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## LGBT Detroit Introduces The Hotter Than July Retrospective

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## Ruth Ellis Center Faces COVID-19:

An Organization That's Used to Finding 'Workarounds' Adjusts

P. 4





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20222 Farmington Rd., Livonia, Michigan 48152r  
Phone 734.293.7200

**PUBLISHERS**

Susan Horowitz & Jan Stevenson

**EDITORIAL**

**Editor in Chief**

Susan Horowitz, 734.293.7200 x 102  
susanhorowitz@pridesource.com

**Entertainment Editor**

Chris Azzopardi, 734.293.7200 x 106  
chrisazzopardi@pridesource.com

**News & Feature Editor**

Eve Kucharski, 734.293.7200 x 105  
eve@pridesource.com

**News & Feature Writers**

Michelle Brown, Ellen Knoppow, Jason A. Michael,  
Drew Howard, Jonathan Thurston

**CREATIVE**

**Webmaster & MIS Director**

Kevin Bryant, kevinbryant@pridesource.com

**Columnists**

Charles Alexander, Michelle E. Brown,  
Mikey Rox, D'Anne Witkowski,  
Gwendolyn Ann Smith, Dana Rudolph

**Cartoonists**

Paul Berg

**Contributing Photographers**

Andrew Potter, Andrew Cohen, Roxanne Frith, Tih Penfil

**ADVERTISING & SALES**

**Director of Sales**

Jan Stevenson, 734.293.7200 x 101  
jan@pridesource.com

**Sales Representatives**

Ann Cox, 734.293.7200 x 103  
anncox@pridesource.com

**National Advertising Representative**

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Jessie Fullenkamp stocking Ruth's Pantry.

## Ruth Ellis Center Faces COVID-19: An Organization That's Used to Finding 'Workarounds' Adjusts

BY ELLEN SHANNA KNOPPOW

### Creative Problem-Solving

If there's one thing the Ruth Ellis Center and the youth it serves are known for, it's the ability to adapt and problem-solve when faced with challenges. And as the community navigates a world hard-hit by COVID-19, the dedicated staff of Ruth Ellis are working together to ensure that young people have access to their service now, just as they had prior to the pandemic.

"The young people are first and foremost our number one priority," said REC Director of Development and Advancement Mark Erwin-McCormick.

Erwin-McCormick spoke with Between The Lines about the adjustments he and the REC staff have had to make following the stay-at-home order issued by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. For one, the Health and Wellness Center has transitioned to telemedicine when it makes sense to do so.

"That's primarily being used for the behavioral health services and then some for primary care as well," Erwin-McCormick said.

The Health and Wellness Center remains open Monday through Thursday for appointments on a limited basis.

"Young people are still able to access their medications — medications including HIV meds, and then also if anyone is transitioning and accessing hormone therapy through the Health and Wellness Center, they're still able to," he said. "That's huge."

For the seven youths, ages 12 to 17, currently living at Ruth's House, the center's licensed residential care facility, McCormick said the staff has stepped up to the challenge of keeping them busy — and safe.

"The staff has done a remarkable job just coming up with online curriculums and daily activities just so that they can continue working toward their educational goals," Erwin-McCormick said. "We have set up Kofi House for them to use right now during the day as more of a classroom setting, just so they can get out of Ruth's House."

Kofi House is the associated building down the street from Ruth Ellis that isn't yet being used for programming and therefore was easy to turn into a more school-like space.

"That's been really helpful," he said. "Just [to] get out of Ruth's House, [to] be in a new environment ... then at the end of the day they can head back to Ruth's House."

Erwin-McCormick spoke of the support they've received from the community, making special mention of Project Beautiful-Inside and Out, one of their partner organizations. A pizza dinner for the young people at Ruth's House would be sponsored by that group later that week, he said.

Because it's a 24/7 job, the staff of Ruth's House is especially aware of taking extra precautions as



they interact with residents. Erwin-McCormick said he would be delivering some personal protective equipment later that day.

While all of Ruth Ellis' programs fulfill crucial needs within the community, the Second Stories Drop-In Center is perhaps its best-known program. It is also the one that has been most affected by the pandemic, as several weeks ago, it had to temporarily shutter. Not only does the space provide food, safer sex supplies and a free laundry room — among other necessities — it is a place to hang out and interact socially with other LGBTQ people ages 13 to 30. As a replacement for the hot dinners served by the center, food boxes are being made available once a week for pick up.

"We made sure we could still provide food resources, because so many of the young people who come to the drop-in center are experiencing homelessness or are unstably housed," Erwin-McCormick said. "And often, food resources are the first thing to go. And so we wanted to make sure we could continue that program. We've had to modify it slightly; right now we're doing it just on Fridays, from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m., and young people are reaching out to the drop-in center's program manager, Dwayne Cole, and they're scheduling times to come pick up their food boxes ... so we can minimize a bunch of people coming in all at once."

### Unavoidable Losses

Everyone has been generally positive and optimistic, according to Erwin-McCormick. However, while the center has found many solutions in the face of adversity, the fact that it is a social gathering space for at-risk youth has been a particularly difficult challenge to overcome because

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in-person meeting is not possible.

“For the LGBTQ young people served by the center, this is their safe space,” he explained. “This is the place where they find community, where they find support, and when that goes away, it’s a huge loss. And so I think right now it’s about finding alternative ways for us to be able to somehow still bring the community together, whether that’s through social media or whether that’s doing peer support groups via videoconferencing — those kinds of things. But again, keeping in mind, not all the youths have access to technology.”

He added that REC is looking into funding opportunities that would allow it to provide access to such technology.

As director of development and advancement, Erwin-McCormick said he would also be pursuing grants that have become available as a direct result of the COVID-19 crisis to maintain food resources at the center. And because it’s not feasible for REC to hold a large-scale fundraising event now, REC leadership has been having conversations with donors and especially thanking those who give on a monthly basis. He said they’re thinking through some “cool and creative ways” to continue to engage the community as well.

“The development department is developing their own podcast, and the podcast will be open to the community,” Erwin-McCormick said. “It will be an opportunity for us to be able to highlight some of the experiences of young people, program directors, funders. There’s a vast variety of topics that are really at our disposal that would allow us to be able to connect with our community and a really meaningful way at a time when people are really isolated. So that’s one thing we’ll be launching, hopefully by the end of this month.”

The center is unable to accept most in-kind donations at his time. Clearly, monetary donations are needed now more than ever, but

Erwin-McCormick said there are other ways to help. Gift cards for grocery stores can help supplement what they are able to provide in the food boxes. For the young people living at Ruth’s House, things to keep them occupied like age-appropriate (12-17) board games, puzzles and art supplies are appreciated. Those should be sent directly to the center. He also mentioned becoming a “Ruth’s Angel,” which is their monthly giving program, stating that even if one can only give \$5 per month, that’s budgetable, sustainable income the center can count on.

Erwin-McCormick is currently working alone at REC’s newest building at 95 Victor St., where most of the renovations have been completed. With so much happening at Ruth Ellis he certainly has his hands full, but he shared why he is optimistic and why he holds hope for the future.

“The resiliency of the young people we serve is the number one thing that gives me hope,” Erwin-McCormick said. “They face extraordinary challenges every single day, even pre-COVID-19. And so I know their strength, and I know that they will continue to seek joy and seek opportunities. I know that when this is all said and done, we will get through this, [with] just an overwhelming generosity and support from our community — just people wishing us well and asking what people can do to help us out. I think what keeps me going is knowing it is not just me, it is not just the staff at Ruth Ellis Center, this is a community effort to ensure that the young people continue to be supported now and after COVID-19. That’s the optimism that I see and feel every day.”

*The Ruth Ellis Center is located at 77 Victor St. in Highland Park. Find out more online at [ruthelliscenter.org](http://ruthelliscenter.org).*



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# LGBT Detroit Introduces The Hotter Than July Retrospective



The Hotter Than July Retrospective is a collaboration between the largest Black-led LGBT nonprofit in North America, LGBT Detroit, and the largest and longest-running LGBTQ publication in

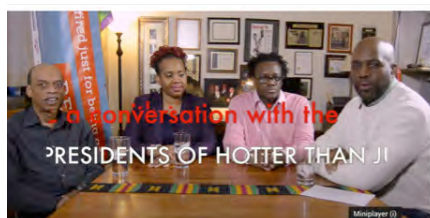
Michigan, PrideSource's Between the Lines. The Hotter Than July Retrospective is supported by the Detroit Journalism Fund at the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan.

For the next year, The Hotter Than July Retrospective will tell stories and cover issues most relevant to Southeast Michigan's urban LGBTQ community. This feature addresses a lack of representation of LGBTQ people of color in mainstream media. It also serves as the kick-off for the Hotter Than July 25th anniversary.

Led by editor Jason Flowers, an assembled team of talented LGBTQ writers, photographers, videographers and storytellers of color tell stories and capture compelling images. In the coming editions of The Hotter Than July Retrospective, you will discover Hotter Than July — its history, progression and future. Lastly, you will learn about the fascinating people behind the event.

The Hotter Than July Retrospective authentically tells our stories in a way that best reflects who we really are. Stay tuned. Email Jason Flowers at [jasonflowers@lgbtdetroit.org](mailto:jasonflowers@lgbtdetroit.org) to share your experiences. Always visit [HotterThanJuly.org](http://HotterThanJuly.org) for more information.

Curtis Lipscomb  
Co-Founder, Hotter Than July  
Executive Director, LGBT Detroit



Check out the video.

**HOTTER THAN JULY RETROSPECTIVE**



## 25 Years of Hotter Than July Leadership

BY DAMON "MAGIC" PERCY

For the last quarter century, Detroit's Black Gay Pride, Hotter Than July, has become the world's second-oldest Black Pride event. Since its inception, there have been four different leaders who have brought their progressive and powerful perspective to make sure the party never stops. Hotter Than July prides itself on serving the community and reflecting the best of itself for the world to see.

Hotter Than July was founded in 1995 and planned as a week-long event showcasing the culture and diversity of Detroit's LGBTQ community since 1996. Planning a Pride is more than a notion and requires a team backed by even greater leadership. At the helm of Hotter Than July's great leadership has been Johnny L. Jenkins, Jr., Hank Milbourne, Kimberly R. Jones and Robert Clark who have brought the annual summer event to this monumental point.

The role of Hotter Than July president is to be the official face and driving force of the movement. The leader must reflect the standard to which they hold their supporters and workers accountable. As the chief decision maker, they balance the financial ups and downs and ensure all aspects of the community are covered inclusively within the integrity of the events.

Jenkins, who served from 1996 to 2007, was the first president, co-leading the initial planning committee with R. Leon Matthews (Askari Ali), as well as being president of, both, Detroit, Black Gay Pride, Inc. and Black Pride Society, two community-based organizations.

"My vision for Hotter Than July was to be an important asset in the Black LGBTQ community's arsenal to advance our priorities and amplify our voices," Jenkins said.

Jenkins said that his biggest challenges were "trying to incorporate the diverse segments of the community into the planning and execution of events during Hotter Than July, and financing the event either through sponsorships, partnerships and vending opportunities."

For past president Kimberly R. Jones, her

participation began with spearheading a Friday event, eventually leading her to become a board member. Jones served on the executive team for 11 years. Her focus, she said, was getting "people to continue to believe in the movement enough to still contribute financially and socially."

As the sole female president, she took satisfaction in having brought a strong lesbian community presence and visibility to Hotter Than July during her tenure.

"Women were always there in many roles, usually in the background," Jones said. "We were the first ones at the picnic and at most of the other events. However, I brought them and myself to the foreground. Soon we had equal voices on the board and at creating events."

Jones said Hotter Than July is an event where attendees will see and touch friends and extended family that they sometimes haven't seen the whole year.

Past president Hank Milbourne served eight years on Hotter Than July's executive team. He said, "Hotter Than July has changed and evolved over the years, as well as, times have changed in ways in which the community interacts with one another." Milbourne acknowledged that he admires the fact that Hotter Than July addresses more social, political and topical issues relevant to the SGL/LGBT community in Metro Detroit.

Each president has handled both the challenges and successes of Hotter Than July with grace, patience and strength as it has grown and expanded into a community legacy that it is today. Past president Robert Clark, who was the youngest to hold the position of president, served for only one year, but made a great impact during his tenure. Jenkins said that, "Clark brought this youthful energy to what could have been a stagnant period and revitalized the movement with his peer group."

Activist Michelle Brown said that Clark "was that next generation of activist that those of us who have been in the trenches hoped will one day step forward to lead the fight." Sadly, Clark passed away in 2014 from health complications.

Hotter Than July past presidents, from left to right, Hank Milbourne, Kimberly R. Jones and Johnny L. Jenkins, Jr.

Moving into the next 25 years of Hotter Than July's legacy, Milbourne hopes that it will "continue to evolve and continue to incorporate more segments of the diverse SGL/LGBT community of color." He hopes it continues to "highlight the present day and current issues facing the community in a forum and fashion that sparks dialogue and critical thinking." Jones said she would like to see a national recording artist showcased at the event.

"We have never had one and there are too many performers that would be great to have just for us." Jenkins added, "Ultimately the community, like in 1996, gets to determine just how relevant Hotter Than July can and will be in the future in improving the quality of life for all Black LGBTQ people and families in Southeast Michigan and beyond."

Today, Hotter Than July is hosted by LGBT Detroit and will celebrate its 25th anniversary partnering with community leaders and supporters offering various safe spaces for educating and showcasing the culture of the Black LGBTQ population. This year's Hotter Than July 25th Anniversary events will take place during the last weekend.

For more information visit [hotterthanjuly.org](http://hotterthanjuly.org).

Damon "Magic" Percy is a cultural historian, writer, activist and archivist based out of Detroit. He sits on the boards of community organizations - Black Bear Brotherhood and Detroit Sound Conservancy - and is a longstanding member of LGBT Detroit.





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# Affirmations Responds to COVID-19 Crisis: Making Adjustments, Facing Challenges

BY ELLEN SHANNA KNOPPOW

## Online Offerings

In the first of what will be weekly addresses via Zoom videoconference, Affirmations Executive Director Dave Garcia reported on March 27 that although the center is closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most groups have moved online and that the Affirmations LGBTQ community center is financially stable for the time being. Garcia said these virtual updates would continue on Fridays at noon until “we can go back to semi-normal lives.” There were around 30 participants for the initial meeting; they are being recorded and made available on the Affirmations YouTube channel for those unable to join live.

“As you might imagine, it’s been a crazy time for all of us,” Garcia said. “I want to take a moment to again appreciate the staff at Affirmations and all the hard work that they’ve done. It’s been long days for us but I think we’re doing pretty well.”

Almost all of Affirmations’ groups — including all of their recovery groups — are now using Zoom videoconference technology.

“Let me start with a little bit of a silver lining,” Garcia said. “Normally our AA group, for example, Alcoholics Anonymous, was getting about 20 people, in-person, per day, Monday through Saturday at the center. We had as many as 71 on their last Zoom meeting. Some of those folks came from out of state, some from as far away as Sweden and Scotland.”

Groups like Motor City Bears, the center’s trans groups and even their largest in-person group, Senior Koffee Klatch, are now using Zoom.

“Now, there’s been a lot of challenges with that group, as you might imagine with the older generation,” Garcia said, referring to Senior Koffee Klatch. “But we’ve had a lot of one-on-one individual training sessions with them. They’ve called John Douglas, our operations manager, if they’re having any trouble at all, and he facilitates them in a step-by-step process on the phone, getting them into a Zoom meeting — and at the last Senior Koffee Klatch meeting we actually had about 30.”

To further assist seniors, Garcia said Affirmations has purchased 10 7-inch tablets for those who do not have a smartphone or access to video technology. They will be available for loan, and they will enable more individuals to participate in groups and remain part of the community at this critical time.

Youth programming continues, too. Learning modules are being offered as are drop-in hours on Fridays and Saturdays, where there is adult supervision — just like in-person drop-in — to prohibit adult strangers from randomly joining



the virtual gathering.

## Work in Progress

That concern — privacy and confidentiality on videoconferencing platforms — was brought up by a group leader after Garcia’s update. Granted, in some ways it’s beneficial to open the “room” to anyone in the world with internet or smartphone access, but one must be aware bad actors can spoil the interaction, too. Unfortunately, this is exactly what played out just a few days later. Garcia posted the following to his personal Facebook page on March 31:

“Today our zoom groups were overrun by white supremacists drawing swastikas on our screens and calling everyone fags etc. We’ve had to spend many valuable hours today changing everything and adding passwords and other security measures so our groups can safely meet. It’s a huge time suck and blow to staff morale, but I told them today that it is a stark reminder of why Affirmations is still so needed and why we get up every day and do the work we do,” he said. “It is unfortunate that some people attack in moments like these, but I still believe there is far more good in this world than bad and my staff will not quit.”

Safety precautions include using a password that has been given directly by a staff member and employing the Zoom “waiting room” function so participants can be vetted one by one. This will likely allow fewer people around the state and country to join the groups, but the primary concern must be to keep the rooms safe for those who do, Garcia said.

Garcia also talked about the Community Action Network, an advocacy group that was started by CenterLink in partnership with the Los Angeles LGBTQ Community Center at the time Garcia worked there. Now, Garcia said, they’ve brought that model to Michigan. Known

as the Michigan LGBTQ+ Community Centers Network, this coalition of executive directors from the nine LGBTQ centers across the state recently held its second meeting — virtually, due to the circumstances. One of the timely topics discussed was the expansion of online offerings.

“In some ways, I think we’re never going to go back to normal,” Garcia said, in reference to Affirmations’ programming. “I think we’re gonna have a bit of a hybrid [where] we will, of course, have our face-to-face meetings at Affirmations, but why not continue a video component element so folks from around the whole state, or country or even the world can join some of our groups where it makes sense?”

He also envisioned the benefit to people in rural areas having access, especially youth and seniors who may be isolated.

## In the Black, for Now

“All grants are on track at this time,” Garcia announced in the address. “Obviously, the health and public health of the community is my first priority; that’s why we shut the center’s doors and have moved in this direction, but I’m the executive director and I worry about the finances. We turned a corner; we had just finished the 2019 audit and for the first time since I was here the last time five years ago, our 2019 audit has Affirmations back in the black.”

Garcia explained how the current pandemic may impact Affirmations financially. At present, they’re not generating any income through room rentals and trainings conducted across the state. Certainly, he’s carefully watching for individual giving to continue at its usual level. As for Spring Bash, it’s been postponed until the fall.

“We had our largest single event scheduled for the 18th of April, the black-tie Spring Bash,”

Garcia said. “We had to cancel. We’ve postponed it; we’ve rescheduled it. That event brings in anywhere from about \$100,000 to \$120,000 of revenue. That’s 15 percent of our budget. So while we have moved Bash to Halloween — it’ll be a black-tie masquerade — think of what that does in terms of cash flow, when you’re expecting \$100,000 to \$120,000 in the month of April.”

As long as the fundraiser isn’t outright canceled, Garcia said he is not worried. A wine party like the one that

was so popular last fall will likely be scheduled for mid-July; however, Garcia said it was too early to make any formal announcement.

Following the update, Garcia spoke with Between The Lines and shared a concern about major donors. He said he’s making phone calls, but in some cases that may not be enough.

“One of my biggest concerns is, what does this mean for our longtime grant partners, especially the Big Three?” Garcia asked. “We have longtime relationships with Ford and General Motors and Fiat Chrysler, and depending on what this means for their business for the rest of the year, what will that mean to how much they can give through their foundations? Those foundations are tied to the markets. They all have foundations or endowments.”

As an example, Garcia explained that Affirmations receives interest from an endowment provided by the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan. Emergency one-time grants are something Garcia is exploring, too. He’s also looking into what the federal stimulus package means for nonprofits.

Garcia reported that for him, it’s business as usual — from a distance. When a board member needed to sign a document recently, he left it in his mailbox and he spoke to her from his window. The Affirmations staff is hard at work, but they find moments of levity. Show-and-tell or some other icebreaker before their morning meetings via videoconference has become part of their daily routine.

“You forget how much you laugh with your team before a meeting or just after a meeting ... those human interactions,” Garcia said.

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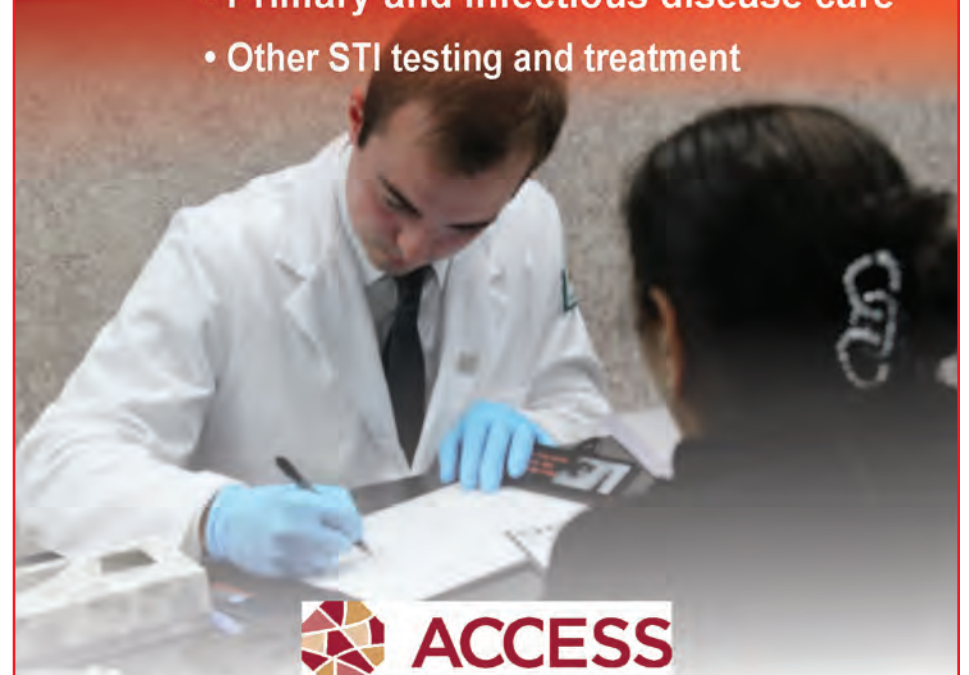



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# Mental Health Expert Urges ‘Physical Distancing’ Over Social Distancing During COVID-19

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

From a physical standpoint, it's obvious that coronavirus has taken a massive toll not only in Michigan but around the world. Because of this, Michigan's governor, along with others in dozens of states, has issued a stay-at-home order to prevent COVID-19's spread. But as valuable as it is to keep one's body healthy, maintaining good mental health should be a priority, too, says Dr. Joe Kort. And it starts with being social.

“They're saying social distancing, but what they really mean is physical distancing. You want to keep yourself six feet apart and be conscious and aware that this is how it spreads. But we're social beings, and we need social connections. And without that, we're going to add to our own depression,” Kort said. “So, what I'm telling my clients and doing myself is making sure we're staying connected through the internet — [use your] webcam, Zoom, Houseparty — just really making sure you're staying connected with people you love intentionally.”

A Licensed Master Social Worker, Kort is the founding director of The Center for Relationship and Sexual Health in Royal Oak. He said that even small steps like this can help extremely beneficial in curbing the feelings of social isolation, which he says he's seeing especially in people who are naturally extroverted. Those feelings, he said, can exacerbate already existing problems.

“You'll start to overly focus on things that maybe were little problems or an ongoing problem. You were dealing with it, but now you have all this time on your hands and no distraction, so it feels like a bigger issue,” he said. “Like with depression, people are feeling more depressed because they feel more alone.”

That's why creating an online social environment as similar as possible to one's everyday routine is so valuable. Kort also suggested using the internet as a means of finding direct resources for one's mental and physical health, because both will ultimately have a positive impact on one's mental state.

“I just had a client today and she said, ‘OK, I've gotta go, I have an exercise class online.’ There are so many things you can plug into right online. The easy things are what is right in your house — food, drugs, alcohol, sex with your partner if you're there — but those get old, and you need to keep it going,” Kort said. “Those [everyday] outlets are now online outlets.”

For instance, for those struggling with addiction, Kort suggested finding online AA or 12-step groups to continue one's support network even without in-person meetings. He urged those not struggling with addiction to be mindful of the ways they choose to self-soothe, too. And that means being conscious of the stressors that staying at home for long periods might have on relationships.

“Couples living together will start fighting over little things, but the real issue is that people are just more aggressive. It's easier to fight over



you're going to need to set better boundaries about keeping distance in the house in whatever way that looks: sleeping in a different bed, being in a different room,” he said. “The number one thing, I think, if it's abusive in a physically threatening way, is to see if there's someone else that they can stay with. Don't stay home with that person. ... You need to ask for help. If you're a person that says, ‘Oh, I'm not going to ask that person not to talk to me, I don't want to hurt their feelings,’ you need to step up and do things you wouldn't normally do.”

In emergency situations, reaching out to domestic violence and suicide prevention hotlines is a great start. Kort said that because millions of people worldwide are working on physically distancing themselves, it's important to remember that though

“we feel alone, we're not alone.”

“And I think the lesson in this is how do we balance feeling secure but also knowing that anything could change. How do we delay gratification? This is another opportunity to see, ‘OK, this isn't forever, this is a couple of months at the most.’ How do we deal with impulse control?” Kort said. “This is a great opportunity to come back to yourself and question how you deal with those things.”

something than to feel the vulnerability that we're quarantined, we're home alone, we're scared,” he said. “And so, people project problems onto each other, and I want people to be careful about that.”

When asked about people who might be temporarily trapped at home with an abusive person, Kort emphasized the importance of removing oneself from the situation if at all possible.

“In this situation, if that's a possibility to get out, I would get out. If it's not a possibility, then

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# Statewide, Local Efforts to Provide Food Banks Resources During COVID-19

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

## Michigan National Guard helps out at food banks across the state

The Michigan National Guard has offered its support to food banks across Michigan. A total of 10 airmen from the 127th Wing at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Harrison Charter Township will serve at Forgotten Harvest Food Bank in Royal Oak.

“This is an example of how the men and women of the Michigan National Guard are helping their communities,” said Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. “They are assisting Michiganders all across this state in response to COVID-19 and I am very proud of their professionalism and commitment.”

The Michigan National Guard members will serve at the Royal Oak location throughout the month of April. Guardsmen are already helping out at food banks in Ann Arbor, Comstock Park, Flint and Pontiac. Guard members are screened for symptoms of the coronavirus and perform their duties with personal protective equipment.

Nearly 450 Michigan National Guard members have been called to active service to aid Michigan’s response since March 18. Across nine counties, members of the Guard are helping local communities and state agencies with logistics support for medical



equipment, medical screening, planning and construction of alternate care facilities. Another 6,600 Michigan Guard members are ready to assist if needed.

“The Michigan National Guard strives to be part of the fabric of every Michigan community,” said Maj. Gen. Paul Rogers, adjutant general of the Michigan National Guard and director of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. “Members of the Michigan National Guard live in every county of this state, and we care deeply about supporting our communities

as we all respond to COVID-19.”

## Detroit Lions player, coach donate to local food banks

Detroit Lions offensive lineman Frank Ragnow is making donations to three charities helping those affected by COVID-19, including \$10,000 to Gleaners Community Food Bank. Ragnow is also making donations to charities in Arkansas and Minnesota.

“Minnesota, where I grew up, which raised

me, my home forever,” Ragnow explained to the Detroit Free Press. “Arkansas completely shaped me. A lot happened right there. Took me under their wing when I lived through some tough times and some great times. And Michigan, Detroit, a place that’s completely embraced me and did nothing but support me. Three amazing communities that have completely impacted me in a way that I don’t think I’ll ever be able to express and be able to give back how I feel they’ve impacted me, so I just thought the least I could do is help people out.”

Meanwhile, Detroit Lions running backs coach Kyle Caskey and his wife Kayla held a virtual food drive for Gleaners. The drive, which had a goal of \$20,000, has raised about \$15,000 so far.

“We’re living through some unprecedented times right now and there’s some families out there that are dealing with the threat of unemployment and some children that maybe aren’t receiving the meals that they usually would when they’re in school,” Caskey said in a video posted to Twitter. “Kayla and I have partnered with Gleaners Community Food Bank to create a virtual food drive, since most of us can’t leave our houses right now.”

## How to get food

Those in need of food can call 211 to be connected to an emergency food assistance program. Two of the most popular food bank services across the state include Forgotten Harvest and Gleaners.

## Fundraiser to Aid Bar Staff from Menjo’s, SoHo

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

As the nation anxiously awaits the arrival of the federal government’s promised stimulus checks, people continue to struggle financially and seek relief. The staff of the LGBTQ community’s favorite nightspots have been amongst those hardest hit by the practice of social distancing during the pandemic, especially after Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s signed an executive order requiring bars to close indefinitely to curb COVID-19’s spread.

That means bar staff have been out of work now for over three weeks. Most don’t qualify for traditional unemployment and the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and Compensation programs Whitmer announced in Executive Order 2020-10, which would grant temporary unemployment benefits to independent contractors and employees who receive 1099s, has not yet been set up to process claims.

To help bar staff cope financially, two separate fundraising campaigns have been launched to assist the staff of Menjo’s, located in Detroit and SoHo in downtown Ferndale. The SoHo campaign was launched by the bar’s manager, Anatoly Ashkenazi. It has a fundraising goal of \$10,000. So far nearly \$9,000 has been raised.



“The spread of COVID-19 has led to extraordinary changes in our lives,” said Ashkenazi. “The future is uncertain, particularly for the staff within the bar/restaurant industry. While we are usually the ones hosting a fundraiser, this time it is our turn to ask for assistance. This fund is set up to directly benefit the staff of SOHO. It is to help with the basic needs while we weather the storm.”

The Menjo’s GoFundMe campaign was created by David Ponsart of Al GAMEA. The group has hosted its successful quarterly event, Arabian Nights, at Menjo’s for many years, but the 2020 spring edition was canceled in the wake of the coronavirus crisis. The Menjo’s campaign is similarly seeking to raise \$12,999 but so far has only raised less than \$1,500.

“Since we were unable to hold the event we

decided when the governor ordered all bars and clubs closed to shift our focus to online fundraising for the staff at Menjo’s who rely on tips for a large portion of their income,” Ponsart said. “They have supported us for many years, and just because we can’t give back to the community in the way that we normally do, we thought we could still give back in some way.”

Whatever the campaign ultimately raises, Al GAMEA will give the funds directly to Tim McKee of Menjo’s to distribute.

“We pulled the GoFundMe together very quickly without much discussion about how much we would need for a group that size, so the goal we set was aggressive but also somewhat random,” Ponsart said. “There are about 50 employees in total that work at Menjo’s, but not all of them work at Arabian

Nights. We’re going to give the funds to Tim who will distribute them to the staff. Menjo’s, during this crisis, has also been serving food and providing pantry staples to their staff as well as any service industry folks that are out of work right now too. This is one of the reasons that we partner with Menjo’s for our event. They are as committed to giving back to the community and creating a sense of togetherness.”





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# MCC Detroit and COVID-19: ‘God Isn’t Going Anywhere and Neither is MCC Detroit’

BY ELLEN SHANNA KNOPPOW

## Innovation by Necessity

To those visiting MCC Detroit’s website for the first time, it might not be readily apparent that things like virtual worship and Zoom videoconference Bible study sessions are brand-new offerings. In fact, just like myriad organizations both religious and secular, Metropolitan Community Church-Detroit has had to adapt quickly in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“God is not confined to a building,” the Rev. Roland Stringfellow affirmed, in the address he delivered online from his home office on March 14. Between The Lines spoke with Stringfellow following two Sundays of pre-recorded messages to congregants, archived on the MCC-D website.

“We’re still getting people accustomed to going to the internet to watch the service,” Stringfellow acknowledged. “Many of our folks aren’t tech-savvy. Not to say that they’re tech-ignorant, it’s just not part of their daily routine.”

At the time of the March 14 message, he expressed that MCC-D planned to be back to meeting in person by Palm Sunday, April 5. However, as the coronavirus safety precautions rapidly increased, Stringfellow and his staff soon realized that was not feasible — “simply listening to what the Governor had to say — as opposed to the President.” Of learning how to use Zoom, “It wasn’t too bad,” Stringfellow said.

“I admittedly so, ended up recording my message six different times before I got to the version that I liked the best, where I wasn’t looking into the camera, or I wasn’t stumbling over words,” he said.

He compared it to learning how to preach.

“When you are a new pastor and you’re speaking in front of people ... you have to work on your eye contact and your connection with the people,” Stringfellow said. “And I find that this is also a similar learning curve for me.”

But it doesn’t end with Stringfellow’s weekly address.

“In terms of the Sunday Bible study, that was my way of offering a live connection for our people at the same time our worship service would be,” he said. “We doubled our participation in the past week. And I have other friends and colleagues in other states who also joined as well.”

Now that they have a national presence, Stringfellow said he’s thinking of how to



broaden the message beyond the MCC-D community. The church’s Connection Groups, regularly scheduled small gatherings that meet for a project or discussion, are up and running using videoconferencing platforms, too.

Out of necessity, MCC-D has had to innovate. Yet given that Stringfellow has been able to markedly expand his reach, we asked whether some of the church’s new offerings would remain in place once the COVID-19 restrictions have been fully lifted.

“Absolutely,” Stringfellow said. “In fact, our program coordinator ... was basically saying, this tragedy that we find ourselves in has really presented an opportunity for us to ramp up our website presence, and even how we communicate clearly with not only our community but the wider community.”

He said they have the opportunity to reach beyond those who already attend worship services regularly, and perhaps draw in those who only occasionally attend their social gatherings.

“I think prior to the virus and the isolation, we were doing everything on a daily basis and trying to make ends meet, and now our time is different,” Stringfellow said. “I’ll put it that way.”

## Responding to Congregants’ Needs

While MCC-D seems to have adjusted their programming very well to present challenges, Stringfellow said the virus has

taken an emotional toll on many of his congregants. In the first place, there is the loss of the ability to meet in person, something that the leadership unanimously decided was necessary for the safety of all concerned. And about half of the congregation is over the age of 60 — a group at greater risk for COVID-19.

“How do you weigh those older adults [who] are very vulnerable to this virus, and still, in my opinion, in good conscience, say, ‘Oh yeah, come on out, and let’s worship together?’” he said. “We just want to protect all of our people no matter what your age or health status. Just stay at home, and we will be the ones to be creative with how to give you the encouragement and worship that you need.”

He added that the reason why they worship as a congregation has always been “to support and help people thrive: thrive spiritually, socially, emotionally.” Now is no different. But his priority, he said, was to not jeopardize anyone’s health. In response to colleagues who might say that God will protect churchgoers from the virus, Stringfellow said, “God is going to be with us, regardless. But that doesn’t mean we’re invincible. And so, again as a spiritual leader, ... we really need to take this very serious in terms of what we are advising people to do.”

Stringfellow said the nature of peoples’ pastoral needs has changed lately, too. Texts and calls regarding loss of jobs, concern for people they know who have the virus or who have died from it have been coming in. From the beginning, church leadership has been actively reaching out.

“The first two weeks was focused on calling and checking in,” Stringfellow said. “How are you doing? What do you need?” We have a couple of volunteers who will do grocery runs, those sorts of things. We’re now realizing our focus will shift on how to help people deal with loss: loss of job, loss of freedom, loss of

life or health.

“[For] many of our people, we are their community. Meaning, only community. We are their family, their friends, we’re their social connection. And so, it’s no surprise, particularly in the LGBTQ community, people don’t have family connections,” he said. “You can rely upon us. We can support you in that need.”

## Lessons to Teach, Looking Forward

Despite the struggles many are experiencing, Stringfellow believes that LGBTQ people who survived the AIDS crisis have a lesson to teach the wider public in terms of priorities and perspective.

As with AIDS, “there is this plague/virus and you don’t know exactly how it spreads and when it will last and who gets it and who doesn’t,” Stringfellow said. “The community experienced that and many beautiful lives were lost. But there were a lot of great lessons learned in terms of what’s valuable, what’s important, what do we put our efforts behind. And I think even in this global pandemic we find ourselves in, there is a lesson ... LGBT people can teach to others, in terms of [how] our differences and divisions are becoming less important as we solely focus upon what is really important.”

At present, Stringfellow is planning for the upcoming holiday and how to make that as meaningful as possible, given the circumstances. MCC-D anticipates a huge influx of attendees each year for Easter, and this year there will likely be more if the response to online offerings thus far is any indication.

From the time they found themselves unable to meet in person, Stringfellow’s instructions to MCC-D’s worship planning team has been to focus solely on Holy Week, directing them to include as many elements of the conventional worship service as possible “so people feel like, ‘Yeah, this is Easter’ or, ‘This is Good Friday,’” he said.

“And not just for the sake of the service, but particularly our goal is: How do we help our people make sense of all that’s happening during this time and really answer the question: Where is God in all of this?” he said. “I think that is the question we constantly need to come back to, so we’re not so focused on a service that people say ‘pow’ and ‘wow’ about, but that really the people are walking away with that hope and direction at a time when things are so uncertain.”





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## Ferndale Pride Reschedules to Sept. 26

BY BTL STAFF

In light of coronavirus-related public safety concerns, the 10th-annual Ferndale Pride event has been rescheduled to Sept. 26, 2020. Event Chair Julia Music released a letter to the community today explaining this decision. Read it below:

Dear Ferndale Pride Fans, Sponsors, Vendors and Volunteers,

Thank you all for your patience as we navigate a world with COVID-19. Many of you have inquired about what will happen with Ferndale Pride. Until a few days ago, frankly we were unsure. Today, I have some good news. Working with the City of Ferndale, we were able to set a rescheduled date.

The new date for the 10th annual Ferndale Pride Festival is Saturday, September 26, 2020.

As of now, we plan to continue almost all aspects of the festival with some additional safety measures in place. Additional hand-sanitizing stations have been added to the footprint. “Hugs! You Matter!” is revising how to show the community love while not hugging. We continue to look for more ways to increase safety while bringing you a quality event. If September rolls around and we still are under a “stay at home” situation – we hope that is unlikely — we will be in touch about the impact to Ferndale Pride.

**Sponsors:** If you qualified for an ad, turn it in ASAP. If you haven't yet submitted your logo, make sure to do that, as well. Be in contact with us if you now are able to attend the event and need booth space or you no longer are able to attend the event and would like to donate your booth space back.

**Vendors:** If you intend to vend on the new date, you don't have to do anything. If this date is now in conflict with your schedule, you may apply for a refund by May 7. The refund won't include the \$5 Events Local charge or the credit card fees associated with the transaction. If you purchased additional advertising, turn your ad in ASAP.

**Volunteers:** The dates on the Volunteer Sign Up Page have been updated. Make adjustments as needed.

Fundraising events are on hold. Follow our Ferndale Pride Facebook page or follow us on Instagram (@FerndalePride) for event updates. We also will send monthly eblasts to share events and news with you.

Finally, we would like to thank you all for your patience and kind words. We are lucky to live in a time and a place where the LGBTQAI community is supported and celebrated. This year, more than ever, we can't wait to celebrate with you.

## Detroit MoGo Bike Share System Offers Free Monthly Pass in Response to COVID-19

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to unfold, the U.S. will begin what President Trump has called the “toughest week” of the crisis yet. That means that extra care should be taken to adhere to the social distancing practices that millions of Americans have been following already. But for those people in Detroit who rely on public transportation to get around during this time, social distancing can be a challenge. That's why MoGo, Detroit's nonprofit bike share organization, is offering free monthly passes for people who need to get around safely during the coronavirus pandemic.

“[With any of our passes] you get an unlimited number of free, 30-minute trips,” said Founder and Executive Director of MoGo Lisa Nuskowski. “We've always thought of bike share as serving a wide range of people and a wide range of needs. So [whether] it's using bike share as transportation right now and helping you make that one trip a week to the store to pick up some things that you need, whether it's helping you get to your job if you're an essential employee and you're still going to work, we want to make sure that that remains available to people.”

MoGo currently offers nearly 500 bikes across 44 stations in the city. Nuskowski said that MoGo is designed with flexibility in mind, so users of the passes should be able to use the “fluid” system as often or as little as they like.

“Bike share is about going from point A to point B,” she said. “So checking a bike out from a station, riding it where you need to go, checking it back in, doing what you've got to do, and then you can check another bike back out to go somewhere else, or you could take another form of transportation.”

Nuskowski added that daily cleaning procedures have been

ramped up during this time, too, in order to ensure that MoGo's bikes and transportation vans are being disinfected.

“So, as our team is going out and adding bikes to stations that may be getting empty, or moving bikes from stations that may be getting full, they're also wiping down the high-contact touchpoints on those bikes and stations: think handlebars, seats, the docking points where the bike locks into the station, the kiosk where people may be touching it,” she said. “They're wiping all of those down with disinfectant to

sense.

“We're doing our best to make sure that everything is clean and safe, but we can't guarantee we're wiping down every bike after every single ride,” she said. “So we encourage people to continue the practice of washing your hands when you get home and exercising caution there. We're doing our best to keep things clean and safe for everyone.”

When asked how long these free passes will continue, Nuskowski said MoGo is taking a wait-and-see approach.

“We want this to be useful and



make sure we're doing as much as we can to keep people safe.”

Nuskowski said she's excited that passes can be purchased for free on the Transit app, because that allows users to avoid contact with the payment portion of existing bike stations, which could open up another avenue for infection.

“You don't have to touch the touchscreen altogether, you could just use the Transit app to get a code to unlock the bike,” Nuskowski said. “So if people are feeling uncomfortable about that, it's a way to minimize contact. That's something we encourage people to use as well.”

But above all, Nuskowski encourages anyone using MoGo to get around the city to use common

helpful for people, so as long as it's useful and helpful during this part of the crisis we'll continue to offer it and just monitor the situation and make that call as we get more information,” she said. “Bike share is active transportation, so when you hop on a bike you're getting some physical activity, and it's healthy for you physically, it's also, dare I say, healthy for you mentally. You get out, you get some fresh air, get a chance to be in different parts of the city, you can see other people while maintaining a safe distance. ... Hop on a bike, get out there and get active.”





Diana Davies, *Gay Rights Demonstration, Albany, NY, 1971, 1971*. Digital print 14 x 11 inches (35.56 x 27.94 cm). Photo by Diana Davies/© The New York Public Library/Art Resource, NY

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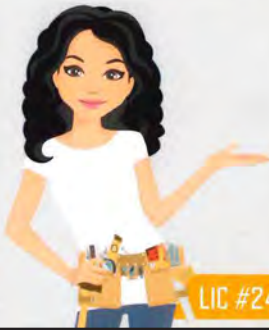
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# Author, Former BTL Contributor Brent Dorian Carpenter Dead at 55

## Brent Dorian Carpenter

April 19, 1964 – March 23, 2020

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

Author Brent Dorian Carpenter, a former reporter and columnist for *Between The Lines*, died March 23 from complications from heart surgery. He was 55.

A native Detroiter, Carpenter graduated from Cass Technical High School in 1981. He was gifted with the pen both as a writer and artist. Carpenter struggled somewhat coming out in the Detroit of the 1980s. This was complicated by the fact that he was diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

Carpenter “learned to use his joy of writing to navigate the treacherous psychological waters of bipolarism, and has learned to use his battles with his obsessive/compulsive nature to hone his literary craft,” said writer Stephen Maglott in a 2014 online profile.

Carpenter began writing for *Between The Lines* in 2001. He covered general news but gained a great deal of attention for the two columns he wrote for the paper, Brent’s Fagenda and, later, Brent Reloaded. In the racy Fagenda, with such column headings as “C’mon, Baby, Let Me Just Stick the Head In,” “In Search of the Perfect Orgy,” “When the Bottom Falls Out



of the Market,” “Girl, He Tore my Guts Out” and “When are You Queens Going to Let Go of Astrology?” Carpenter quickly made a name for himself in Metro Detroit’s LGBT community.

“Brent was mercurial and kind of progressive,” said friend Keronce Sims recalling those early columns. “He was truthful to a fault.”

Carpenter was known not only as a writer but also as an AIDS activist who was open not only about his struggles with HIV but also with mental illness. But for all his challenges, Carpenter rallied. In 2004, he, along with partners Johnny Jenkins, Imani Williams, BTL

publishers Susan Horowitz and Jan Stevenson and Teresa Kelly, the publisher of the *Michigan Citizen*, another paper he wrote for, produced the first ever town hall meeting to address homophobia in Detroit. It was moderated by then-Fox 2 reporter and anchor Charles Pugh and drew a packed crowd.

“There was a moment two weeks before the town hall that I helped organize to address homophobia in Detroit’s black community when I realized it was the most important thing I had done in my entire life,” Carpenter, himself, later reflected for a column in BTL. “No venue of that nature had ever been convened before. My magnificent collaborators ... and I were making history.”

Also, in 2004, Carpenter was presented with the Media Award at the LGBT Community Pride Banquet. He would continue to write off and on for BTL and the *Citizen* for several years. While with BTL, Carpenter began releasing books. He started in 2001 with “Man of the Cloth,” the fantastical science fiction story of a catastrophic plane crash that wipes out the Pope and the upper hierarchy of the Catholic Church, plunging the Holy See into turmoil. In the wake of the crash, a desperate Vatican cardinal named Attanasio Calabrese teams with the unscrupulous geneticist Dr. Wilmut Gunther Jung to conspire to create a clone of the messiah Jesus Christ from the divine blood on the holy relic the Shroud of Turin.

For his second book, “This Time Around,” a

gay African American college student discovers a way to travel through time and goes back to 15th-century Africa to attempt to stop the Atlantic slave trade before it begins.

After relocating back to Atlanta in 2006, Carpenter continued to release material including “Bald Ambition: A Collection of Award-Winning Essays, Bios of Black Gay Historical Figures, Black Pride Diaries, Erotic Short Stories and More,” the novel “The 21st Century Chronicles of Thugg,” “The Barbarian King,” the graphic novels “T’Shai: The Fall and Resurrection and Enemy Space: The War of Syzgy.” He would also create and write a comic book series called “U.N. Force” and, later, “U.N. Force Files.”

He shopped projects to Hollywood and worked on screenplays while in Georgia. But his main source of income during this time was derived from his work as a personal trainer. He loved animals and often took in strays.

“He was the big brother I never had,” said longtime friend Ebon A. Pinson in a Facebook tribute. “We argued like brothers – doggone Aries – but it was only love. I wouldn’t be as big of a Prince fan if it weren’t for him. He loved Prince. And he loved his mother Carmen like no other. She was his saving grace. He would be the first to tell you that if it weren’t for her, we wouldn’t have had him as long as we did.”

Carpenter is survived by his mother, Carmen Carpenter, and brothers Kevin Carpenter and Spencer Carpenter III

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## OBITUARY: Phyllis Ann Lyon

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

Nov. 10, 1924 – April 9, 2020

Phyllis Lyon, who along with her late wife Del Martin, became the first to wed in San Francisco in 2004 when then-Mayor Gavin Newsom instructed the city clerk to begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples, has died of natural causes. She was 95.



Phyllis Lyon and her wife the late Del Martin

Lyon was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and later moved to California where she earned a degree in journalism from the University of California, Berkeley in 1946. Early jobs including reporting for the Chico Enterprise-Record. She lived for a time in Seattle, where she wrote for multiple publications, and it was there, in 1950, that she met Dorothy Louise Taliaferro Martin, known to her friends as Del.

The two reportedly became involved romantically in 1952 and started living together in a Castro Street apartment in San Francisco on Valentine's Day 1953. Two years later, in 1955, they co-founded the Daughters of Bilitis, the first social and political organization for lesbians in the U.S., which took its name from a collection of lesbian love poems named Songs of Bilitis.

Lyon and Martin served as co-presidents of the DOB and co-edited its publication, *The Ladder*, for many years. The two would go on to become one of the first lesbian couples to join the National Organization for Women. Later, the couple created the Council on Religion and the Homosexual, a group that worked to convince ministers to accept LGBTQ people into their churches. They also worked to have anti-gay laws across the state struck down.

In the '70s, Lyon and Martin stopped publishing *The Ladder* and went on to co-write two books, including "Lesbian/Woman," which won a Stonewall Book Award in 1972, and the following year's "Lesbian Love and Liberation: The Yes Book of Sex." Also in the '70s, Lyon and Martin became members of the Alice B. Toklas Democratic Club, which was San Francisco's first LGBTQ political organization. The group would go on to convince then-Mayor Dianne Feinstein to push forth a bill to ban employment discrimination against gays and lesbians in the city.

"Phyllis Lyon fought for LGBT equality when it was neither safe nor popular to do so," said California State Sen. Scott Weiner, who is chairman of the LGBTQ caucus, in a tweet. "Phyllis and her wife Del played a crucial role winning the rights and dignity our community now enjoys. We owe Phyllis intense gratitude and love for her work."

Lyon and Martin continued to remain active throughout the years. On Feb. 12, 2004, Lyon and Martin became the first same-sex couple to legally marry in San Francisco. That marriage was voided a mere six months later by the California Supreme Court. Four years later, that same court finally legalized same-sex marriage and Lyon and Martin would once again marry on June 16, 2008.

"Phyllis, it was the honor of a lifetime to marry you and Del," Newsom tweeted. "Your courage changed the course of history."

Martin died just two months after they married for the second time. Today, Lyon is survived by her sister, Patricia Lyon, and a daughter, Kendra Mon, two grandchildren and a great-granddaughter.

## Fewer Americans Oppose Religious-Based Refusal of Service to LGBTQ People: Poll

BY CHRIS JOHNSON

A new study on LGBTQ issues made public Tuesday has found a modest — but noticeable and sustained — drop over time in opposition to business owners being allowed to refuse services to LGBTQ people.

The study, conducted by the non-profit research organization PRRI, found 56 percent majority of Americans oppose allowing a small business owner in their state to refuse to provide products or services to LGBTQ people, if doing so violates the owner's religious beliefs. Meanwhile, 37 percent of Americans support such denials of service to LGBTQ people.

Although a majority of Americans have opposed religious-based refusal of services for some time, the strength of that opposition — based on previous iterations of the survey — has fluctuated in the last five years.

Opposition rose slightly between 2015, when it was at 59 percent, and 2016, when it was at 61 percent, but that has since dropped each year and was 60 percent in 2017, 57 percent in 2018 and — as the most recent study found — 56 percent in 2019.

Further, the study found this decline is most pronounced among groups that have been the most opposed to refusing service to LGBTQ people historically.

For liberal Democrats, opposition decreased from 85 percent in 2016 to 78 percent in 2019; for liberal Republicans, 63 percent in 2016 to 51 percent in 2019; for younger adults under the age of 30, 70 percent in 2016 to 62 percent in 2019; and for white Democrats without a college degree, 76 percent in 2016 to 68 percent in 2019.

At the same time, the study found support for LGBTQ non-discrimination protections remains strong.

According to the study, 72 percent of Americans favor laws that would protect against anti-LGBTQ discrimination in employment, public accommodations and housing, while 75 percent are opposed.

Support for non-discrimination protections includes majorities of both political parties, religious groups, and nearly every major demographic group, the study found.



"Support for LGBT rights continues to be strong and expansive in all 50 states. Issues that in the recent past demarcated major political and religious fault lines now find broad agreement," PRRI CEO and Founder Robert Jones said in a statement. "However, this landmark survey also finds some erosion in opposition to allowing business owners to refuse to serve gay and lesbian people based on their religious beliefs."

The study was conducted in both English and Spanish between Mar. 26, 2019 and Dec. 29, 2019 among a random sample of 40,357 U.S. adults ages 18 and up. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 0.6 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence, according to PRRI.

The timeframe for when the survey was conducted is the same time the U.S. Supreme Court issued a narrow ruling in favor of a Colorado baker who refused to make a custom-made wedding cake for a same-sex couple.

The court determined the Colorado Civil Rights Commission harbored anti-religious bias in adjudicating the case against Jack Phillips, the owner of Masterpiece Cakeshop, and vacated the decision against him.

Anti-LGBTQ groups, most notably Alliance Defending Freedom, are continuing to make the case the First Amendment grants business owners to right to refuse wedding-related services to LGBTQ people.

A petition from Arlene's Flowers, whose owner Baronelle Stutzman

refused to provide custom-made floral arrangements for a same-sex marriage, is pending before the Supreme Court. Justices had declined to hear the case before, but have yet to act on the current petition before the court.

Despite the increase in opposition to religious-based refusal of services to LGBTQ people, the PRRI study had also promising findings for LGBTQ rights, including an upward trajectory in support for same-sex marriage.

One such finding: A majority of seniors in the United States for the first time ever in the United States are now in favor of same-sex marriage. A bare majority of Americans age 65 and older — 51 percent — now support marriage rights for same-sex couples, compared to 41 percent who oppose them, the study found.

The findings also confirmed majorities in all racial groups in the United States, including 58 percent of black Americans, support same-sex marriage, as well as most major religious groups. The exception is white evangelical Protestants, 41 percent of whom support same-sex marriage.

But views on same-sex marriage still vary along party lines, the study finds. Seven in ten Democrats and two-thirds of independents support same-sex marriage, compared to 47 percent of Republicans.

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



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Building Dreams Together





## Parting Glances

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

### OZ Goes Drag Queen Bingo!

“It’s been 80 years this year since we debuted in the movies,” said Scarecrow on ZOOM to Tin Man, Cowardly Lion, Aunty Em, Glenda the Good Witch, and starlet Dorothy.

“The weathers horrid, wild and persistently wicked. So gloomy! Time to do something special, while we’re still young. At least in everybody’s memory, that is.”

“OK, Scarecrow. Anything to break this scary isolation. What do you suggest?” replied ever-bored Tin Man, flexing his metallic biceps.

“Listen, guys. I know it’s far out. But how about Drag Queen Bingo at OZ Club 2020. And, just maybe we can get our Dorothy a booking.”

Excited, Scarecrow, Tin Man, Cowardly Lion, and a little nervous Dorothy (her voice was wearing somewhat thinner in the upper registers since 1939) once more followed the fabled Yellow Brick Road to 45 Presidential Drive, at Impeach Blvd.

Strangely, the Yellow Brick Road was littered with a strange, sticky debris.

“Hey! If you’ll think we might be seen going there (it’s not MGM politically correct), we could wear masks. Just a suggestion,” cautioned Scarecrow, who secretly loved costume changes.

Rumor has it that the drag queens that auspicious night were from big-time City D.C. Wherever that is, wondered Cowardly Lion. “As in deceit, no doubt.”

The Club 2020 Stage was brightly lit! Music blared loudly! Stars and Stripes Forever! And three drag queens in red, white, and blue matching chiffons appeared! Pearl Harbor! Amazing Grace! Connie Karaoke.

The three held silver/gold embroidered gloved hands, blew kisses to each other. Bowed. Encouraged the scattered applause to get louder. LOUDER! LOUDER! LOUDER! Then sat down around the 2020 Bingo Wheel of Fortune for a spin.

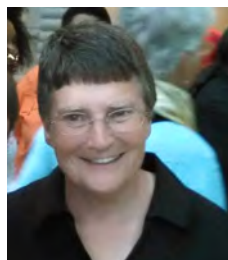
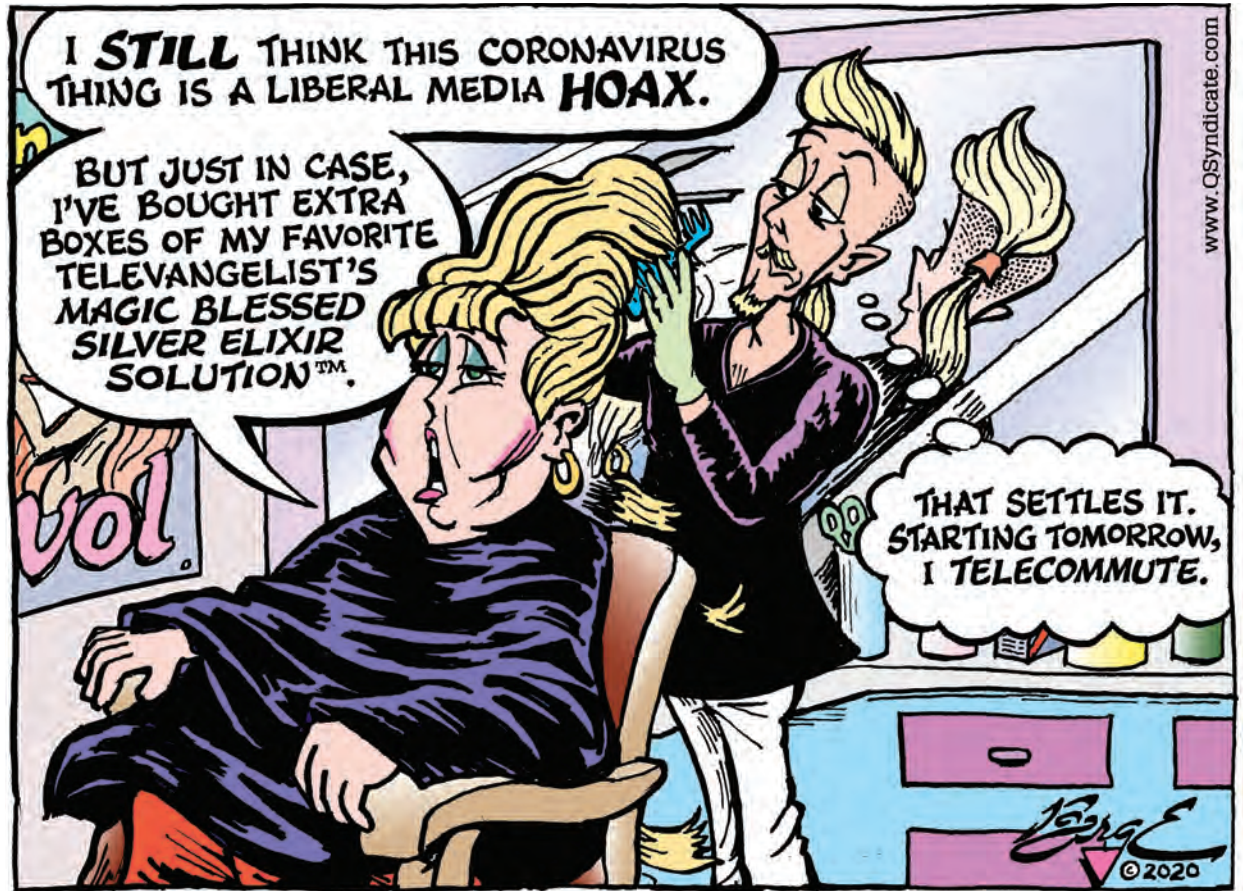
“Oh, hold on just an everlovin’ puss-in-boots minute!” vocally ejaculated Pearl Harbor. “Tonight’s your lucky night bingo buddies. All bingo numbers I (as in you, and Big i ME) on your cards are free on the house of OZ 2020 Club!”

Just as Scarecrow was about to do a double take of his dozen or so cards laid out before him, seeing what advantage that afforded him, he was startled to hear Amazing Grace bless the scattered crowd gathered with, “And for Bingo Night goodness sake: all Os are in free too!”

Sadly that night, however, Scarecrow, Tin Man, Cowardly Lion, and Dorothy didn’t win a damn thing.

And, as they were leaving the OZ Club 2020, they got unexpectedly accosted by Connie Karaoke.

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BY SHEA HOWELL

### Thinking for Ourselves: Water Games

**O**n Friday, April 3, Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan assured the city that he has restored water to everyone who had it shut off at his daily COVID-19 briefing. He also praised the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department for stopping water shutoffs at 1,100 households.

Almost everyone who has followed the crisis of water shutoffs believes this is not true. Just two days before this announcement, Freshwater Future and We The People of Detroit called upon Gov. Gretchen Whitmer to have the state environmental justice council watch over compliance with her order that requires water to be turned on everywhere by April 12.

There are three very good reasons to doubt the mayor and call for state-level enforcement of the governor’s decree. First, the mayor does not seem to actually know how many people are living without water. He has given wildly conflicting numbers about the dimensions of the problem. He has said that the city delivered fliers about reconnections to 5,000 homes. Meanwhile, Detroit Water Department Director Gary Brown said that there have been 9,000 surveyed homes, within which at least 2,880 were occupied and without water. Taking the most conservative numbers the city has given us, there are still

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## ► Viewpoint

Continued from p. 14

1,780 households without water, meaning that there are still more homes without water than those that have had it restored.

Activists who have followed this situation closely for more than 6 years believe the real number is closer to 10,000 households. This means the mayor has achieved about 10 percent of the goal for water restoration. This is based on estimates from 2019, when service was restored to only 13,721 of the more than 25,000 accounts that were shut off. That means 11,297 households still lacked water service when shutoffs stopped due to weather. Of that total, the water department then believed 10,145 of those accounts were for occupied homes.

Second, there has been little energy by the administration to restore water to homes without. Director Brown said the problem is under control because calls to the city for restoration have slowed. His logic here reflects the refusal of the city to act as aggressively to restore water as it did to turn it off. There have been minimal commitments by the city to publicize the number to call. There has also been minimal effort to make that process efficient.

Activists are putting up signs and handing out leaflets, while calling on the city to put information at food distribution centers, on buses and in other public places. Radio and TV ads should be

provided by the city, as well as notices sent to all customers. The mayor does not even display a number to call for water restoration during his daily press briefings. These are simple measures that would say to people, “We want to protect you, your family and your neighbors. We will do whatever is necessary to ensure you have clean, plentiful water.”

Third, there has been no acknowledgment that the city has been wrong in pursuing a shutoff policy, rather than a water affordability plan based on income. It is this policy that has put all of us at risk, degrading the quality of life for people. Since 2014, almost 141,000 shutoffs have occurred. Just days before the COVID-19 crisis hit our city, both the governor and the mayor denied any relationship between access to clean, affordable water and public health. This flies in the face of logic, history and now our present, painful experience.

It should be obvious as we move through this crisis that public leadership lacks the necessary value framework to ensure public health and thriving communities. It should be obvious to everyone that if we allow some of us to live less than full, supported, healthful lives, none of us will survive. We have choices to make.

*Call 313-386-9727 to have water restored.*

“Say, isn’t your name Dorothy, young lady? You look familiar. You’re a singer, if I recall correctly. (My memory’s not what it use to be.) Hey, by any chance do you know two of my favorites melodies: “God Bless America” and “Dark Side of the Moon”?”

That unforgettable night Scarecrow, Tin Man, Cowardly Lion, and Dorothy tightened their protecting disguises and returned home to (God Only Knows Where).

While hovering overhead on the celestial

horizon a chorus of radiant stars sang “Somewhere Over the Rainbow.” Just the way all hopeful OZ stories should conclude.

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

# Creep Of The Week

## Perry Stone

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Well, it was only a matter of time before it was revealed that LGBTQ people are responsible for the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak. It turns out that God is mad about gay marriage.

So file COVID-19 under Things LGBTQ People Have the Power to Unleash, right alongside hurricanes, floods, tsunamis, recessions, climate change, terrorist attacks, divorce, autism, dementia, and naming your pronouns. And it goes without saying that the anti-gay right is most upset about that last one.

According to Perry Stone, a Tennessee pastor, he heard from God himself that “this is a moment of reckoning.”

“I know what I heard, I did not make that up,” he tells his congregation. “I audibly heard the phrase, a male voice speaking, and I believe it was the Holy Spirit.”

Oh, a male voice, huh? That’s sexist. Then again, men are more prone to violence, so I guess it makes sense that he would imagine a male Holy Spirit striking down everyone in your local nursing home and making all of the toilet paper and hand sanitizer disappear just to punish you for being LGBTQ.

“Why is there a reckoning?” Stone asks. “Because we have by law forced God out of our country and basically told him, ‘In public places, you’re not welcome.’ You’re not welcomed in our schools, so our schools are now shut down. No prayer in public school, no Bible reading in public school. Now, are you with me? They’re telling kids to stay home for who knows how long, so our schools are shut down.”

So God is mad about separation between church and state. Got it. But is Stone saying that the reason schools have been shut down is part of a plot to make sure people don’t start praying in them again? Or is he saying that God blew coronavirus in all of our faces because he’s mad about the lack of school prayer? Has God never heard of Christian schools? Because those are a thing. You can send your kid to a school where they have to pray.

It isn’t gays alone that have brought on a worldwide epidemic. It is by the power of gays and women who have abortions combined.

“We have said to God, ‘The infants that you put in our wombs, we don’t respect

them, we don’t want them, we will get them out of our bellies through abortion,’” Stone continues.

Who is going to tell him that the only way a baby ends up in your belly is if you eat it?

“If you watch the women who are pro-choice, the majority of them have a spirit about them where there is no love,” he says and then launches into an obnoxious imitation of what he imagines a feminist sounds like: “It’s our body. We will do what we wanna do. You’re not gonna tell us what to do with our body. I got news for you ladies: It ain’t your body; there’s another body living inside your body.”

So women who support abortion rights are loveless shrews who anger God because they don’t want to be human incubators? Got it.

“The Bible talks about going after ‘strange flesh,’” Stone says and then launches into the tale of Sodom and Gomorrah. You know, the one where Lot invites a couple of angels into his house and then his neighbors are like, “Give us those angels to rape!” and Lot is like, “No. Take my virgin daughters instead” and then he tries to run away with his wife but she turns back to scope the destruction and gets turned into a pillar of salt. And that’s why processed food has mad amounts of sodium.

“So why is there a reckoning?” Stone continues. “There is a reckoning because the courts of the land passed a law to take an infant’s life, that it was OK, and for marriage as we have known it to be changed into something we have never known. Both of their laws, biblically in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, are what God calls an abomination. And the Bible teaches us that God is long-suffering, he is not willing that any perish, he wants everyone to come to repentance, but there will be a time when the Lord says, ‘Enough is enough.’”

And when the Lord is at his wits end he kills a bunch of people at random and hopes that people will figure out what it is he really wants. That must be where Donald Trump learned it from.

*D’Anne Witkowski is a poet, writer and comedian living in Michigan with her wife and son. She has been writing about LGBT politics for over a decade. Follow her on Twitter @MamaDWitkowski.*



# SAGE Metro Detroit Emphasizes Use of Its Friendly Caller Program, Other Remote Services

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

For the past five years, SAGE Metro Detroit has been operational as a local affiliate of the largest LGBTQ elder care organization in the U.S., Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders. By providing a mix of resources like LGBTQ-awareness training, advocating on a state and local level, educating the greater LGBTQ community of Metro Detroit and more, SAGE Metro Detroit has helped to foster community and face-to-face interaction among those who receive its services. However, just as with all similar advocacy organizations around the world, steps have been taken to protect against the spread of coronavirus. Despite this shift in programming and protocol, SAGE Metro Detroit Executive Director Angie Perone said that LGBTQ older adults should still feel comfortable reaching out to the organization and using its services.

“We’re here for you,” she said. “All of us, our roles have expanded significantly because we are still trying to do some of the same stuff to keep us moving forward with a much more focused lens on what the immediate needs are given COVID-19.”

For now, the organization has put its focus on developing documents like this resource guide designed specifically for LGBTQ older adults, and focused on its remote services. Perone said that the Friendly Caller Program, designed to combat the isolation of LGBTQ elders, has been especially popular.

“The intent of the program was really to connect people by phone, and then provide resources and referrals as needed, but now the need has become really great for a lot of our participants so we need to be more proactive. And we are being more proactive about connecting them to groceries and ways to access food, ways to access medical transportation



and ways to access different kinds of health needs,” she said. “So we’ve modified and expanded the program to make sure that we provide the most accurate, updated information and access to resources.”

Perone said that SAGE is also hoping to create care packages to send to people in the community who might be feeling especially removed from resources during this time of social isolation. She added that while the “details are being ironed out” on the expansion of as many remote services as possible, she’s grateful for the help of a coalition created earlier this year to help out with the housing gap for LGBTQ elders.

“The folks that are participating are Affirmations, Corktown Health Center, Detroit Elder Project, we have folks from LGBT Detroit, Transgender Michigan, Trans Sistars of Color, and of course we have others — it’s a pretty broad group of folks that participate. And the goal was to release a survey within the

community to identify what is your current housing situation and what would you like it to be, what are the gaps in service, what are the gaps in meeting your needs, food, paying bills associated for housing, and it’s also a very important resource right now,” she said. “We’ve kind of been shifting the ways in which we’ve been disseminating that survey, but I think because we had that already in place, it’s been easier to already reach out to our collective organization and connect with each other.”

Though each of the coalition’s representatives has now switched to meeting remotely, those connections, she said, are proving “robust conversation about COVID-19” and how to respond.

“I will say, the specific coalition for COVID-19 is still emerging, and part of this is because all of us are still in survival mode in terms of what are our most urgent needs for our community we need to address right now, and also transitioning our own internal structures to be responsive,” Perone said. “So, I think while we’re all actually in touch with each other we are looking to having a deeper more formal structure that will emerge in the near future.”

In the meantime, Perone encourages anyone interested in finding elder LGBTQ care to stay connected virtually with SAGE.

“We’re pushing the importance of staying connected and making sure folks are really taking care of themselves and being mindful of that. The biggest thing we can offer right now is our Friendly Caller Program, but I think folks can really look forward to more resources on our website as well as our partner websites and other creative ways to stay connected,” she said. “And we’re also going to be looking toward the community to help us with ideas on what they need, and I think we’ll see some new evolving developments as a result of that as well.”

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## Mighty Real/Queer Detroit Art Show Postponed to Pride Month 2021

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

**M**ighty Real/Queer Detroit, the month-long, multi-venue LGBTQ art exhibition scheduled for June, has been postponed until next year.

“In keeping with public health directives, the Mighty Real/Queer Detroit exhibition has been rescheduled for June 2021, once again coinciding with the month-long celebration of LGBT Pride,” read a statement on Facebook from MR/QD Project Director Patrick Burton. “We deeply regret that assembling in June 2020 for the exhibition is no longer possible. However, given the strong response to our initial efforts, including over 100 participating artists, the postponement has created new opportunities.”

Burton’s announcement went on to say that the extra year of planning would allow the project team to increase the number of participating galleries, call for additional submissions and undertake studio visits, target the youth community and its artists with special outreach, develop special online programming in conjunction with this year’s Pride, and expand the Detroit Institute of Art’s exhibition programming of performance, film and panel discussions.

Burton, who had already lined up six spaces for the exhibition, including Collected Detroit, Galerie Camille, Hatch, M Contemporary, The Scarab Club and the Cass Café, said that each space had agreed to take part in the exhibition next year. He also said that the project team would work throughout the next year to raise awareness of the exhibition.

“In the year ahead, we will regularly post

information of interest,” Burton continued. “Our GoFundMe campaign to cover exhibition expenses, including the catalog, will be relaunched later this year. Those who are able to give at this time may still do so if they wish. These efforts will help us to build an audience for the exhibit and to increase its chance for future success, benefiting the greater Detroit art community.”

In a previous *Between The Lines* story announcing the exhibition, Burton promised it would “explore queer art by emerging and established Detroit artists [and] it will celebrate LGBT artists, past and present, from Detroit and its metropolitan area, whose works manifest distinct but intersecting backgrounds.”

The idea for the exhibition, Burton said, came to him while attending an opening at the Scarab Club and talking to BTL columnist and Scarab Club Board Member Charles Alexander.

“... There were so many artists that came to my mind as I started thinking; I had maybe 40 artists I had identified on a piece of paper. I said why don’t I do three galleries. So I continued to reach out to galleries I had a connection with or some kind of relationship with the gallery director and it just kept expanding,” he said. “That’s when I realized it was too much for me to do myself, so I started talking to other artists about being involved in the planning. ... It was really Charles Alexander who pushed me into doing this.”

And even if the COVID-19 crisis has caused the show this year to be canceled, Burton said the need for art is greater than ever.

“Art is a constant reminder of the preciousness of life, and this reminder offers us hope.”



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# Freep Film Festival, Jeff Montgomery Documentary Premiere Postponed

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

The Freep Film Festival was scheduled to take place April 22 through 26. It was to open with the premiere of "America, You Kill Me," the documentary that tells the story of the late LGBTQ right activist and Triangle Foundation co-founder Jeffrey Montgomery. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the festival and premiere have been pushed back to December.

"Exact dates and venues [are] TBA but we will provide updates as we received them from the FREEP Film Festival team on our website and Facebook pages," read an announcement on [americayoukillme.com](http://americayoukillme.com). "We had hoped that the originally scheduled April 22nd premiere date for our documentary would provide us with a solid Spring 2020 public launch of 'America, You



'Kill Me.' Regardless, the AYKM team plans to continue to explore next steps to assure a successful launch of this important documentary. Your ongoing support for our project is appreciated." "America, You Kill Me" is directed by College for Creative Studies graduate

Daniel Land and is produced by Jeffrey's brother John Montgomery. For those who have already purchased tickets for the festival or premiere, organizers say that they will be honored in December, but refunds are available as well.

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## MSU Extension Offers Free Online Group Learning, Entertainment Events

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

In order to prevent the spread of coronavirus, it's vital to practice social distancing whenever possible. However, because social distancing requires people to be physically isolated, it can be difficult to keep up with all of one's wellness, learning and career goals during this time. To combat that, Michigan State University's Extension program, which brings the university's resources to people around the state, has expanded hundreds of its programs to be available online to anyone.

"We're no longer doing any kind of group face-to-face programming or activities, so my team is working very hard to rotate as much of what we do into online opportunities as possible," said. Dr. Jeff Dwyer, the director of MSU Extension. "There are three things that we're known for: one is taking the work of a great land grant university to all residents in Michigan, second that we are truly statewide and our people live in the communities where they work, and third that we work in so many different areas — we have over 200 active programs at this point in

time."

He said that this expansion of services will give people all over the state real-time access to anything and everything from yoga classes to webinars on starting a business and homeownership. Each of these events is listed on the site's virtual events calendar. As of this article's publication date, there are events scheduled all the way through September.

And for people looking for specific resources and web events, Dwyer said that MSU Extension breaks down its focuses into four areas: health and nutrition, children and youth, agriculture and agribusiness and community development.


"And it's important for people to know that this is not a page that they're going to want to look at one time. It's literally changing every day because dozens and dozens and dozens of people are actively working to get more on this website," he said.

He added that while the circumstances surrounding this expansion of virtual events is far from ideal, it could be a great way for people across the state to create virtual


communities.

"Is it learning from an individual? Absolutely it is. But it's also an opportunity for us all to be reminded that we're a part of this much larger community and one of the ways we can be connected is by learning and the things we're doing together online," he said, citing an instructional video on jump roping that he participated in recently.

"Which might not sound like a big deal, but I'm almost 60 and I haven't jumped rope for 50 years. But it was interesting, and she went through some basic movements and went to get fancy and that's the kind of thing people could do with their family. ... We could have a whole neighborhood where people come out on the end of their driveways and jump rope," Dwyer said. "Those are the things we hope for, too. Some of this is about learning, but some of it is about encouraging people to maintain health and to, wherever possible with appropriate social distancing, stay connected to people."



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## Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

### Gaston and LeFou are back

Think back to that flash of a moment in 2017's live-action remake of Disney's "Beauty and the Beast," the one where it seemed that Gaston's (Luke Evans) sidekick LeFou (Josh Gad) was, in effect, coming out as gay. We call it a flash because if you blinked you missed it – that is, if you don't count the constant thread of LeFou having a wild crush on Gaston – but that's another complaint for another day. It's canon now: LeFou is gay (but keep up, Gad is heterosexual and Evans is the gay actor, just for the record). Now that you have all



Luke Evans. Photo: KathClick

that background you can know that Disney+ is developing a six-part prequel series about the two characters and how they came to be such a villainous team. It'll also be musical, with songs from veteran "Beauty" composer Alan Menken. And we're just telling Disney now, because we'll all be watching from the social-distancing comfort of our homes and paying very close attention that LeFou better stay very, very, very gay or there will be a riot.

### 'The Baby-Sitters Club' comes to Netflix

Kids' literature is no stranger to independent-minded tomboy characters created by talented and thoughtful lesbian authors, such as "Harriet The Spy" by Louise Fitzhugh and "The Baby-Sitters Club" by Ann M. Martin. But unlike Harriet, whose adventures spanned just two novels, "The Baby-Sitters Club" became an enduring series throughout the '80s and '90s, with a feature film version in 1995. And now comes a series from Netflix – same name, naturally – that will bring the girls up to date for a new generation. The four mains are all relative newcomers: Sophie Grace as Kristy, Shay Rudolph as Stacey, Malia Baker as Mary-Anne, and Momona Tamada as Claudia, with Alicia Silverstone and Mark Feuerstein providing grown-up support. There's no drop date yet, but that's Netflix for you. And while you're waiting, there are quite literally a couple hundred books in this series, waiting to satisfy your childhood nostalgia urge.

### 'American Gigolo' calling for Showtime

Feeling a sense of deja-vu? Well, it's because "American Gigolo," the stylish 1980 male escort drama starring Richard Gere and Lauren Hutton, keeps promising to become a TV series and then just... not. In its day, the film was obsessed over for its fashionable details, as well as for its strange straddling of queer panic and queer pleasure, all while objectifying its occasionally nude star. But now comes another chance of resurrection at Showtime, where Jon Bernthal ("Ford v Ferrari") will star as the sex worker who was framed for murder. David Hollander ("Ray Donovan") is penning the script that updates the story to present day (and yet set only 18 years after the original story, so good luck keeping your mind wrapped around that), as the older, wiser Gigolo struggles to find his way in the

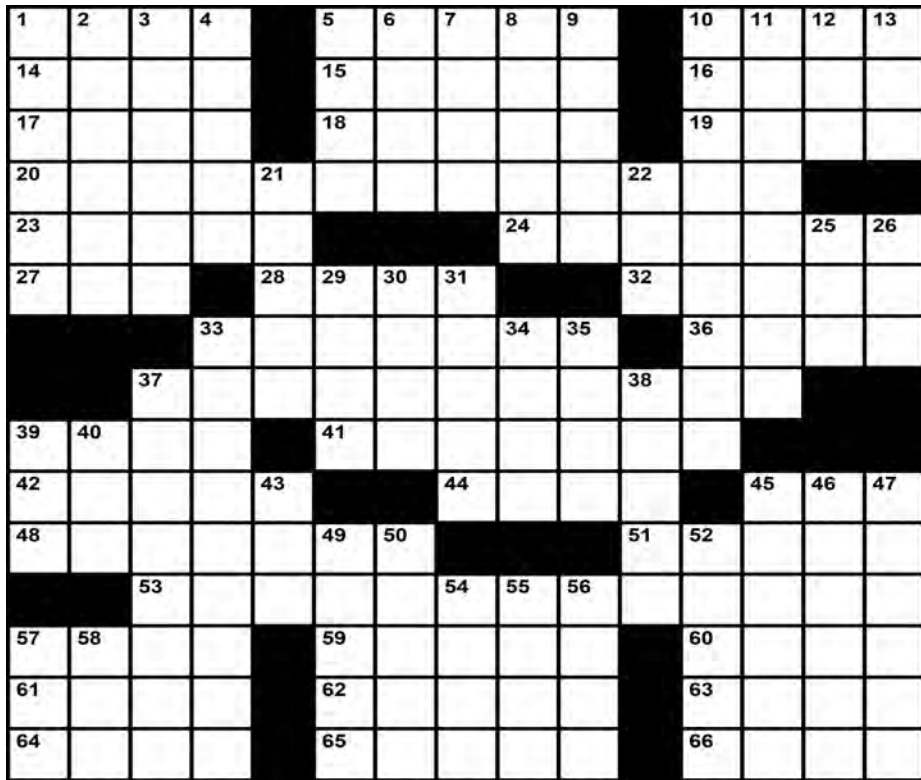
modern sex industry of Los Angeles, all while trying to sort out the truth about who framed him so many years ago. We're not holding our breath for this one because we were promised it before, but now that Showtime's delightfully trashy reality series "Gigolos" is no more, there's a vacant space in our hearts waiting for a hero.

### Joel Kim Booster's 'Trip' to Quibi

Actor and stand up comic Joel Kim Booster ("The Other Two," which he co-produces) is taking his new project to Quibi, the streaming platform for short-form series. It's called "Trip," and he'll write, produce and star in it, a mini-sitcom about two gay friends on vacation in Fire Island. The twist here is that "Trip," while ostensibly about gays doing typical gay things in a gay place, is inspired by Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" (can't wait to see who the Mr. Darcy turns out to be). This will mark Booster's debut as a series creator, and we're looking forward to seeing how much of his stand-up material – which sometimes involves discussions of his religious upbringing and always includes details of his life as a gay, Asian man – will make it into the final product. No matter what, it's a trip we're ready to take.

Romeo San Vicente is a full round trip all by himself.





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## Q Puzzle

### Across

- 1 Irene of \_Fame\_
- 5 Sound of three men in a tub
- 10 Bit of salt, for Stephen Pyles
- 14 Way to come
- 15 Stars that shoot off
- 16 Emerald Isle
- 17 \_To \_\_\_ Foo Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar\_
- 18 "I knew \_\_\_ along!"
- 19 What fruits do in orchards
- 20 Laura Dern series set in Monterey, California
- 23 There's a single runner
- 24 Treat to eat while dropping trou?
- 27 Jan. 1 until now
- 28 Unlikely to bite
- 32 Intense desires
- 33 Infuses with bubbles
- 36 Ginsberg's "In Back of the \_\_\_"
- 37 Laura Dern series about a corporate executive who has a nervous breakdown
- 39 \_\_\_ Fein
- 41 Accounts of AnaÔs Nin and such
- 42 Really get into somebody
- 44 Costner character
- 45 Binges, briefly
- 48 Statistic in David Kopay's sport
- 51 \_\_\_ Eclipse\_
- 53 Laura Dern movie about a coast-to-coast divorce
- 57 Prison sticker
- 59 Like a happy face that you put on
- 60 Inventor Elias
- 61 Himalayan legend
- 62 Dinah of a golf classic
- 63 Ivy League team
- 64 Calendar boxes
- 65 Many go down on them
- 66 Money from Lucy to Ethel

### Down

- 1 Gay rodeo guy
- 2 Rub some oil on
- 3 Like a tree's cross section
- 4 \_West Side Story\_ Jet, e.g.
- 5 Prissy temper tantrum
- 6 Trent of Mississippi
- 7 Shaped like the office of the top homophobe
- 8 Witchcraft trials city
- 9 Greeting for Dolly
- 10 De Rossi's wife
- 11 Earhart's velocity
- 12 B'way hit sign
- 13 Cut
- 21 Chip company
- 22 It's attractive and a bit of a shock
- 25 Lupino of \_Women's Prison\_
- 26 Immigrant's subj.
- 29 Dry as a bone
- 30 Threesome that visited Mary
- 31 Green with a mostly unfabulous social life
- 33 She played the housekeeper on \_The Brady Bunch\_
- 34 Raison d'\_\_\_
- 35 Frida's half-dozen
- 37 Frequent online exaggeration
- 38 Chicken hawk pads
- 39 Undercover agent
- 40 "I Got Rhythm" writer Gershwin
- 43 Organ pleased by Britten
- 45 Peter who played Lawrence
- 46 No pal of creationists
- 47 Hardest to catch
- 49 Whitman's leaves
- 50 Eminem's \_\_\_ Mile\_
- 52 Questionnaire choice
- 54 It's for skin care
- 55 Hiker's snack
- 56 Some of Mary's lambs
- 57 Pink Floyd guitarist Barrett
- 58 "Isn't \_\_\_ bit like you and me?" ("Nowhere Man")

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## AIDS/HIV

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

### Metro Care Coordination Network

Free, comprehensive services for those living with HIV/AIDS.  
877-931-3248  
248-266-5545  
[Metrocarenetwork.org](http://Metrocarenetwork.org)

### UNIFIED - HIV Health & Beyond

3968 Mt. Elliott St.  
Detroit MI 48207-1841  
313-446-9800  
[www.miunified.org](http://www.miunified.org)  
Michigan HIV/STED Hotline  
800-872-2437

### Matrix MAC Health

429 Livernois St.  
Ferndale, MI 48220  
888-226-6366  
248-545-1435  
<http://www.matrixhumanservices.org/programs/matrix-mac-health/>

### Macomb County STD Clinic

27690 Van Dyke  
Warren, MI 48093  
586-465-8440  
<http://health.macombgov.org/Health-Programs-HPDC-HIVAIDSCounselingTesting>

### Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency (OLSHA)

196 Cesar E. Chavez Ave.  
Pontiac, MI 48343  
248-209-2647  
[www.olhsa.org](http://www.olhsa.org)

### Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Service (ACCESS)

Sterling Heights Center  
4301 East 14 Mile Rd.  
Sterling Hts., MI 48310  
586-722-6036  
[www.accesscommunity.org](http://www.accesscommunity.org)

## Advocacy

### Equality Michigan

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

## Campus

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

### U-M Ann Arbor

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

### Oakland University Gender & Sexuality Center

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

### Eastern Michigan University

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

### The Lawrence Tech LGBT Resource Center

[ltu.edu/student\\_affairs/lgbt.asp](http://ltu.edu/student_affairs/lgbt.asp)  
**Wayne State JIGSAW**  
[Facebook.com/groups/WayneStateJIGSAW](https://www.facebook.com/groups/WayneStateJIGSAW)  
[wsujigsaw@gmail.com](mailto:wsujigsaw@gmail.com)

## Community Centers

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

### Jim Toy Community Center

Ann Arbor  
[www.jimtoycenter.org](http://www.jimtoycenter.org)  
[www.facebook.com/jimtoycenter](https://www.facebook.com/jimtoycenter)  
or follow them on Twitter @JimToyCenter.  
319 Braun Court  
Ann Arbor, MI  
734-995-9867

### LGBT Detroit

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

### Affirmations

Ferndale  
<http://goaffirmations.org>  
[www.facebook.com/Affirmations/](https://www.facebook.com/Affirmations/)  
or follow them on Twitter @GoAffirmations.  
290 W. Nine Mile Road  
Ferndale, MI  
248-398-7105

## Legal

### American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan

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

### Fair Michigan

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

### Know Your Rights Project

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

## Older Adults

### SAGE Metro Detroit

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

## Political

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

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

## Professional Groups

### Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce

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

### Ties Like Me

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

## Transgender

### FtM Detroit

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

## Get Listed, Promote Your Events

You can add or update any listing by going to [www.PrideSource.com](http://www.PrideSource.com) and clicking on Yellow Pages. Once you submit your listing, our staff will contact you to confirm your information. You can add your event to the Pride Source Calendar online and in print by going to [www.PrideSource.com](http://www.PrideSource.com) and clicking on Calendar, then "Add Event." Send any press releases and announcements to [editor@pridesource.com](mailto:editor@pridesource.com)



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

### FtM A2 Ypsi

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

### Transgender Michigan

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

### Trans Sistas of Color Project

19641 W. 7 Mile Rd. in Detroit  
313-537-7000 Ext 107  
[info@tscopdetroit.org](mailto:info@tscopdetroit.org)  
[www.facebook.com/TSCOPD/](https://www.facebook.com/TSCOPD/)

## Youth

### Ruth Ellis Center

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

### Ozone House

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

### Stand With Trans

Farmington, MI  
[www.standwithtrans.org](http://www.standwithtrans.org)  
248-739-9254

## Find these resources online

- Adoption Services
- AIDS/HIV Hotlines
- AIDS/HIV Organizations
- Alzheimer's Association
- Animal Shelter
- Anti-Violence
- Archives/Collections
- Campus; Student and Alumni Groups
- Cancer Support Groups
- Choruses
- Community Centers
- Employee Resource Groups
- Families and Parents
- Foster Care
- Foundations and Funders
- Hotlines & Switchboards
- Labor Union
- Legal Organizations
- Museums
- Music Groups
- National Organizations
- Political Organizations
- Professional Organizations
- Religious & Spiritual
- Senior Living
- Seniors
- Social/Community Organizations
- Sports
- Substance Abuse
- Transgender Groups/Services
- Women's Health
- Youth Services



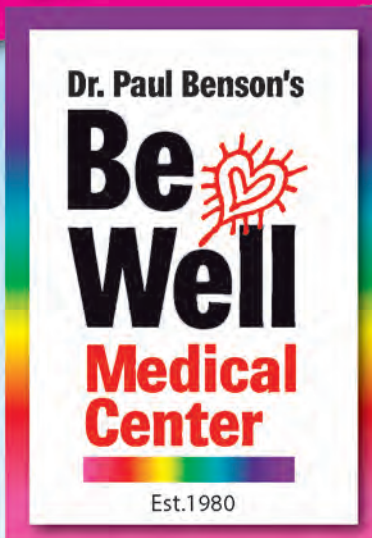
# On the Edge of Primary Care PODCASTS with Dr. Paul Benson



**Dr. Benson is launching a new podcast series for 2020!**

Use your cell phone to capture the QR code above, or visit our website, Spotify, Apple, or Google for access.

Since 1980, our medical team has been committed to providing compassionate, sensitive care for all lifestyles. The topics and specialists featured on the podcast will help you keep pace with the most up-to-date info to improve your health!



**1 Why We Sleep?** (Dr. Benson) Release: **1/2/2020**

Sleep is one of the most important, but least understood aspects of our lives and wellness.

**2 Living with HIV in the 21st Century** (Dr. Benson & Caleb Youngblood) Release: **1/16/2020**

HIV is a chronic manageable disorder, perhaps easier to live with than Heart Disease or Diabetes. Learn the latest about the HIV virus, new therapies, and the lessons learned from our history of dealing with HIV and its social stigma.

**3 On the Edge: Transcending the Standard of Care**

(Dr. Paul Benson, Dorea Shoemaker & Gretchen Haughton) Release: **1/30/2020**

Take matters into your own hands and become an active participant in your health. We'll discuss Cannabidiol (CBD) and its properties to improve and manage health with an expert, Dorea Shoemaker. CBD may be a new and safer alternative for pain instead of Tylenol or ibuprofen. We'll also discover benefits of whole food supplements to keep us healthy.

**4 The Transgender Population – Understanding and Embracing this Population** (Leon Bullough) Release: **2/13/2020**

A report from the World Professional Association on Transgender Health's (WPATH) Annual Conference. Hormone Replacement therapy is only a part of the transitioning process. Community and mental health support is essential for success. Individualized care plans based on evidence based

medicine and created to match each individual's desires and pace is essential to make the transition process a safe and healthy journey.

**5 Sexual Health and HIV Prevention**

(Dr. Paul Benson & Mark Rosen) Release: **2/27/2020**

We'll discuss sexually transmitted infections and their prevention. Many healthcare providers sweep this topic under the rug, but outcomes improve when we talk about how to stay healthy and infection free. Sexual health is not simply the absence of disease. It's living comfortably without fear or stigma; and embracing your sexuality while living day to day in your comfort zone.

**6 Living Well Over the Age of 50**

(Dr. Benson and Colin Colter) Release: **3/12/2020**

We'll discuss simple steps you, with the assistance of your doctor, can implement to live longer and healthier. Proper health maintenance makes a big difference at any age, but becomes even more important as the decades pass. We'll talk about prevention and aggressive strategies to manage co-morbidities sometimes encountered as we age. We can't turn back the clock, but you *can* improve your heart, liver, brain function, kidneys, and virtually every organ system.



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