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# All Means All

## Elementary School Principal Nationally Recognized for LGBTQ Advocacy



Principal Craig McCalla in hallway of Dexter's Cornerstone Elementary School. BTL photo: Andrew Cohen

BY ELLEN SHANNA KNOPPOW

## All in a Day's Work

Two years ago, after the Michigan State Board of Education approved a set of policy recommendations for the support and inclusion of LGBTQ students, the father of a child attending Dexter's Cornerstone Elementary School scheduled a meeting with principal Craig McCalla. He took issue with the school's bathroom policy: allowing students to use the bathroom that aligns with their gender identity.

"I know what you're gonna tell me; you're one of those liberals," said the father, according to McCalla, who could predict what was coming next.

"You're lettin' people in who wanna use 'em," said the father.

After McCalla replied yes, the father said, "Well I don't think that's right. I think you gotta know."

McCalla calmly pointed out the absurdity

of the angry parent's argument.

"So what you're asking me is, 'Do you want the job of making sure everybody pulls down their pants before they walk in and show you their parts?'" asked McCalla.

"Well, you can't do that!" the angry father said.

"But that's what you just told me you want. You want me to guarantee that everybody's parts go in their right bathroom," McCalla told him. "See how ridiculous it sounds?"

Since McCalla wouldn't budge, eventually the exchange ended.

"He kept looking at me, and I'm like, 'Dude, you're not gonna get anywhere with me,'" McCalla said.

An unwavering advocate and steadfast ally to his Kindergarten through fifth grade students, McCalla said he takes such conversations in stride. And it's just this determination and dedication that earned him both local and national recognition. Along with a regional award in 2012, in 2017 McCalla was honored as Michigan's Outstanding Practicing Principal for

his advocacy on behalf of his LGBTQ students, as well as social justice awareness and leadership in transgender issues. And this October, he was named a 2018 National Distinguished Principal by the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

Now 13 years into his career, McCalla said he always knew that education was his calling. He said that having a brother with cognitive impairments guided his decision to focus his early career on kids with special needs.

"I knew though that cognitive impairments were a little bit too close to home," said McCalla. "So when I was taking my classes, I found a niche for working with students with emotional impairments. I really enjoyed it and I really connected with those students and families."

Following a year in Saline, then six in Chelsea as a self-contained early intervention teacher working with K-5 students, McCalla spent two years as a teacher consultant at a middle school in Chelsea. Then he decided to throw his hat into the administrative ring. And after a year as a middle school and high school assistant

principal, he secured his spot at Cornerstone Elementary. McCalla's passion for his work with young children is unmistakable.

"I love my little ones. I tell everyone, they make me smile every day," said McCalla. "I love to come to work. I have a tremendous staff ... We all work as a team, my special ed team, amazing people. And just the kids. Every day they fill me up with joy. To see them ready to learn, excited to try new things. They don't fear taking risks, and I just enjoy seeing that every day. I tell everybody I love being the rock star to the 4- to 8-year-old crowd."

## Following Through

When McCalla was first presented with the needs of a transgender Kindergartener six years ago, he called it "an easy conversation to have."

"When Pete and Sara (Tchoryk) came to me ... and said hey, [Jacq] is coming to school, and we started talking about what it means to be transgender, and what I'm gonna do here at

*“I’ve always erred on what’s best for kids. And it’s funny, I never realized how much I said it until people started telling me, you know you realize you always say ‘all means all.’”*

Cornerstone to help him out,” McCalla said. “I feel as an elementary principal it’s my job — or any principal — to support all your students and give them what they need.”

Peter Tchoryk agreed that McCalla was immediately receptive.

“One of the first things he said [was], well, ‘I will learn about this. And I don’t have much experience with transgender children, but I guarantee you that we will create a safe and supportive environment for your son. Because we do this for every child,’” he said. “Sure enough, he followed through.”

Jacq adjusted well to school until an issue arose in second grade: He was troubled that his classmates did not believe he was transgender. After the family approached McCalla, they decided to speak to the students. And for all the trepidation he and the Tchoryks experienced beforehand, their fears were largely unfounded.

“We talked to the class and Jacq wanted to talk to the class about who he was and what it means to be transgender. It was funny, when we got done with that presentation that day I was like, ‘Are there any more questions?’ Hands [go] straight up: ‘We’re good with Jacq, we understand that. But somebody’s stealing bubble gum. Can we talk about the bubble gum?’” McCalla said with a laugh.

## Long-Term Advocacy

While it had been his mission from the outset to support all students and create safe environments for them, McCalla has been cast in the spotlight as a champion for LGBTQ students since he and the Tchoryks crossed paths. And that’s a role he has wholeheartedly embraced.

“So the amazing thing, you have one elementary school principal that realizes how important this is, and it really is life and death for these kids, there’s just no doubt about it,” Peter Tchoryk said. “[It’s] amazing what just one educator could do then to create this ripple effect.”

Cornerstone has completed all-staff training around supporting LGBTQ kids, and McCalla hopes to include social justice training for the entire staff, too. The school also incorporates elements from the HRC Foundation’s Welcoming Schools program that provides training and resources to elementary school educators.

But McCalla’s efforts have reached beyond the elementary school, and beyond Dexter. Along with the Tchoryks, he is a founding member of the Transgender Task Force, which provides guidance to schools in Washtenaw and

Livingston counties on things like name changes and student records, as well as professional development and resources to share with social workers and families. Nationally, McCalla has been asked to join a number of amicus briefings on behalf of trans youth, most notably, G.G. v. Gloucester County School Board, the case involving Gavin Grimm, who was barred from using the boys’ restroom at school because he is transgender.

McCalla said his advocacy is rooted in doing what’s right for kids — not just for the kids in Dexter, but those in the entire state and beyond. That’s because in places where LGBTQ kids’ needs are addressed, they are able to thrive.

“How do we support our LGBTQ students in schools? What policies and procedures need to be in place?” McCalla said. “There’s lots of reports and studies out there that if students feel safe and supported, suicide rates go down for our LGBTQ kids, and academic scores go up; there’s less bullying and harassment, that’s really what those [Michigan State Board of Education] guidelines are part of.”

## All Means All

Based on McCalla’s and his school’s reputation, a number of administrators, families and groups have reached out to him over the years.

“I guess that was one of the most shocking things to me,” he said, when asked about being a role model. “Why is everybody coming to me? Aren’t all administrators doing this? Isn’t everybody taking care of their kids? And they’re like, no. It doesn’t make a whole lot of sense to me. ‘Cause I’m nothing special. I’m the guy who puts in place for his kids what needs to be put in place.”

“I’ve always erred on what’s best for kids. And it’s funny, I never realized how much I said it until people started telling me, you know you realize you always say ‘all means all,’” he said.

That three-word credo, “all means all,” was adopted as the school’s motto. It informs everything McCalla does as principal of Cornerstone Elementary, and Peter and Sara Tchoryk recognized that early on. Peter Tchoryk said they were fearful, but couldn’t be more grateful for that first conversation in 2012 — and where it led.

“We look at Craig as truly one of our heroes,” he said. “We’re fortunate we have a Craig. And unfortunately, there’s a lot of kids who don’t have a principal like him and a school district like we do. Our hope is that other principals and other school districts will see this and say, ‘You know what? We can do this, too.’”

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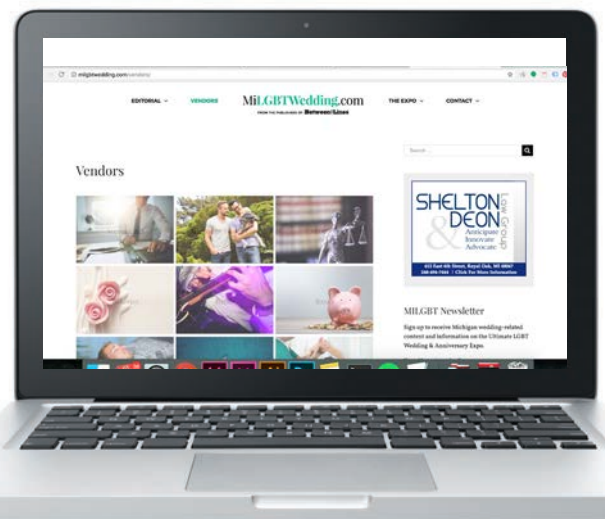
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# Affirmations Suspends Executive Director Search, Announces Layoffs

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

In a Nov. 14 press release, Ferndale's Affirmations LGBTQ community center announced that it has suspended its nearly year-long search for a replacement executive director and laid off three employees: Development Director Katie Koch, Education and Training Manager Becca Budde and Offices and Facilities Coordinator Ryan Fowler.

This notice came just days after the announcement of the community center's Interim Executive Director Lilianna Reyes' resignation, that officially went into effect Thursday of last week. The release went on to describe the financial struggles the organization has been facing in recent years.

"Over the past several years the cost of

running a large community center like AFFIRMATIONS has outpaced the level of revenue. This has led to the continual utilization of reserve funds to supplement the ongoing shortfall," read the release. "Thus far in 2018 a total of \$80K was needed from reserve funds to offset center costs. This strategy is not sustainable for the long-term survival of the center."

Board President Mike Flores said there was not a specific reason why the center's financial struggles were announced when they were, but that the center had to "withdraw funds from the reserves to address cash flow concerns for the month of November."

"In doing so, the board recognized that we need to take additional actions to prevent additional funds from being withdrawn from the reserves at this rate," Flores said.

As funds stand now, Flores said that the organization has enough money left to keep the center open for another six months. The news of Affirmations' financial woes came as a shock to many in the local LGBTQ community, especially as according to 2017 financial records the center ended last year with a surplus of funds.

"In 2017 there was a slight surplus which was (due to) the strong effort from the staff and that ED at the time," he said. "Moving into 2018 again, grants and donations have to be applied for and

have to be awarded on a yearly basis and unfortunately some grants did not come in as expected."

Flores said that there is roughly \$130,000 in grants that have yet to be awarded that are scheduled for 2019. He is hopeful that before the new year begins the center will have sent out year-end appeals for funding, and that he, along with the board, will have devised a more efficient strategy for not only gaining revenue, but maintaining it.

"In addition, we're going to make additional efforts to do touchpoints with the community and with key stakeholders to make them aware of the current situation. And if there are any opportunities for additional donations then of course we would be extremely appreciative of any additional support the community would be able to provide to Affirmations," Flores said. "Right now, this is what the next couple of months look like: basically, identifying what our existing revenue streams are, and are there additional revenue streams that we could tap into that we could work and align with."

Flores said that he is reaching out to "subject matter experts" both from the Metro Detroit area and beyond to help the community center find ways to get back on its feet, along with stakeholders and

## INFO

### Board Meeting

Affirmations will host a Dec. 5 board meeting at 6:30 p.m. that will address concerns about the center's future. It is located at 290 W. Nine Mile Road in Ferndale. Find out more information about the center by going online to [goaffirmations.org](http://goaffirmations.org) or by calling 248-398-7105.

See **Affirmations**, continued on p. 8

# Michigan Department of Corrections to Amend Policies for Incarcerated People Living With HIV

BY BTL STAFF

This month, Lambda Legal and Michigan Protection & Advocacy Service announced the successful settlement of a 2015 lawsuit filed on behalf of John Dorn against the Michigan Department of Corrections. Lambda Legal is an organization dedicated to earning fully equal civil rights for the LGBTQ community, and the MPAS works to help Michigan adults with disabilities. The lawsuit was filed after Dorn was disciplined “far more severely than another incarcerated man based solely on his HIV status, which was in violation of Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act.”

“After Mr. Dorn and the other man were accused of engaging in consensual sexual activity, Mr. Dorn was immediately taken from the lowest-level security facility to the highest and placed in solitary confinement where he remained for more than 21 months, whereas the HIV-negative person was given only a 30-day loss of privileges,” said a Lambda Legal press release.

However, the settlement with the MDOC and Dorn includes “substantive changes to the MDOC policy directive that allowed disproportionate punishment of incarcerated people living with HIV without adequate justification.” Additionally, MDOC is required to review and reconsider the punishment of other HIV-positive inmates and a monetary settlement of \$150,000.

“While this outcome has taken many years to achieve, it was worth the fight, I lost over 21 months of my life to solitary confinement for no good reason because of the prior MDOC policy directive,” Dorn said. “No human being should have to endure that type of punishment. In my case, the directive that led to nearly two years of isolation was based on old science. It was also based on a presumption that did not consider the actual risk of transmission.”

Dorn added that he is both proud to have survived to tell his story, and to have positively impacted HIV-positive Michiganders who may find themselves involved with MDOC — which now must comply with federal disability law.

“We are pleased with the outcome, not only for Mr. Dorn, but also for other incarcerated people living with HIV in MDOC custody,” said Richard Saenz, Lambda Legal senior attorney and criminal justice and police misconduct strategist.

“Advocating for and protecting the legal rights of people with disabilities in Michigan is the state-designated work of the Michigan Protection & Advocacy Service,” added



Lambda Legal client John Dorn. Photo courtesy of Lambda Legal.

Chris Davis, a Michigan protection and advocacy service staff attorney. “No one’s HIV status should result in policy decisions and draconian punishments predicated on outdated information and science. We worked for many years with Lambda Legal on behalf of Mr. Dorn and are pleased that we have been able to get this discriminatory and outdated policy changed.”

Lambda Legal Counsel and HIV Project Director Scott Schoettes went on to emphasize that this issue, and many others surrounding HIV status, arose because of stigma surrounding HIV. Schoettes said that the policy updates are the surest way to help end unfair associations.

“Like state laws that unjustifiably criminalize the sex lives of people living with HIV, these policies in correctional settings have not kept up with the science and the benefits of consistent medical treatment, which makes it impossible to transmit HIV,” he said. “Changes to these outdated laws and policies are critical, and Lambda Legal will continue to fight for these changes through the courts and legislatures all across the country.”

To find out more about Lambda Legal and its various cases, go online to [lambdalegal.org](http://lambdalegal.org). For more information about the Michigan Protection & Advocacy Service, visit [mpas.org](http://mpas.org).

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# Meet Creating Change Co-Chair Q&A: Cara Mitrano

BY JASON A MICHAEL

Creating Change is an annual LGBTQ conference put on by the National LGBTQ Task Force. Hosting hundreds of workshops, caucus sessions, keynote speakers and more, the more than 30-year-old event tours across the U.S., every year choosing a city in which to showcase the LGBTQ community's local and national community. This year, Creating Change 2019 is coming to Detroit in January. In advance of the event, BTL has reached out to interview four local co-chairs who are involved in putting on this Detroit-specific event. This interview is part of that series.

Cara Mitrano is a senior undergraduate student at Wayne State University. She has been involved in LGBTQ activism since high school when she founded a Gay-Straight Alliance in her school and began volunteering with local nonprofits. At Wayne State, Mitrano has been a leader in LGBTQ student organizations and she founded the LGBT Student Advisory Board. Mitrano is also a member of the Southeastern Michigan HIV/AIDS Council and collaborates with many organizations including Planned Parenthood, Transgender Michigan, Advocates for Youth, the Gender-Identity Network Alliance and PFLAG.

## What does Creating Change mean to you?

Creating Change is an opportunity for LGBT people and allies across the country and around the world to convene and build community. Not only do they create the unique short-term community during the five days of the conference, but they can use what they learn in the workshops to strengthen

and improve their own communities back home.

## What are you doing to create change in your own life?

As a student activist at Wayne State University, I founded the LGBT Student Advisory Board, an activism and leadership-focused LGBT student organization. We are affiliated with many community organizations and host events which empower individuals and uplift the diverse voices of Detroit's LGBT community. During WSU's Coming Out Week (Oct. 8 through 12), I [hosted] an LGBT Professional Development Lunch in partnership with Ally Financial and bringing Deidre D.S. Sense to campus for a workshop about self-expression through spoken word.

## What made you feel you had to be a co-chair?

I have connections to many LGBTQ-specific and supportive organizations in the Detroit metro area. For example, while Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan is not LGBT-specific, it has a mission of including and centering LGBT needs in its activism and advocacy. Additionally, as a student at Wayne State University, I wanted to invite students and other representatives of the university to participate in this work. As a young person myself (21 years old), I hope to be a role model for other young people looking for ways to be involved in LGBT activism and advocacy.

## What are you most looking forward to about Creating Change 2019?

survive in some form and function.”

He said that the organization's existing plans to restructure will reaffirm its unique mission to help community members “become the best version of themselves” and allow the center to become the “best version of itself.”

He added that as of now, merging with other existing organizations is not being considered either.

“With that being said it requires us to leverage the partnerships that we have so we are working synergistically with all of our partners across the region, so that way we are using our resources as effectively and efficiently as we can,” Flores said. “So, what comes to mind now is the Ruth Ellis Center. How do we continue to strengthen our relationship with the Ruth Ellis Center? ... LGBT Detroit, how are we working synergistically with them? The Corktown Health Center, how are we working synergistically with them? Stand With Trans, just to name a few organizations. ... These are



I am excited for my first Creating Change! Since other locations of the conference have been far away and expensive to attend, though now I know about the many opportunities for scholarships, I have never been a part of this conference. I hope to show Creating Change 2019 attendees the amazing LGBT community in Detroit and get to know other communities across the country in future years.

## What is your take on Gay Rights in the Era of #45? Where are we as a community and where do we need to be?

As always, we should be politically engaged

*“Creating Change is an opportunity for LGBT people and allies across the country and around the world to convene and build community.”*

and voting. More than ever, we also need to look out for others and uplift the voices, needs and experiences of those who are less privileged or less able to advocate for themselves. For example, I am an ally to non-white communities in Detroit by listening to their struggles, offering resources and including or centering their voices in my work. Creating Change 2019 will give a platform to the many diverse voices within our community and allow attendees to develop necessary skills to organize and advocate for those who need it the most.

## INFO

### Creating Change

Creating Change will be held at the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center from Jan. 23 through 27 in 2019. More information its included events, speakers and programs can be found online at [creatingchange.org](http://creatingchange.org).

## ► Affirmations

Continued from p. 6

former donors who have helped the center in the past. However, under tax law, Affirmations is classified as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. If Affirmations' efforts should be unsuccessful, the organization will be required under law to give its assets to another 501(c)(3) if it should go out of business. When asked if either Flores or the board had given thought to any local organizations that they might consider to receive those assets, Flores was firm that they had not.

“The plan is for us not to go out of business. That is not the plan, so at this time we have not identified any of those actions because that is not our plan,” he said. “Our plan is to have Affirmations survive as an organization. That may look different than what it looked like earlier this week, but Affirmations is going to

organizations that are experts in their area and we want to make sure that we're not overlapping with them.”

Flores said that the largest cost expenditure for Affirmations right now is its staff salaries.

“They support all the programming that goes on at the center, they support all of the management and logistical requirements to be able to support the community. That's actually our largest cost on a monthly basis, hence why when we needed to tackle cost concerns when there was no other option available, we had to look at restructuring to be able to address the cost structures of the organizations and to prevent additional requests from the reserves,” Flores said, referencing its laid off employees and those whose positions have been removed.

However, Flores said that there are no current plans to lay off any more employees, adding that the responsibilities of those no longer with Affirmations will be distributed among existing staff and the board of directors. Flores left the

## Flores said that the largest cost expenditure for Affirmations right now is its staff salaries.

country the morning after the announcement for a month-long work assignment overseas.

During a previous financial crisis in 2011, Affirmations was forced to take a mortgage out on the new building in Ferndale of \$460,000, but they were able to eventually pay that off and rebuild a substantial cash reserve from better operating results and several large gifts and bequests. Flores told BTL that only \$70,000 remains in the cash reserve account.

Community members can expect an update at the center's next board meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 5, at 6:30 p.m.

More information about the center can be found online at [goaffirmations.org](http://goaffirmations.org).



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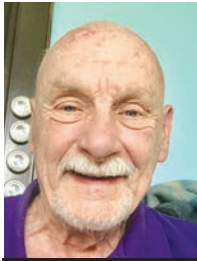


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# Parting Glances

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

## Two Kings and a Presidential 'Queen'

**M**artin Luther King, Jr.'s 1965 historic march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, for African-American voter rights changed the South forever. (Or, did it?)

Few know that another King – William Rufus DeVane King – gave Selma its name 145 years earlier. (It means “high seat” or “throne,” and comes from an epic Ossianic poem, “The Songs of Selma.”)

Billy DeVane was the live-in companion – possible partner, advising spouse, subliminal lover – of James Buchanan, the 15th president of the United States.

Buchanan met Billy in 1834 while they were both serving in the Senate. They became inseparable for almost 20 years.

Gay historians say there's a strong possibility that Buchanan may have broken his engagement to his fiancée Ann Coleman for the handsome, slightly older Billy. Poor Ann. She died brokenhearted shortly thereafter.

Buchanan referred to Billy's friendship as a “communion.” Washington gossips called Billy Jamie Buchanan's “better half,” and the two of them “the Siamese Twins.”

Former President Andrew Jackson dubbed Billy “Miss Nancy,” (Jackson's own wife – a zesty, buxom tart of a thing – was also the subject of much malicious gossip.)

Democrat Aaron Brown confided in letters to his friends that Billy was “Aunt Fancy trigged in her best clothes.” He called Billy “she” and referenced to “her” telltale behavior and conversations. There's hinting that Billy may have been a cross-dresser.

But Billy was also a highly respected politician, with 38 years of dedicated service in the House of Representatives, the Senate and as minister without portfolio (perhaps it was beaded) to France and to St. Petersburg, Russia.

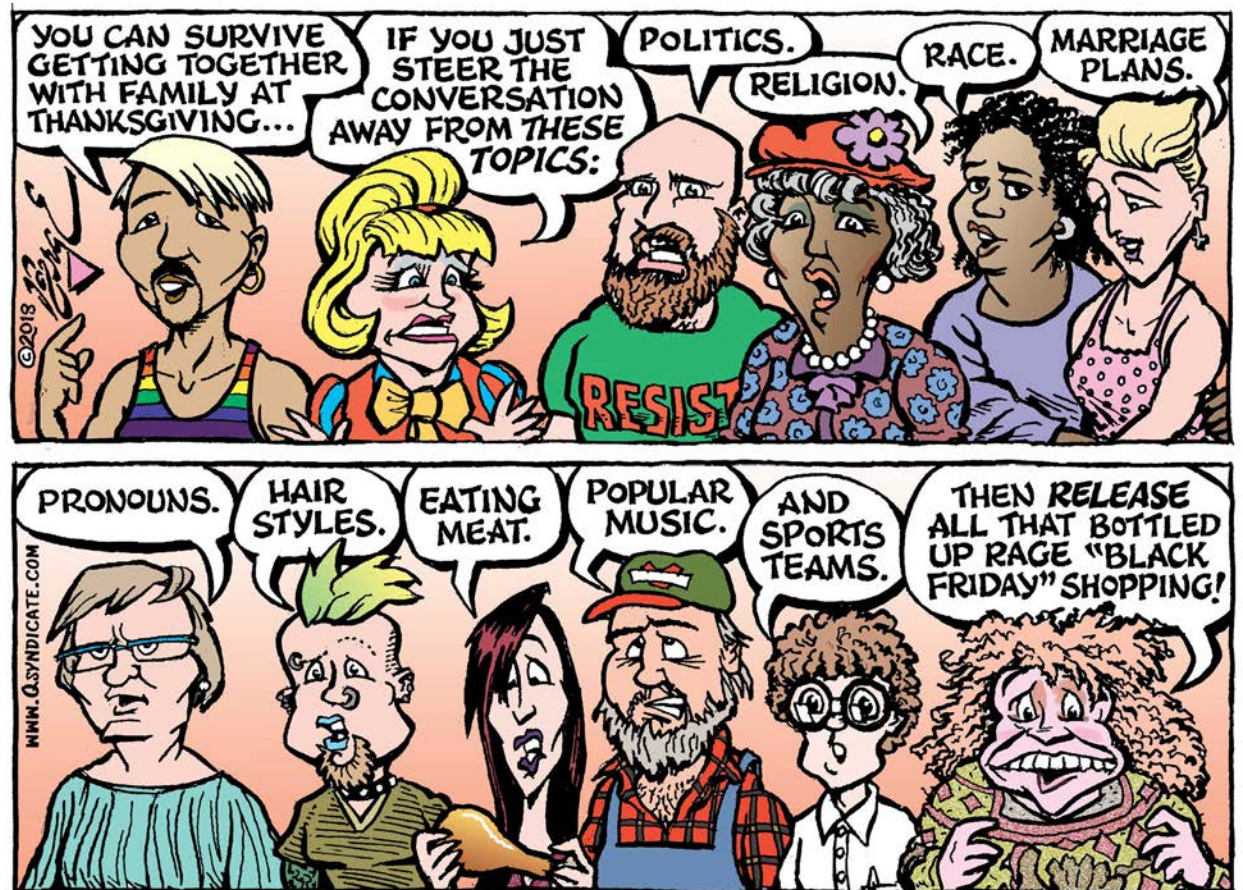
It's rumored at the time that Billy took the post in France to quash gossip about himself and Jamie Buchanan. Whether true or not, he did a splendid job of keeping the French from interfering in this country's plans to annex Texas from Mexico. (Things might have been better for all parties concerned these Trump-mongered days if France had succeeded.)

In 1853, Billy became vice president to our 14th president, Franklin Pierce. Billy, who owned slaves, was chosen as a compromise candidate on a pro-slavery ticket. But before taking office he showed signs of tuberculosis, hastening to a friend's plantation near Havana, Cuba, to recuperate and mint julep it up, and — mayhap, Mary — cross-dress in the sun.

For the only time in our history, a special act of Congress was passed to allow the king to take the oath of office outside of the U.S. But excessive drinking further weakened Billy's constitution, and within six weeks of being sworn in he was dead. Jamie Buchanan was devastated.

In 1850, Buchanan without his beloved Billy, became our only bachelor president. His indecisiveness in office brought the Civil War closer. Lincoln inherited the conflict. (Gay historians think the young Lincoln was possibly bisexual.)

Billy is buried in a shady cemetery just outside Selma, a city remembered today for two Kings. And possibly a queen. Perhaps America's first: J. Edgar Hoover notwithstanding.



## Viewpoint

## Where Memories Collide



BY KATRINA C. ROSE

**I**grew up in Houston, Texas, a fact I neither brag about nor hold my head in shame about (well, usually; but the less said about Ted Cruz's re-election the better.) It is what it was and I have not lived there for quite some time.

My family lived not far from the Astrodome, then the home to the Astros as well as Houston's then-NFL team, the Oilers. During most of that portion of my youth during which I began to develop an observational knowledge of sports the Oilers were, well, there's really no way around this: They were bad. Horrid, even.

I would on occasion hear of how the team had been quite good not long before I was born, a championship team during the early days of the American Football League when it played in an old high school stadium near the campus of the University of Houston. But the Oilers of the early 1970s, the eighth wonder of the world (as the Astrodome was once known) and all, now

are most remembered for a fan infamously flipping off a camera during a game during Monday night football and rendering the notoriously verbose Howard Cosell momentarily speechless.

That fan's sentiment was shared by much of Houston. Once, at a school carnival, I won a 5-by-7 inch glossy photo of the Oilers' quarterback. My father made me tear it up. Literally.

The Astros of the 1970s weren't much better than the Oilers, but for some reason the baseball team, certain notoriously bad trades aside, didn't attract quite as much local animosity as the football team did.

The first baseball game I attended was the Astros' 1974 home opener, on a Friday night against the Dodgers. I had to look the game up to remember that the Astros' starter was Claude Osteen (no relation to Joel as far as I know), but I've always remembered that the Dodgers started Al Downing.

See **Viewpoint**, continued on next page

For some of us, that was our first lesson in gay politics and history. For some it still may serve as such, either in Sean Penn's "Milk" or from the documentary "The Times of Harvey Milk," which opens with a clip of Sen. Dianne Feinstein announcing the assassinations at San Francisco City Hall.

## ► Viewpoint

Continued from p. 10

Why? It was his first start since serving up home run number 715 to Hank Aaron earlier in the week.

We saw a handful of games that year, the last being Aaron's final appearance in Houston as an Atlanta Brave. The sellout crowd (a true rarity for the Astros of that era) gave him a standing ovation when he came to the plate. My father even joined in, one of the few times I can recall him having anything good to say about anyone who wasn't white.

And yet my most indelible Astrodome memory is of football – and of the year that the Oilers returned to prominence. After a decade out of the playoffs, a trade for the first draft pick brought in Earl Campbell, the prior year's Heisman Trophy winner. That did not solve all problems for the Oilers. They still did not make it to the Super Bowl – then, or ever. (When it finally happened, it was three years after leaving the city and even abandoning the name "Oilers." To me, that doesn't count, but I digress.)

Merely because of that draft choice, however, the team did make it back onto the Monday Night Football schedule. In prime time late in the year, the Oilers hosted the Miami Dolphins – several years removed from the perfect 17-0 season but still a contender. The Oilers went 1-13 the year the Dolphins were undefeated and, despite Campbell's presence, were still viewed as pretenders.

A promotional gimmick to at least aid in erasing that perception was the handing out of blue-and-white pompoms to all of those who attended that Monday night game. Not long before game time, with the Oilers' memorable (yet equally annoying) fight song blaring, all 50,000 or so people in attendance began waving those pompoms. Between more fighter-jet flyovers and bad marching-band renditions of "Sweet Caroline" than I can count, I've long since become jaded to sporting-event spectacles, but the sight of all of those pompoms then left me awestruck. It also left me wondering, "What the hell is going to happen if we lose?"

But we didn't.

Late in the fourth quarter, with the Oilers ahead by five and trying to run out the clock, Campbell ran 81 yards for a touchdown to seal the deal.

The next day, some kids at school said they'd seen me on TV. Maybe they did, maybe

they didn't. It would be a few years before I managed to acquire a VCR, so I couldn't go back and look – at least for quite a while. Just prior to the YouTube era, some enterprising video pirate began selling bootleg copies of network broadcasts of old NFL broadcasts on eBay. The pirate's copy of the Houston-Miami game was several generations old even before he burned it onto a DVD. Most every crowd shot is just a conglomeration of blurs; I know exactly where I was sitting and I still can't discern if I was ever actually onscreen or not. I'll give the guys who said they saw me the benefit of the doubt.

Maybe sports isn't your thing now – and maybe it never was. But what many people still refer to as "The Earl Campbell Game" is a happy memory for me.

It is a memory of a time when the era still fondly referred to by many (even many who have long-since abandoned Texas) as "Luv Ya Blue" was just beginning.

A memory of a time when the man now known for being the viciously transphobic lieutenant governor of Texas (re-elected this month right along with Ted Cruz) was known only for being a genuinely likeable sports anchor at Houston's CBS affiliate.

A memory of a time when the world was young – or at least seemed so.

A memory of 40 years ago.

A memory of Nov. 20, 1978.

We all know what happened a week later.

For some of us, that was our first lesson in gay politics and history. For some it still may serve as such, either in Sean Penn's "Milk" or from the documentary "The Times of Harvey Milk," which opens with a clip of Sen. Dianne Feinstein announcing the assassinations at San Francisco City Hall.

For many of us whose adolescence came and went long prior to the internet and DVDs, that first lesson came in gay politics and history came in as close to real time as one could expect: via a special report that immediately preceded the Monday Night Football game for that week — a 49ers home game, which went on almost as if nothing else had happened that day.

On Nov. 27, the Pittsburgh Steelers won. Everybody else lost.

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*Katrina C. Rose still has her pompom from that Oilers-Dolphins game. In the years since, she's also acquired a law degree and a doctorate in history. One chapter of her dissertation will appear early next year in the University of Massachusetts Law Review.*

## Creep Of The Week

### Bob Vander Plaats

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

When I was in high school it was common to hear kids say "that's so gay," usually to deride something that was thought to be extremely corny or nerdy. Or, well, lame.

And I have to admit, I suspect that 4-H got more than its fair share of that's-so-gays.

Honestly, I only had a passing understanding of what 4-H was while growing up. I knew that some kids went to the state fair to eat and then throw up cotton candy on carnival rides, while other kids went to the state fair because they had, like, a pig in the pig contest or something. I didn't fit into either of those categories, which helps to explain why my 4-H knowledge base is shaky at best.

Oh, and the name 4-H "represents four personal development areas of focus for the organization: head, heart, hands, and health" (thanks, Wikipedia! Send them \$3). The 4-H website has no farm animals on its front page and kind of looks like Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Big Brothers Big Sisters all rolled into one. Millions of kids are involved in one way or another. Even some LGBTQ kids.

And here's the great thing: 4-H wants to include and protect its LGBTQ youth.

The not-so-great thing, however, is that the Trump Administration does not want them to do that and, according to a detailed investigation in the Des Moines Register, the administration "pushed the national 4-H youth organization to withdraw" the LGBTQ-inclusive policy.

The biggest sticking point appears to have been letting transgender youth use the bathrooms that matched their gender identity.

It is a familiar story, one that Trump's administration really enjoys telling, and believing, even though there is no evidence to justify the right wing's anti-trans focus.

So when 4-H in Iowa published the inclusive guidelines to their website, some people freaked the eff out.

One of those freakers was Bob Vander Plaats, president of the conservative Christian organization the Family Leader in Des Moines. According to the Register, he wanted his supporters to reject the policy's "radical" approach. He claimed that under this policy allows "a man who claims the female gender (without any medical procedure or legal verification) to sleep in the girls' hotel rooms."

Vander Plaats, whose photo in the Register looks like a headshot for an actor playing a B-movie role as the head of a conversion therapy summer camp for gay teens, is but a bit player in the Register's investigation. But I've chosen to focus on him because comments like his get people killed. This idea that there are men out there who want

**The vast majority of transgender people are not predators. But they are all people.**

**Vander Plaats would like you to forget that part, and his comment about "girls' hotel rooms" is clearly an effort to dehumanize a group of people who, like all of us, just want to live their lives in a way that makes the most sense to them.**

to slip their hairy calves into a pair of Leggs so that they can stride confidently into a ladies' locker room to ogle and sexually assault women and girls is absurd. It's also dangerous, painting an already vulnerable population as predators, which pretty much gives a blank check to those who wish to do violence against transgender people.

The vast majority of transgender people are not predators. But they are all people. Vander Plaats would like you to forget that part, and his comment about "girls' hotel rooms" is clearly an effort to dehumanize a group of people who, like all of us, just want to live their lives in a way that makes the most sense to them.

I should note that Vander Plaats's comments are not a surprise. The Family Leader is staunchly anti-LGBT. The very first thing on their "Issues we are focused on" page is marriage, as in, "We believe marriage is a permanent, lifelong commitment between a man and a woman." This is followed closely by sexuality, as in, "The Family Leader affirms sexual relations within the bond of marriage, and opposes distortions of sexuality or special rights to those practicing distorted sexual behavior."

Thankfully, the LGBTQ kids of 4-H had someone in their corner: 4-H Youth Development Program leader John-Paul Chaisson-Cardenas.

According to the Register, Chaisson-Cardenas wrote in an email referring to WorldNetDaily, a right-wing website that has an extreme anti-LGBTQ bias and had been covering the 4-H controversy: "I guess I am not sure why we are valuing the propaganda machine of a recognized hate group over the existing rights of LGBTQ youth?"

An excellent question, and one that we'll probably never have an answer for because Chaisson-Cardenas was canned. He's not the first and won't be the last person pushed out by Trump for supporting transgender people. The question is only how many more will there be?

# House GOP Urges Trump to Drop LGBT Protections in NAFTA Update

BY CHRIS JOHNSON

A group of nearly 40 House Republicans are calling on President Trump to drop from the updated U.S. trade proposal with Mexico and Canada a provision encouraging countries to adopt policies barring anti-LGBT discrimination in the workforce, throwing ratification of the deal in question.

In a letter dated Nov. 16, lawmakers led by Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-Colo.) say they're "deeply concerned" by the proposed LGBT requirements in the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, a renegotiation of the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement initiated by President Trump. An article Friday in Politico highlighted the letter.

"A trade agreement is no place for the adoption of social policy," the letter says. "It is especially inappropriate and insulting to our sovereignty to needlessly submit to social policies which the United States has so far explicitly refused to accept."

The letter urges Trump to remove the language from the agreement before signing it at a planned Buenos Aires event with the leaders of the United States, Canada and Mexico on Nov. 30, which is the day before the current administration leaves office.

After the leaders sign the agreement, the countries would have to ratify the deal for it to take effect. For the United States, that means approval in Congress after an election in which House Democrats swept in power amid dissatisfaction with Trump.

Section 23 of the USMCA contains a provision against sex discrimination in the workplace, calling on a members in the deal to adopt against sex-based discrimination, including on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. The sections also calls for cooperation among the member states "in promotion of equality and elimination of employment discrimination" with regard to numerous characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender identity.

According to Politico, the language was included in the draft agreement at the behest of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, whose government reportedly called the provision a "big win."

The language is unprecedented in a U.S. trade agreement, Politico reports, but it's unclear whether provision has real teeth and Canada and United States agree it wouldn't require a new law.

In opposition to the provision, House Republicans enumerate other policies of the Trump administration excluding LGBT people from the definition of "sex" under federal law. The Justice Department has reversed Obama-era policy interpreting laws against sex discrimination, such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, to apply to transgender people and has asserted discrimination against

lesbian, gay and bisexual people isn't covered under the law.

Also cited is an explosive recent report in the New York Times asserting the Department of Health & Human Services is drafting a proposal essentially to eliminate transgender people under the implementation of the law. Although that proposal generates a firestorm of opposition among transgender advocates, House Republicans call the effort "encouraging" and say it would "restore the historic definition of 'sex' to a person's anatomical sex at birth."

Adopting the agreement along with the LGBT protections, House Republicans assert, would undermine efforts currently underway in the U.S. government.

"One wonders at the contradictory policy coming through [the U.S. Trade Representative] when other departments under your administration are working to come into alignment on SOGI policy," the letter says.

Signers of the letter includes House members with a history of anti-LGBT views, including Rep. Vicky Hartzler (R-Mo.), who proposed an amendment seeking to bar the U.S. military from paying transition-related care for transgender services members, as well as Reps. Steve King (R-Iowa), Andy Harris (R-Md.), Louie Gohmert (R-Texas) and Mark Meadows (R-N.C.), chair of the House Freedom Caucus.

A statement from Lamborn asserts he signed the letter along with 45 other co-signers. However, the Blade counts 38 total signatures on the missive. Slots for two signatures — Reps. Warren Davidson (R-Ohio) and Roger Williams (R-Texas) are left blank.

In the statement, Lamborn said the adoption of the proposal in the USMCA would be "an unnecessary black eye."

"My concern is the precedent this could set for activist courts to cite as congressional support for SOGI language once the USMCA is adopted," Lamborn said. "I strongly urge him to remove the troubling language in the deal that was adopted behind the scenes."

Drew Hammill, a spokesperson for House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), slammed the letter as "despicable."

"This despicable letter is more of the same from a Republican Congress with open contempt for the humanity of the LGBTQ community," Hammill said. "It enrages these GOP Members that LGBTQ Americans should be treated with respect and dignity under the law. They are on the wrong side of history, and come January, they will be on the wrong side of the newly-elected House majority."

According to CTV News, Trudeau isn't saying what he's willing to do to keep the LGBT provision intact, reportedly telling reporters Sunday he's not going to negotiate the deal in public.

"We got to a good agreement that I think represents Canadian values, Canadian approach, but also values that are broadly

shared amongst citizens of our three countries," Trudeau is quoted as saying at the end of summit with Asia-Pacific leaders.

"In any trade deal, there are going to be people who would like this or like that or not want this or not want that," Trudeau reportedly added.

The Washington Blade is unable to find any reporting on the Mexican government's position on the LGBT language. A representative of the Mexican government couldn't be immediately reached for comment.

According to Politico, opposition from House Republicans is just "one more landmine in the path" of enacting Trump's biggest trade achievement. Labor groups have also expressed concern mechanisms to enforce new worker protections aren't sufficiently strong and hinted the incoming Democratic House might seek changes.

Given the deal requires congressional approval for implementation, a lack of support among members of Congress — Republican and Democratic — could spell doom for the proposal when it comes before lawmakers for ratification. According to a report in Business Insider, the concerned over the agreement already mean the deal is "suddenly in trouble" and it's future is "in question."

Adjusting the deal would be a "tall order," Politico reports, but if the Trump administration were to address the concerns of House Republicans, the easiest way would be persuading Canada and Mexico to change the language before the agreement is signed.

If those countries refuse and Trump is concerned about having enough Republicans votes for congressional approval, the administration could seek to eliminate the LGBT language through the implementing bill, but that would be highly unusual and give Democrats a reason to vote "no," Politico reports.

Lamborn is quoted in Politico as saying his understanding is the administration could seek to alter the language without opening the deal back up, reportedly adding, "if it's bad enough — and in my opinion it's bad enough — they should consider taking it out."

"At this point I'm a 'no' vote and I would encourage others to be a no vote unless something is done," Lamborn reportedly said. "And things could be done within the agreement."

It remains to be seen what action the Trump administration will take. The Washington Blade has placed a request in with the White House seeking comment on the House Republican letter.

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

# Chad Griffin to Step Down as Human Rights Campaign President

BY CHRIS JOHNSON

After a seven-year period leading the nation's largest LGBT group that culminated in massive gains for LGBT rights supporters on Election Day 2018, Chad Griffin announced Thursday he will step down as president of the Human Rights Campaign.

"I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to be a part of this incredible organization at such an important moment in the history of our movement — and our nation," Griffin said in a statement Thursday. "The true strength of the Human Rights Campaign is in its fearless army of staff and volunteers, who are committed to ensuring full equality reaches every LGBTQ person across America, and around the world. For decades, this organization has shown the world that love conquers hate. But this year, in this election, with the future of our democracy on the ballot and the equality of future generations on the line, we proved that votes conquer hate, too."

According to the Human Rights Campaign, the HRC Board will work to establish an executive search process for Griffin's successor in the coming weeks. Griffin plans to stay on until 2019 to ensure a smooth transition.

The news was first reported by the Associated Press. The AP reported Griffin informed staff earlier on Thursday of his intent to depart the Human Rights Campaign.

Griffin's tenure at the Human Rights Campaign ended with massive gains in a "blue" wave that resulted in Democratic control of the U.S. House, Jared Polis becoming the first openly gay person elected governor and four new lesbian, gay and bisexual candidates elected to the House. The wins were bolstered this week when Kyrsten Sinema was confirmed as the winner in the U.S. Senate race in Arizona, making her the first openly bisexual person elected to the chamber.

The Human Rights Campaign contributed to this effort with a \$26 million #TurnOut campaign to vote that sought to motivate the estimated 10 million Americans who identify as LGBT and 52 million Americans who support pro-LGBT policies to vote in the election. The #TurnOUT campaign identified six states — Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — on which to focus its efforts.

In a conference call with reporters last



Chad Griffin to step down as Human Rights Campaign president.

week, Griffin touted those contributions and said they helped drive the “blue” wave on Election Day that ousted anti-LGBT members of Congress, calling it the “largest grassroots expansion in the history of the Human Rights Campaign.”

“It is not only ousting these anti-LGBT equality members of Congress,” Griffin said. “If you look at the pro-equality champions they were replaced by, all across the country, in red, blue and purple states alike, they were defeated by not just pro-equality champions, but candidates who actually fought for our votes and made passing the Equality Act one of the top campaign issues in their districts.”

Griffin’s work to advance LGBT rights pre-dates his tenure at the Human Rights Campaign. In 2009, shortly after the passage of Proposition 8 in California, Griffin established the American Foundation for Equal Rights, hiring the dream team of Ted Olson and David Boies to challenge the ban on same-sex marriage in court.

The lawsuit was filed contrary to wishes of major LGBT rights groups, including the Human Rights Campaign, over fears the lawsuit was too risky and would be unsuccessful. Although the litigation worked its way through the courts for several years before making to the Supreme Court, where justices ultimately issued a ruling based on standing and not the merits of the case, the lawsuit resulted in the restoration of marriage equality to California.

Kris Perry, who along with her spouse Sandy Stier was among the plaintiffs in the Prop 8 case, told the Washington Blade in the aftermath of Griffin’s announcement he’s an “incredible leader.”

“I first met him in 1999 after he helped Rob Reiner pass Proposition 10 in California, a tobacco tax that still generates hundreds of millions of dollars in public funding for children zero to five,” Perry said. “As you know in 2008, Chad turned his attention to fighting

Proposition 8, the same-sex marriage ban in California which he masterfully won. Sandy and I have been HRC supporters since his arrival there in 2011 and we are in awe of the energy, expertise and courage he demonstrates year after year in his fight for human rights, fairness and equality. Chad has improved our lives and the lives of tens of thousands of Americans.”

Early on in 2012 during his tenure as HRC president, Griffin pushed to increase support for marriage equality by encouraging lawmakers to echo President Obama’s declaration of support for same-sex marriage. That year, for the first time, three states — Maine, Washington State and Maryland — legalized same-sex marriage at the ballot, and one state, Minnesota, rejected a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage.

In 2013, passage of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act was a priority for the organization. Griffin coordinated an effort that led to passage of the legislation in the Senate, although the bill never came up in the Republican-controlled House.

After the legislative effort petered out, Griffin led efforts to develop and introduce the Equality Act, which would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to bar not only anti-LGBT discrimination in employment, but also public accommodations, housing, education, jury service, federal programs and credit.

Griffin also led the Human Rights Campaign during victories at the Supreme Court for same-sex marriage aside from the decision against Prop 8, including the 2013 decision in the Windsor case against the Defense of Marriage Act and the 2015 decision in the Obergefell case for same-sex marriage nationwide.

After the Windsor decision in 2013, many skeptics scoffed when Griffin said full marriage equality would come throughout the country within the five years, but that prediction became even reality even sooner when the Obergefell decision was handed down years later.

But Griffin’s tenure wasn’t successful in every effort. The Human Rights Campaign was early supporter of Hillary Clinton in her 2016 presidential bid and contributed to her election campaign. (Griffin at age 18 was a White House press office manager during the Bill Clinton administration.) Those efforts were ultimately unsuccessful and President Trump and Republican majorities were elected to Congress.

However, in that same year, the Human Rights Campaign contributed to efforts to unseat North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory after he signed the anti-trans House Bill 2 barring transgender from access restroom in state government-operations building. Despite Trump’s success, McCrory in that year was ejected from the governor’s mansion.

Griffin also didn’t have consistent adulation from the LGBT community. When the book “Forcing the Spring” came out in 2014 on the Prop 8 case and compared Griffin to civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks on the first page, Griffin became the butt of criticism from LGBT rights supporters who thought he was taking too much credit for movement. Griffin, however, distanced himself from the comparison and the controversy abated.

Hilary Rosen, a lesbian D.C.-based Democratic activist, said Griffin’s advancement of the LGBT rights is consistent with the overall efforts of the Human Rights Campaign over the decades.

“The most gratifying thing about HRC is

how it has tracked and led the progress of the movement,” Rosen said. “We have had the right leader for each growth spurt and each political season that has been just right. Chad took this organization to the grassroots at the right time in the right way.”

Rosen also pointed to Griffin’s creation of Project One American, a multi-year project that sought to advance support for LGBT rights in the South.

“He did so much for the movement, but one aspect really sticks out for me,” Rosen said. “His Arkansas roots gave him the incentive to work harder and smarter to make change for young LGBTQ kids and their families in North Carolina, Alabama, Georgia and throughout the South. I think that will go down in history as one of his most singular contributions.”

Speculation emerged immediately after Griffin’s departure from the Human Rights Campaign that he’d seek to join the campaign of one of the potential 2020 Democratic presidential contenders, such as Sen. Kamala Harris (D-Calif.).

According to the Associated Press, Harris demurred when asked if she’d hire Griffin to help with her presidential campaign, saying only that she hadn’t made a decision on entering the race.

Harris, however, was public on Twitter on Thursday in her praise for Griffin, predicting history would remember him as a “leader in the moment he was needed to lead.”



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Photo: Columbia Pictures

# Still Here, Queer, and Slaying

'The Girl in the Spider's Web' Actress Claire Foy on Objecting to a Lesbian Sex Scene and Being Bi in 'Unsane'

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

A pansexual man-avenger returns – this time, with English actress Claire Foy sporting the Swedish computer-hacker Lisbeth Salander's leather gear and trademark dragon tattoo. Based on the novel from David Lagercrantz, written after original author Stieg Larsson's sudden death, the second installment in the American-produced "Millennium" film series, "The Girl in the Spider's Web," positions Foy's Lisbeth as a Bond-like anti-hero. Gayer, though. And with so many dildos.

Foy's latest big-screen turn follows two other memorable lead roles this year, in Steven Soderbergh's unnerving thriller "Unsane" and the Neil Armstrong (portrayed by Ryan Gosling) biopic "First Man," starring as his wife, Janet Armstrong. On the small screen, the 34-year-old actress took the throne as Queen

Elizabeth II for two seasons of Netflix's "The Crown," which garnered her an Emmy and a Golden Globe in the best actress categories.

Here, Foy discusses that dildo scene, talking "Spider's Web" director Fede Álvarez out of gratuitous lesbian sex, and why there's an "ease" and an "openness" to kissing her female co-stars.

**"Queer Eye" star Jonathan Van Ness stepped in when you and your two guests couldn't get into the Governors Ball after the Emmys this year. In life, do gay men tend to have your back?**

(Laughs giddily) Best question I've ever been asked – ever! We can't get better than that. I don't know! I mean, I would hate to speak for all gay men; I think that's something you'd have to ask all gay men. There are several of them in my life who I feel have my back, which is lovely. And I have theirs.

**Do you cry while watching "Queer Eye" like the rest of us?**

Oh my god, it's sort of like watching – have you ever watched "One Born Every Minute" where you watch someone give birth? It's like watching that, because every time you watch it, you start going, "I'll be fine with this one, this one's fine, there's nothing that's gonna get me here," and then ultimately, by the end, you're weeping.

**If we're being honest, sometimes I watch "Queer Eye" just to weep.**

(Laughs) It's a cathartic thing to do!

**Your encounter with Jonathan strongly suggests that you may have attracted a fierce LGBTQ following over the years. How aware are you of your gay and lesbian following?**

I wish I was more aware of it! I think I've never

particularly noticed someone who identifies themselves in any particular group as being someone who's watched a particular show that I've done. I feel very lucky, especially with "The Crown," that it has such a broad appeal and that's something that I am amazed by, that a TV program could be watched by so many different people. It's quite a unifying thing, I think. Very rare nowadays. But I must say, I think the Queen holds a special part in quite a lot of people's hearts, and so it's interesting to see who kind of has been interested in me because I played her.

**It can't hurt that "The Crown" portrayed Lord Snowdon as bisexual.**

Oh yeah. Well, I think there's so much honesty (on that show) about people's sexuality that I think is really important. That's how I feel about Lisbeth. I think her pansexuality – I

loved that she had such an open attitude, not only to her own sexuality but to everybody else's, a kind of non-judgment (and an understanding that there should be no judgment about people's sexuality or what they identify themselves as. There should be more protagonists who have that message. It's very important.

**In the BBC's "The Night Watch," you played Helen, who gets involved in a Sapphic love triangle but identifies as sexually fluid. Do you gravitate toward characters who choose not to label their sexuality, or is that just a coincidence?**

I think... no. As much as I'm interested in exploring those sides of myself I'm also interested in exploring those sides of other people. It's what it means to be human. People's sexuality, their sensuality, is something that I think there's a lot of shame about in every walk of life; it's something that's weirdly not talked about, and I think people are not allowed to explore and express themselves and be open and be honest about what it means to be them, and that obviously includes your sexuality. I think it's just really important to investigate that.

**Have you questioned your own sexual identity?**

Especially nowadays, I do find the idea of people being prescriptive about sexuality and defining themselves by it... that's why I found Lisbeth so fascinating. She sort of takes it for granted, that her freedom is expressed in that way. Why should she have to evaluate it in that way? I think that is something that I find really admirable and definitely like to encourage more in myself. That openness and that ability to allow yourself the freedom to explore everything that is out there and everything life has to offer.

**Our current political climate, where we have an administration attacking people who are not heterosexual males, seems like a good time for Lisbeth to resurface.**

I just think that's crazy. The beauty of humanity is that we're diverse and interesting and all different shapes, sizes, colors – everything. (Diversity) should just be applauded and accepted and worshiped and adored.

**Besides Helen and Lisbeth, have you played other LGBTQ roles?**

I always thought my character Sawyer Valentine in "Unsane" was bisexual. I just did. I felt she was a very modern, young woman, and I think there's an openness with this generation that definitely wasn't around when I was younger. A kind of openness and understanding about sexuality and how it can be open in that way, that didn't really exist when I was in school, so I think Sawyer probably grew up slightly with a bit more of that mentality.

**For "Night Watch," you said your kissing scenes with your female co-stars, Anna Maxwell Martin and Anna Wilson-Jones, were preferable to**

**kissing scenes you've had with male actors.**

(Laughs) Yes...

**All these years later, is that still true even after co-starring alongside Ryan Gosling?**

(Laughs boisterously) I mean, male or female, I've been very, very lucky in who I've had love affairs with onscreen. Just, when you're with another woman there's an ease and an understanding and a respect and an openness that is just a natural way of being. It's a dynamic that happens; it's just easier to be more open when you're with a woman, in general, for me. So it's much easier to have those conversations of going, "Oh god, this is really weird, sorry about that." "Did I do anything weird with my mouth in that kiss? I'm really sorry." You can be more honest about it, I suppose. And that's not a gender thing. I've definitely done scenes with male actors where it's not felt open but it's felt that you can laugh about it and be silly about it and take it for what it is – which is pretty silly. It's a pretty odd, strange thing to do, to kiss someone in front of 250 people.

**In "Spider's Web," you wake up in bed next to Sofia, played by trans model and actress Andreja Pejic. Sex isn't depicted but suggested. What kind of talk was there regarding how intimate Lisbeth should be onscreen with other women in the film?**

There was a sex scene originally in the beginning of the movie.

**The very beginning, right out of the gate.**

Yeah, exactly. And that's why I questioned it. I said, "What is the purpose of this? What are you trying to tell the audience with this sex scene? Are you trying to say that she's a pansexual woman and here she is having sex with a woman and this is an important part of her character?" And I said, "Or is it titillation?"

**Right, to indulge the male gaze.**

Exactly. Lesbian relationships in movies are often used not as truthful depictions of two women making love with one another; they're often (done) as a way of titillating the male and appealing to men. And so I asked pretty openly and bluntly (laughs): "How would you shoot it? Why is it necessary here? What are you trying to say?" "If we do do this, it's gonna be as raw and honest and truthful to the actual experience. I'm not doing anything that's gonna be because it looks cool; it has to be really real."

And I think when we had that conversation it sort of made (Fede) realize (the) purpose of this. You can communicate the relationship that two people have to one another without having to have a sex scene. I think that as an audience member I don't particularly enjoy watching sex scenes. Isn't like I watch them and go, "Oh, great!" I just think, "Oh god, let

See **Claire Foy**, continued on p. 16

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## H.E.R. to Perform at Royal Oak Music Theatre Dec. 3

BY BTL STAFF

Gabi Wilson, better known by fans as H.E.R., has been making music since 2014, but in her short career already earned a spot on iTunes' Best of 2016 R&B/Soul Albums list. Additionally, she has earned hundreds of millions of online streams of popular songs like "Best Par," "Focus" and "This Way." Now, she'll be heading to the Royal Oak Music Theatre on Monday, Dec. 3.

When asked what the acronym behind her stage means, H.E.R. said that it



stands for Having Everything Revealed. Ironically, the singer started her career in near total anonymity. When asked about this decision in an LA Times piece,

H.E.R.'s manager Jeff Robinson said it was a conscious decision.

"Coming out in this kind of way has made her freer so that she can just concentrate on making music, and having people judge the music for what it is," he said. "She wanted to touch people without dealing with anything else."

*Doors open for the show at 7 p.m. She will be performing with artists Bri Steves, and Tone Stith. Find out more information on the show and ticket prices at [royaloakmusictheatre.com](http://royaloakmusictheatre.com).*

## Royal Oak Fundraiser for Helping Hands of Wayne County Dec. 4

BY BTL STAFF

On Tuesday, Dec. 4, guests at the Michigan By the Bottle Tasting Room in Royal Oak are welcomed to help the cause of Helping Hands of Wayne County by purchasing a ticket valued at \$40. The proceeds will go to aiding children under the court's jurisdiction.

"We help children pursue recreational opportunities, academic pursuits, music lessons, sports and other activities

by sponsoring and partnering with providers," say Helping Hands officials. "Many children under the court's jurisdiction do not have the means nor access to these activities."

Originally founded by attorneys and lawyer/guardian ad Litem — those who represent children who cannot represent themselves legally — the organization's mission is to "educate, support and enrich youth development to ensure the success of children and families under

court jurisdiction." The organization is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that operates through community support.

*To find out more information about Helping Hands of Wayne County, reach out via phone at 313-284-6345 or email [info@helpinghandsofwaynecounty.org](mailto:info@helpinghandsofwaynecounty.org). More information about this event and to reserve tickets can be found online at [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com).*

## Brunch With Santa at Royal Oak's Pronto!

BY BTL STAFF

Kids eager to see Santa Claus to ask for gifts can now prepare for brunch with him, too. Presented by Pronto! in Royal Oak on Saturday, Dec. 1.

"Join us for Brunch with Santa at Pronto! Restaurant in downtown Royal Oak," said event organizers. "Complete brunch buffet including our famous 'Stuffed French Toast!' Adults are \$15.99 and kids (8 and under) are \$6.99. All guests will receive a \$5 Pronto! Gift Card to come back and visit us again!"

Attendees are encouraged to arrive right at 10:45 a.m. to account for Santa's busy schedule around the holiday. All ages are welcome to attend this holiday-inspired event.

*Pronto! is located at 608 S. Washington, Royal Oak. Find more information about the event online at [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com).*



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### ► Claire Foy

Continued from p. 15

it be over?"

**And watching it in a theater with 300 other people...**

Yeah, exactly. I think passion is such an important part of a love drama. I think it needs to be there. People have sex, therefore sex scenes need to be portrayed in films. But I do think it needs to be portrayed for a reason. There has to be a dynamic that's interesting, and it needs to be not just at the opening of a film — two women having sex with each other for no real purpose, just to say, "Oh, by the way, she has relationships with men and women!" And so Fede was like, "I've thought about it and I think, actually, we don't need it. I think it sends the wrong message."

**When you read that there would be a suitcase of dildos in the movie, what went through your mind?**

I thought it was brilliant. It's proper Lisbeth. Not only is she doing some sort of espionage but she also will enjoy the humor of knowing that all those kind of really macho airport security guys will have to search a case of dildos.



**So, does this film hold the record for the most dildos in a Claire Foy movie?**

Oh, I think so. There's definitely room for a few more, though!

**Claire, that suitcase looked packed, though.**

Come on, we could get a couple more in there. (Laughs)

*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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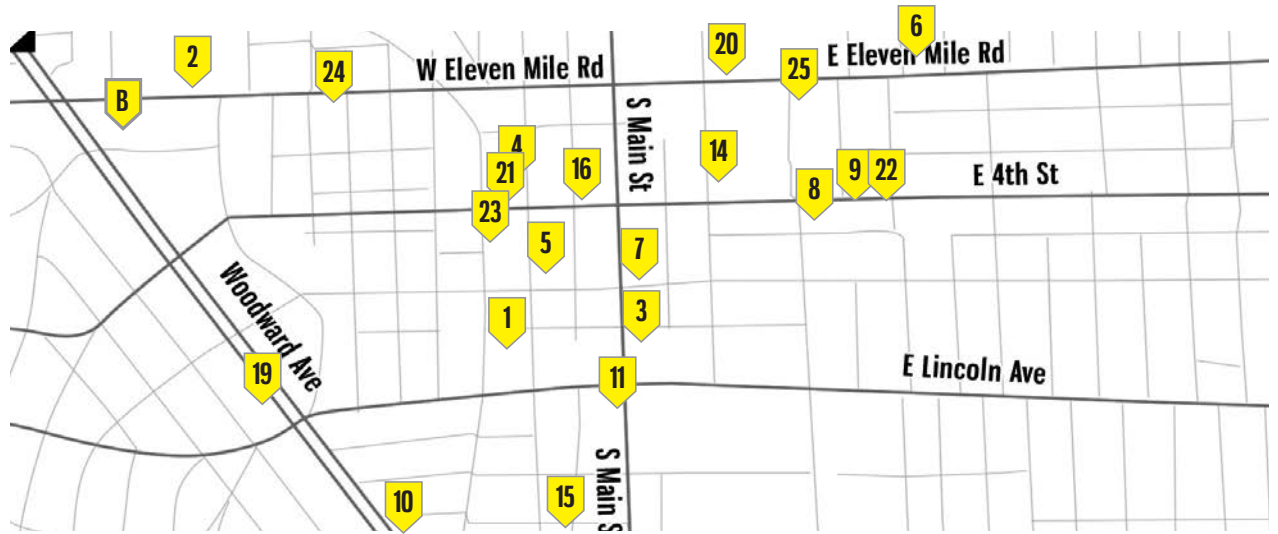
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# Angel Vivaldi is Reintroducing Instrumental Guitar

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

Whether escorting fans on a seasonal tour of the universe, providing a musical accompaniment to some of the brain's most key neurotransmitters or removing song titles from an EP altogether, Angel Vivaldi's artistic vision has consistently set his projects apart from other heavy hitters in instrumental guitar music. However, his latest project is a means to bring both fans and musicians closer together. It's called The Guitar Collective 2018 tour.

Now in its second year, it showcases the talents of not only Vivaldi but other musicians who are paving the way in the genre with their own unique styles. Touring with Vivaldi will be guitarist Nita Strauss, of Alice Cooper fame, and Jacky Vincent, formerly in Falling In Reverse. The tour will head to Ferndale's own Loving Touch on Sunday, Nov. 25.

In advance of his Michigan appearance, BTL spoke with Vivaldi about being a trailblazer in instrumental guitar, his sources of inspiration and what it's like being openly gay in the the world of heavy music.

**You've said the Guitar Collective tour is a way for people to see stand-out acts in the heavy instrumental guitar world. What pulled you to start this project?**

There's a big wave of more modern-day guitar players that I really wanted to give an opportunity and I wanted to give their audience an opportunity to see them live — as opposed to them just sticking to watching them at home on their phones and YouTube. It's a different dynamic, a different energy. This is technically the second year. There were three events. The first event was a NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants) in 2017. It was just the NAMM Convention in Anaheim and it was a showcase there, and then the second year it became a tour.

**For people who might not be familiar with your music, how do you go about introducing people to heavy instrumental music and its different types?**

[I tell people to] think about it as just replacing the voice, not necessarily the genre. There's still melody there. I think that's the beauty with instrumental: whether to say a little bit or to say a lot. The melody is there but there's no lyrics telling someone how to feel about a song. My song "Serotonin" could be about, God forbid, your dog dying or you losing someone despite it being very uplifting. There's no lyric dictating how someone should feel about a song, which I think is a very beautiful thing.

**Speaking of "Serotonin," that was a track off of your latest album "Synapse." You perform that song with Nita Strauss. Was that the first time the two of you had collaborated creatively?**

Yeah. We've been friends for a number of years, however it was the first time I felt it was a really good platform for her to showcase what she does best. And with "Synapse" being a big concept record and obviously we wrote the song title, "Serotonin," the whole premise behind it is a very uplifting, positive kind of playful dynamic. That's what serotonin is about; it's the confidence molecule. So, her having played with Alice Cooper for so long and having that very over-the-top performance and very playful energy, there's no doubt she was the perfect person to be a guest on one of the songs.

**Although you've worked with bands and other musicians before, much of your work is solo projects. Now that you're touring together along with Jacky Vincent, have you learned new approaches to solo guitar or found yourself reevaluating your own style?**

It feels that the most I've learned about it is how to relate to people. The way I look at it is my yellow and someone's blue can make a beautiful green. But, then there's other people and their blue is a little bit off and we make a really crap green, you know? You have to really be honest and aware enough to know how to shift your color a little bit to complement theirs to get the big picture done. I think that's the biggest thing people have taught me in this industry.

**How do you go about writing songs? Much of your work revolves around a**

**single topic it seems.**

I'm a very conceptual writer. So, depending on the theme that I'm writing, it's going to greatly influence the dynamics. So, for instance, "Synapse" is about brain chemicals and neurotransmitters. I'm very moved by interior design and if I wasn't a musician I would have been an interior designer, but what I did was I took my studio, painted it red and wrote "Adrenaline." Then I painted it blue, painted it black and so on for each song. I did that and that really influenced how I wrote it.

**Being an openly gay musician who performs heavy music runs against many stereotypes both within the LGBTQ community and in music. Have you faced any challenges since coming out?**

I would say that you're always going to have issues to some degree, but for the most part it's been incredibly supportive and positive. Starting in 2003, I didn't really come out publicly until maybe 2013. Eventually, when I did come out the way I did, a lot of people found it incredibly inspirational. I had fans messaging me up to a week after telling me that they actually came out to their families because of that. Because it is atypical for someone who listens to heavy music to be gay or be comfortable with being gay. The thing with rap, too, is that there's this sense of machismo and hypermasculinity that captivates that whole world. There's definitely a stigma there, but we're all out there.

**Since you came out five years ago, has it influenced your music or your performances at all?**

It really did, honestly. For instance, on this coming out on tour, I'm coming out to "Work B\*\*tch" by Britney Spears. I probably wouldn't have thought to do that if I wasn't an openly gay man. There's a certain tongue-in-cheek playfulness in establishing who I am. I spread myself very thin in my career, and I do everything myself. I'm not on a label, I don't have a manager or anything like that, so taking that into consideration it's too much work to not be myself. It's incredibly healthy for artists to do that for their own wellbeing and I think it's healthy for people to see that because it exists.

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# Happenings



## 'Elf The Musical' at Foxx Theatre through Nov. 25

"Elf" follows the story of Buddy, a young human child who accidentally ends up in Santa's bag of gifts and finds himself in the North pole. Eventually discovered, he is raised by elves but comes to realize that he is human. He then sets off on a journey to discover his true identity and home. Tickets start at \$39 and more information can be found online at [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com).

## OUTINGS

### Thursday, November 22

**Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Farmington Hills – Oakland County** 7 p.m. Come into the parking lot and go left down the A an event every month that begins at 7 p.m. on day Second of the month, repeating indefinite. Oakland United Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road, Farmington. 248-626-3620. [oaklandumc.org](http://oaklandumc.org). [standwithtrans.org](http://standwithtrans.org).

**Toastmasters International SpeakOUT! LGBTQ Meeting** 7 p.m. Professional & personal communication skills development. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867. [lawrencemoebbs@gmail.com](mailto:lawrencemoebbs@gmail.com). [speakout.toastmastersclubs.org](http://speakout.toastmastersclubs.org).

### Saturday, November 24

**A Drag Queen Christmas 2018 – The Naughty Tour at Devos Hall, Grand Rapids** 8 p.m. Presented by Murray & Peter from "RuPauls Drag Race" Devos Hall, 245 Monroe NW, Grand Rapids. [help@goldstar.com](mailto:help@goldstar.com) [help@goldstar.com](mailto:help@goldstar.com).

### Sunday, November 25

**MCC Detroit – 30th Anniversary World AIDS Day** 11:30 a.m. Join us for this special service as we commemorate those who have and continue to be impacted by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. After service there will be a screening of the important documentary "It's Not Over". MCC Detroit, 205 N. Main St., Clawson. 248-399-7741. [mccdetroit.org](http://mccdetroit.org).

**A Drag Queen Christmas 2018 – The Naughty Tour at the Fillmore Detroit** 8 p.m. Get ready for those fierce drag queens from TV, coming to your city, live

on stage this holiday season. For the third year in a row, A Drag Queen Christmas returns with magic and shenanigans. The Fillmore Detroit, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 800-745-3000. [help@goldstar.com](mailto:help@goldstar.com).

### Tuesday, November 27

**Strand with Trans Support Groups – Ann Arbor – Washtenaw** 6:30 p.m. Parent Support Group Facilitator – Yma Johnson, [ymaj1968@gmail.com](mailto:ymaj1968@gmail.com) or 734-780-4092. Trans Youth Support Group Facilitator – Joy Cavanaugh, LPC. Journey of Faith Christian Church, 1900 Manchester Road, Ann Arbor. [standwithtrans.org](http://standwithtrans.org).

### Wednesday, November 28

**MCC Detroit – GenderSpark Monthly Program** 7 p.m. Founded by a group of trans-identified folks and their loved ones. The groups message is essentially that you don't have to choose between your identity and your spirituality. MCC Detroit, 205 N. Main St., Clawson. 248-399-7741. [mccdetroit.org](http://mccdetroit.org).

### Saturday, December 1

**MCC Detroit – Bavarian Inn, Frankenmuth Trip** 11:30 a.m. Join the fun of Frankenmuth at the holidays! The group will gather to share lunch at the Bavarian Inn at 11:30am. After lunch, it will be time to wander and enjoy the holiday spirit and Bavarian Inn Lodge, 1 Covered Bridge Lane, Frankenmuth. 989-652-7000. [bavarianinn.com](http://bavarianinn.com).

### Sunday, December 2

**Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Adrian-Lenawee County** 6:30 p.m. For parents of transgender kids. Contact facilitator Socorro Sevilla, MSW: [socorro@hilltopcounseling.org](mailto:socorro@hilltopcounseling.org). Hilltop Counseling,

115 W. Maumee St., Adrian. 313-909-5408 [standwithtrans.org](http://standwithtrans.org). [hilltopcounseling.org](http://hilltopcounseling.org).

### Tuesday, December 4

**Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Lake Orion / Oakland County** 7 p.m. 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. [stmarysinthehills.org](mailto:stmarysinthehills.org). [standwithtrans.org](http://standwithtrans.org).

### Wednesday, December 5

**DIVINELY QUEER Book Launch** 7 p.m. Join Affirmations and author Jennifer Miracle-Best for a reading, Q&A, and book signing. Continue the celebration after at Rosie O'Grady's Ferndale for Wednesday PRIDE Night. 10 percent of proceeds go to Affirmations. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105.

### Thursday, December 6

**Pride Night at Thunderbowl!** 7 p.m. Meet & Greet First Thursday of every month, unlimited bowling, shoe rental, private room, private bar area, drink specials, billiard room, 250 foot video wall. Come as you are! Thunderbowl Arena, 4200 Allen Road, Allen Park. 313-928-4688 [thunderbowl.org](http://thunderbowl.org).

### Saturday, December 8

**The Detroit Prohibition Bus Tour** 10 a.m. Join us for four hours of fascinating Prohibition history in Detroit. Goody bag and snacks included in price. Bus Tour, 1400 Wilkins, Detroit. [marion@magicalmichigantours.com](mailto:marion@magicalmichigantours.com).

### Monday, December 10

**Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Macomb County** 6:30 p.m. Macomb Teen/Youth Support Group. Dakota High School,

21051 21 Mile Road, Macomb. 586-723-2700. [chippewavalley.schools.org](http://chippewavalley.schools.org).

### Wednesday, December 12

**Stand with Trans Youth Support Group – Flint – Genesee** 6:30 p.m. Facilitator Sara Griffin, MA, LPC is a psychotherapist and a parent of a transgender son, [eiregriff@aol.com](mailto:eiregriff@aol.com). Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Flint, 2474 S. Ballenger Hwy, Flint. 810-232-4023 [uuf Flint.org](mailto:uuf Flint.org). [standwithtrans.org](http://standwithtrans.org).

### Thursday, December 13

**Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce Merge & Mixer** 6:30 p.m. Michigan Employee Resource Groups for Equality (MERGE) Monthly Networking Event. Soho, 205 W. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-542-7646 [info@detroitlgbtchamber.com](mailto:info@detroitlgbtchamber.com). [ferndalesoho.com](http://ferndalesoho.com). [detroitlgbtchamber.com](http://detroitlgbtchamber.com).

### Friday, December 14

**Home for the Holiday 16: Songwriter Showcase and Charity Drive** 8 p.m. The 16th annual showcase raises donations for goods for the homeless population in Detroit. 7 singer-songwriters will perform for the cause. PJs Lagerhouse, 1254 Michigan Ave., Detroit. 313-961-4668.

### Saturday, December 22

**MCC Detroit – Christmas Elves Celebration!** 1 p.m. We will be gathering with the families that we have adopted for Christmas to give them their gifts and share some holiday spirit. There will be MCC Detroit, 205 N. Main St., Clawson. 248-399-7741. [mccdetroit.org](http://mccdetroit.org).

### Monday, December 24

**MCC Detroit – Candlelight Christmas Eve Service** 7 p.m. Join us for our annual candlelight Christmas Eve service as we are reflective of the greatest gift of all and how we can be a blessing to others in the world. MCC Detroit, 205 N. Main St., Clawson. 248-399-7741. [mccdetroit.org](http://mccdetroit.org).

## Editor's Pick

### Detroit Urban Craft Fair

Held at The Masonic in Detroit, the Detroit Urban Craft Fair is a three-day alternative fair that has been held annually for 13 years. This year's fair will run from Friday, Nov. 30 through Sunday, Dec. 2 and will feature more than 100 handmade crafters and indie artists. Shoppers are encouraged to interact with vendors and get to know Michigan's crafting scene. Admission is \$10 on Friday, and \$1 on Saturday and Sunday. Children 12 and under are free. Find out more at [detroiturbancraftfair.com](http://detroiturbancraftfair.com).



# Editor's Pick

## 'The Nutcracker' at Detroit Opera House

From Nov. 24 through 25, the Michigan Opera Theatre will open its holiday season with the return of BalletMet's "The Nutcracker." The production will feature a local dancer in the company this year, Shelby Township native Sophie Miklosovic. Additionally, the production will feature a toy drive with Detroit's Coalition on Temporary Shelter. Find out more about this holiday classic performance online at michiganopera.org. Tickets range in price from \$29 to \$110.



## MUSIC & MORE

**Jazz & Soul Singer Sky Covington & Club Crescendo Live Every Thursday Night at Northern Lights Lounge** Nov. 22, 9 p.m. Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore, Detroit. 248-445-1277. northernlightslounge.com.

**New 'Holiday Belles' House Tour at Ford House** November 23. With replica holiday décor and new stories, this new tour gives you a glimpse into the society scene of the 1960s. Edsel & Eleanor Ford House, 1100 Lake Shore Road, Grosse Pointe Shores. 313-884-4222. info@fordhouse.org. holidaybelles.fordhouse.org.

**DSO Presents The Vienna Boys Choir!** November 25, 7 p.m. The group of child musicians has been delighting music lovers across the globe for six centuries with their purity of tone, distinctive charm and popular repertoire. Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-576-5111. dso.org.

**"Out of the Mouth of Jazz", The Dinah Washington, Sarah Vaughn and Billie Holiday Revue** November 25, 7 p.m. Unlimited Sky Production Proudly Presents "Out of the Mouth of Jazz." Sky Tangent Gallery, 715 East Milwaukee Ave., Detroit. 248-445-1277. nicolefreemanmanagement@gmail.com.

**An Introduction To Cultivating Mindfulness to Support Recovery** Nov. 27, 7:30 p.m. Free, open to all. St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Education Center Auditorium, 5305 Elliott Drive, Ypsilanti. 734-485-8725. dawnfarm.org.

**Bugs Bunny at the Symphony II** November 30, 10:45 a.m. Bugs Bunny at the Symphony II celebrates the world's most beloved Looney Tunes with original scores played LIVE by the DSO. Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-576-5111. dso.org dso.org

**Michigan Philharmonic Presents 'In a Winter Garden'** Nov. 30, 8 p.m. 'In a Winter Garden' brings together orchestra, chorus and soloists sharing a musical reflection on Advent. Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, 47650 North Territorial Road, Plymouth. 734-453-0326. michix.com.

**Friends of the Huntington Woods Library Used Book Sale** Dec. 1, 10 a.m. Year end sale, bargains abound! All proceeds fund library programs and Huntington Woods Library, 26415 Scotia, Huntington Woods. 248-543-9720. greengirl22@gmail.com. huntingtonwoods.libcal.com.

**Fort Street Chorale presents Handel's Messiah** December 1, 3 p.m. The Fort Street Chorale and Chamber Orchestra present their 40th annual performances of Handel's Messiah. Presbyterian Church, 631 W. Fort St., Detroit. 313-961-4533 secretary@fortstreet.org secretary@

fortstreet.org.

**32nd Annual Winter Concert – Ann Arbor Youth Chorale** Dec. 1, 4 p.m. 32nd Annual Winter Concert! Bethlehem United Church of Christ, 423 S Fourth Ave, Ann Arbor. 734-996-4404. aaycadmin@annarboryouthchorale.org.

**Theatre and Dance at Wayne Presents 'Noel Night – Dance'** Dec. 1, 6 p.m. Company One Dance performs this one-day only concert for the 46th annual Noel Night in Midtown Detroit. Allesee Dance Theatre, 4841 Cass Ave., 3rd Floor, Detroit. wsushows.com.

**Detroit Opera House Presents 'Too Hot to Handel'** Dec. 1, 7:30 p.m. This Detroit rendition of Handel's 'Messiah' is a unique jazz infused version of the holiday classic. Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., 313-237-SING. michiganopera.org.

**Saline Antiques Market** December 2, 9 a.m. Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds, 5055 Ann Arbor-Saline Road, Ann Arbor. 734-761-2796. salinemarket@gmail.com. foodgatherers.org.

**AEG Presents 'Hip Hop Nutcracker'** Dec. 6, 6:30 p.m. Detroit Masonic Temple, 3011 W. Grand Blvd, #f100, Detroit. 800-854-2196. templedetroit.com.

**Beethoven's Fifth** December 6, 7:30 p.m. No other musical statement can match its raw power and bracing energy. Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-576-5111. dso.org.

**AEG Presents The Piano Guys at the Fox Theatre** December 7, 6:30 p.m. Hailing from Utah, ThePianoGuys became an Internet sensation by way of their immensely successful series of strikingly original self-made music videos. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-471-6611. aegpresents.com.

**Theatre and Dance at Wayne Presents 'December Dance Concert'** December 7, 7:30 p.m. Join us at the Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Detroit for these two remarkable performances. Music Hall, 350 Madison St., Detroit. 313-887-8501. musichall.org. wsushows.com.

**A Charlie Brown Christmas with Cyrus Chestnut & Friends** December 7, 8 p.m. Virtuoso and playful, pianist Cyrus Chestnut infuses these classic charts with his soulful sound. Hear all your favorites Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-576-5111. dso.org.

**The Detroit Prohibition Bus Tour** December 8, 10 a.m. Join us for four hours of fascinating Prohibition history in Detroit! Bus Tour, 1400 Wilkins, Detroit. marion@magicalmichigantours.com.

**Foster Care and Adoption Orientation** December 12, 6 p.m. Join us for an orientation to discuss the need, process & how you can become a parent for a child in need! Orchards Children's Services, 24901 Northwestern Hwy., Suite

601, Southfield. 248-258-0440. smarks@orchards.org. orchards.org.

**Holiday Pops with the Phil** December 13, 6 p.m. Get into the spirit of the season with the Michigan Phil performing all your holiday favorites along with a beautiful Mozart horn concerto. The Penn Theatre, 760 Penniman Ave., Plymouth. 734-453-0870. michiganphil.org.

**Navigating Grace: The Power of Connection and Transformation** Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m. Best-selling author and clinician Jeff Jay will describe personal connection. St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Education Center Auditorium, 5305 Elliott Drive, Ypsilanti. 734-485-8725. dawnfarm.org.

**AEG Presents 'Straight No Chaser' at the Fox Theatre** December 19, 7 p.m. Male a cappella group. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-471-6611. aegpresents.com.

**Home Alone with the DSO!** Dec. 19, 7:30 p.m. Enjoy one of the most beloved holiday films of all time projected on a giant screen accompanied by the Detroit Symphony live. John Hughes' charming Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-576-5111. dso.org.

## ART 'N' AROUND

**"See What Stacey Started" Benefit for MS Research** November 24, 12 p.m. Local artists and a myriad of eclectic performers will lend their talents to a very important cause this Thanksgiving weekend. Scribble Art Studio, 48137 Van Dyke Road, Shelby Township. 586-224-2400. scribbleart.com.

**MCC Detroit – Open Art Studio at The Art Experience, Inc.** November 24, 12:30 p.m. Join others as they go to the Art Experience on Woodward Avenue in Pontiac to spend some time to explore your creative side. The Art Experience, 175 S. Saginaw, Pontiac. 248-706-3304. theartexperience.org. mcdetroit.org.

**Lina Iris Viktor: Materia Prima** November 29, 5 p.m. Lina Iris Viktor is a British-Liberian conceptual artist whose work centers around the age-old practice of gilding with 24-karat gold to call into question the nature of time and being. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397. stamps.umich.edu.

**Holiday Show 2018 @ Epiphany Studios** November 30, 4 p.m. Watch glassblowing demonstrations, shop in our gallery for one-of-a-kind sculptures and unique handmade gifts. Epiphany studios, 770 Orchard Lake Road, Pontiac. 248-745-3786. epiphanyinfo@epiphanyglass.com.

**Yourist Studio Gallery 2018 Holiday Show and Sale** December 7, 5 p.m. Join us for exceptional ceramic art, good

company, delectable food and drink. Yourist Studio Gallery, 1133 Broadway, Ann Arbor. 734-662-4914. kay@youristpottery.com. youristpottery.com.

## THEATER

**She Never Fails: A Reading of a New LGBT Stage Play** November 27, 7 p.m. How can a trans woman find love in a city full of hate? Come watch the reading of this new stage play and join us for a mingling session afterwards. The performance will feature 3 Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105.

**Theatre and Dance at Wayne Presents 'A Christmas Carol'** November 30, 7 p.m. Join Ebenezer Scrooge on a ghostly adventure in Dickens' classic story. Bonstelle Theatre, 3424 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 313-577-2960. wsushows.com.

**War of the Worlds: The Panic Broadcast by Joe Landry** November 30, 7:30 p.m. The play celebrates the 80th anniversary of Orson Welles' 1938 radio adaptation that threw humanity into chaos when aliens made landfall on earth. The Marlene Boll Theatre, 1401 Broadway, Detroit. tasiopeg@udmercy.edu.

**THE ELVES AND THE SCHUMACHERS by Carla Miliarch and R. MacKenzie Lewis World Premiere** November 30, 7:30 p.m. Bring the whole family to laugh, boo, hiss, and sing in this over-the-top evening. Theatre NOVA, 410 W. Huron, Ann Arbor. 734-635-8450. A2TheatreNOVA@gmail.com. theatrenova.org.

**Monster Box Theatre Presents 'The Book of Liz', A Comedy** Nov. 30, 7:30 p.m. Event every week that begins at 7:30pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, repeating until Dec.15. 2529 Elizabeth Lake Road, Waterford. 248-787-1400 monsterboxtheatre.com

**Stagecrafters Presents Peter and the Starcatcher** is the fantastical adventure about how Peter Pan came to be. An event every week that begins at 8 pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, repeating until Dec. 9. 9 Scarlett Middle School, 3300 Lorraine St, Ann Arbor. 734-971-2228 https://a2ct.org

**A2CT JT Presents 'The Girl With The Golden Locks'** Dec. 7, 7:30 p.m. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre's An event every week that begins at 1 pm on Sunday and Saturday, repeating until Dec. 9. 9 Scarlett Middle School, 3300 Lorraine St, Ann Arbor. 734-971-2228 https://a2ct.org

**Theatre and Dance at Wayne Presents 'Vanya & Sonia & Masha & Spike'** Winner of the 2013 Tony Award for Best Play. Studio Theatre at the Hilberry, 4743 Cass Avenue, Detroit. theatredanceatwayne.com/ wsushows.com

**The Plays The Thing: 1-Act Full-Length Play Revision** Dec. 8, 1 p.m. This workshop will give attendees the opportunity to get feedback and revise existing script ideas. Local playwright Brian Cox will lead registrants through the process of development and revision. Studio Theatre, 322 W. Ann St., Ann Arbor. 734-971-2228 https://a2ct.org/classes-and-workshops

**Disney's Aladdin at the Detroit Opera House!** Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. It's an extraordinary theatrical event where one lamp and An event every week that begins at 7:30pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, repeating until Jan. 12, 2019 Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. 313-237-SING broadwayindetroit.com

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# Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

## Get ready for a Roy Cohn-ucopia

Did you miss the Roy Cohn lesson in queer history class? Do you still not know about the closeted, Trump-mentoring, McCarthyite lawyer who hated the LGBT community and himself? Well, soon you won't be able to blame media erasure for not knowing about one of the most dastardly homosexual villains of the 20th century, because Michael Sheen ("Masters of Sex") is about to star opposite Christine Baranski, Cush Jumbo and Rose Leslie, playing a character based on Cohn in the upcoming third season of the CBS All Access series "The Good Fight." Sheen will play a charismatic lawyer named Roland Blum whose wickedness and corruption provides plenty of resistance fodder for Baranski. Meanwhile, we already reported on the upcoming Matt Tyrnauer ("Scott and the Secret History of Hollywood") documentary "Where's My Roy Cohn?" (formerly titled "Don't Mess with Roy Cohn") But brace yourself for a second Cohn doc, this one still untitled, from Ivy Meeropol ("Heir to an Execution"). She's the granddaughter of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who were prosecuted by Cohn in the 1950s, and then executed. Word is that this one will focus intently on Cohn's private life, based on information from people who knew him, as well as on candid audiotapes of Cohn himself. Not to worry, none of this drops between now and the holidays to bum you out; it'll all be part of 2019's gift basket of deplorables instead.

## Todd Haynes and Mark Ruffalo go after DuPont

Three-time Academy Award nominee Mark Ruffalo ("Spotlight") will leave his Hulk responsibilities alone long enough to star in the latest movie from Todd Haynes. Socially conscious production company Participant Media will produce the film – once known as "Dry Run," though currently untitled – about corporate lawyer Robert Bilott, who shepherded an environmental lawsuit that turned his career upside down and, most importantly, exposed decades of chemical pollution on the part of DuPont. Ruffalo will co-produce the film, based on Nathaniel Rich's New York Times Magazine article, "The Lawyer Who Became DuPont's Worst Nightmare." It will be interesting to see what Haynes can do with this material, as his adaptations of other work always wind up bearing his auteurist stamp, and it's great to see one of Marvel's most beloved



Mark Ruffalo. Photo: Starfrenzy

superheroes take time out to remind audiences that the only real-life heroes are the people who stick out their necks and take on the Big Bad themselves.

## Daniel Kaluuya joins Lena Waithe's 'Queen & Slim'

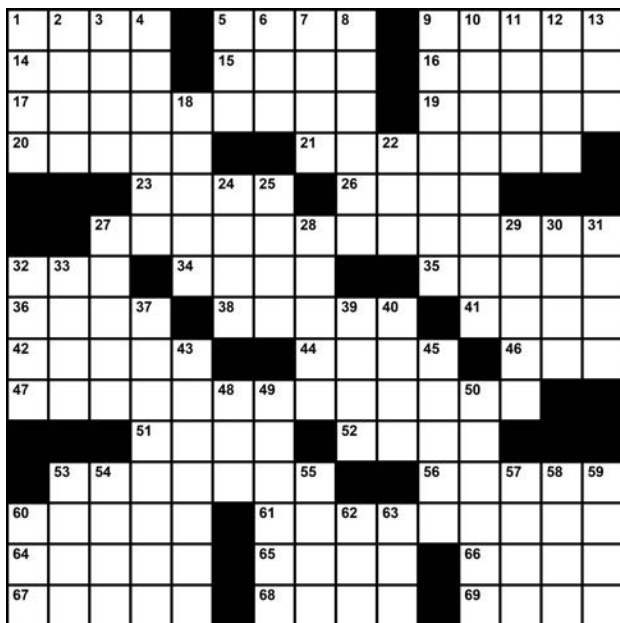
Powerhouse lesbian creator Lena Waithe has a new project going before the cameras. Called "Queen & Slim," it's the story of a black couple on a first date that goes horribly wrong, forcing them into a series of consequences they never anticipated. Starring Daniel Kaluuya (Get Out) and up-and-comer Jodie Turner-Smith (soon to be seen as Grace Jones in the upcoming Marvin Gaye biopic, "Sexual Healing") have signed on, while helming duties will fall to acclaimed music video director Melina Matsoukas. It'll be her first feature film, but she's already directed cinematic stunners like Beyoncé's "Formation" video as well as dozens of clips for artists like Rihanna, Jennifer Lopez, Whitney Houston, Kylie Minogue, and Katy Perry. And the Waithe connection? She directed the Emmy-winning "Thanksgiving" episode of "Master of None." In other words, bring on this encore collaboration right now.

## Will Ferrell, Gus Van Sant crown 'Prince of Fashion'

Gus Van Sant, fresh off the critically well-received biopic, "Don't Worry He Won't Get Far on Foot," is about to bring another real-life subject to the screen: the 13-year-old son of Pulitzer Prize-winning author Michael Chabon ("The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay"). Chabon wrote a 2016 piece for GQ titled "My Son, The Prince of Fashion" in which he detailed a trip to Paris' Men's Fashion Week with his young son, a devoted design fan. The heartwarming father-son bonding story went viral, especially among queer readers, and now Will Ferrell has signed on to play Chabon's role in the film version. Currently titled "Prince of Fashion," we're hoping it turns out to be the kind of film befuddled dads in need of a map for raising their own fashion-loving boys turn to for advice. Then we hope they buy plane tickets to Paris for that boy. Trust us, we guarantee that kid has already been through a lot and deserves a break.

Romeo San Vicente knows more queens of fashion than princes.





- 38 Leather community, e.g.  
 41 Former CBS anchor Roger  
 42 Take the top off  
 44 Mauresmo's do-overs  
 46 Dorm VIPs  
 47 Shrimp served in a flour shell?  
 51 Lawn party rental  
 52 "Now and \_\_\_"  
 53 More like a Susan Feniger recipe  
 56 Part of a Buddhist title  
 60 Orange beverage in ads by Anita that was boycotted by the gay community  
 61 Devout lawyer that worked for homophobe Trump?  
 64 Song from Sondheim's "Passion"  
 65 "Spamalot" writer Eric  
 66 Small dot of land  
 67 Occasional cross-dresser Milton  
 68 Monika Tret's refusal  
 69 Nair rival
- 12 Where director yell "Cut!"  
 13 9-digit ID org.  
 18 Princess with fins  
 22 Canadian prov.  
 24 James VI, e.g.  
 25 Norse bolt maker  
 27 Cukor's "What \_\_\_ Hollywood"  
 28 Not straight  
 29 Batmobile maneuver  
 30 Common mixer  
 31 Targets of men who make passes  
 32 Finishing stroke  
 33 Prefix with science  
 37 Type of error  
 39 Ginsberg's kind of poet  
 40 Cut glass  
 43 Come before someone else comes  
 45 Like a nocturnal emission?  
 48 Prefix that may have sex  
 49 Pinch-hit  
 50 "I have a headache tonight..." med  
 53 Maupin's "\_\_\_ of You"  
 54 Tying-up place  
 55 Sally in space  
 57 Give the slip to  
 58 Ready and willing partner  
 59 "Yeah, sure"  
 60 Triangular sail  
 62 Larry Kramer, for one  
 63 Number of gay men under a centurion?

### Down

- 1 Had body fluid running down the face  
 2 Great Lakes city  
 3 Sherman Hemsley religious sitcom  
 4 Seaport of Pasolini's land  
 5 JFK's branch  
 6 Stashed away  
 7 Jackie's designer  
 8 "The Rocky \_\_\_ Picture Show"  
 9 Galindo and Mattis  
 10 Uncle Henry's wife  
 11 Prefix that means "queer"

### Just Desserts

#### Across

- 1 Get off the breast  
 5 Ejaculation of concern  
 9 Travels with one's first mate  
 14 "At Wit's End" author Bombeck  
 15 Farm erection  
 16 High marks  
 17 Tempt with desserts?  
 19 Bryant, who was publicly got a

dessert in the face in 1977

- 20 Peter Pears, for one  
 21 Holes that spelunkers enter  
 23 Santa's got a long one  
 26 "Tell me \_\_\_ haven't heard!"  
 27 Color of a lime on a dessert?  
 32 Nero's heart  
 34 Booty  
 35 Determined to  
 36 Cut

### QPuzzle

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For more information about PrEP and prevention services please contact our Lead Prevention Specialist Keith Hughes at [khughes@miunified.org](mailto:khughes@miunified.org)

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Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a way to help prevent HIV by taking a pill every day. PrEP must be taken every day to be most effective.

- ✓ HIV Testing
- ✓ PrEP Assessment
- ✓ Insurance & Payment Guidance.
- ✓ PrEP Education



When taken consistently, PrEP has been shown to reduce the risk of HIV infection in people who are at high risk by more than 90%.

Your risk of getting HIV from sex can be even lower if you combine PrEP with condoms and other prevention methods.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



# MERGE and LGBT Regional Chamber of Commerce Collaborate to Aid LGBTQ Organizations

BY BTL STAFF

This month, through a collaboration between the Michigan Employee Resource Group for Equality or MERGE and the Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce, LGBTQ organizations across Metro Detroit were given the opportunity to connect one-on-one with business leaders in the area. The two groups met for a collaborative business dinner in downtown Detroit. Present were representatives from leaders of prominent LGBTQ institutions from across the region like LGBT Detroit and Motor City Pride, along with representatives from businesses in the area. In attendance were Beth Correa, senior vice president and market manager at Flagstar Bank; Camila Gatón, senior associate at KPMG; Jodi Weatherly, vice president at PNC Bank; Kevin Pfau, CI expert at DTE Energy; Michael Mitro, vice president at The Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan; Michael Kaser P&L training lead at General Motors and others.

Employee resource groups like MERGE allow for large, many of them Fortune 500, companies to connect with minorities like the LGBTQ community face-to-face and provide them with a means to amplify their voices within large organizations. The close-up look also allows companies with the means to provide philanthropic aid the opportunity to do so.

"I dedicated my life to social justice and making sure that no one experiences trauma as we did when we were young," said LGBT Detroit Executive Director Curtis Lipscomb referencing the 1980s AIDS epidemic. "What LGBT Detroit does is we're an education and advocacy organization. If you're not familiar, we create spaces where you can get information to find places to get great help and advocate on issues. Young adults and teenagers come in to get information and resources for prevalent issues like sexual assault, cancer care and leadership. Also, Hotter Than July is our big project and the world's second oldest black gay pride located right here in Detroit and I invite you to come and see who we serve."

Also in attendance was Sean Cowie, who is the beverage director for Motor City Pride. He spoke of the annual event's reach — last year estimated to have exceeded 40,000 attendees — but also of the need for community help to maintain the weekend-long celebration.

"Next year we're going to be granting \$20,000 to other nonprofit LGBTQ organizations," he said. "We always want to make it bigger and make things better and we can't do what we do without all of you."

Jan Stevenson is the co-publisher of Between The Lines and the vice president of the Detroit Chamber. She said that the benefit of events like these can be a great vehicle for making not only a more inclusive, informed business community, but aiding great causes in the Metro area.

"The corporate community is leading the way on LGBTQ equality, and is way ahead of our political leaders on our issues," Stevenson said. "By networking with the decision makers within these large corporations and employers, LGBTQ community leaders provide insight and data about our local community, it's projects, needs, successes and challenges. This opens the channels of communication and support between these two impactful groups of leaders."

To find out more about the Chamber and its many services, reach out to [detroitlgbtchamber.com](http://detroitlgbtchamber.com).

Photo top left: Corporate leaders, LGBTQ organizational leaders and board members from the Detroit Regional LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce gathered at Bolero restaurant in Detroit to network and build coalitions for future support.

## Please join us in celebrating the 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF WORLD AIDS DAY

*a special commemoration event*

honoring all that are living with and/or affected by HIV/AIDS, remembering how far we've come and looking ahead to an AIDS-free generation.

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AIDS DAY  
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12-1-2018  
GETTING TO ZERO**

Saturday  
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6:00 PM - 10:00 PM

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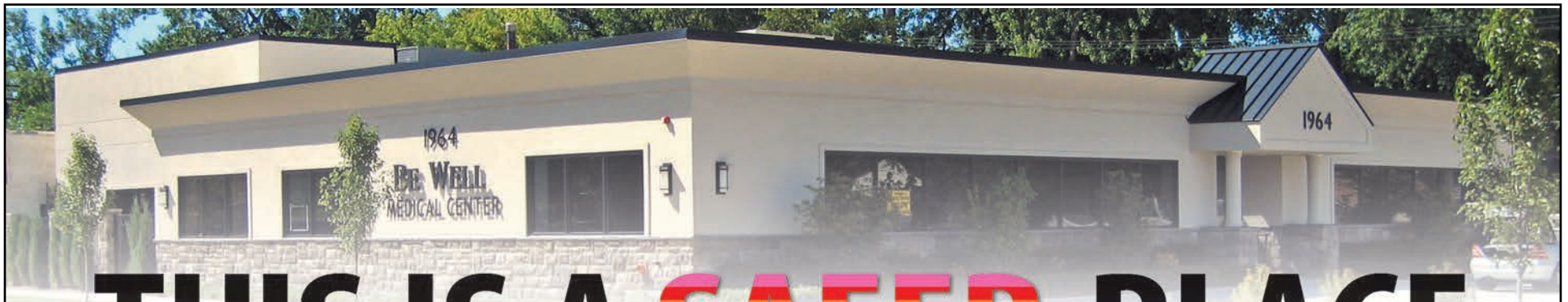
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1/2 oz orange liqueur

1/2 oz lemon juice

1 lemon slice

star anise

Add all ingredients to a shaker with ice.  
Shake and strain into a chilled copper martini glass.  
Garnish with star anise for an extra sparkle.

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