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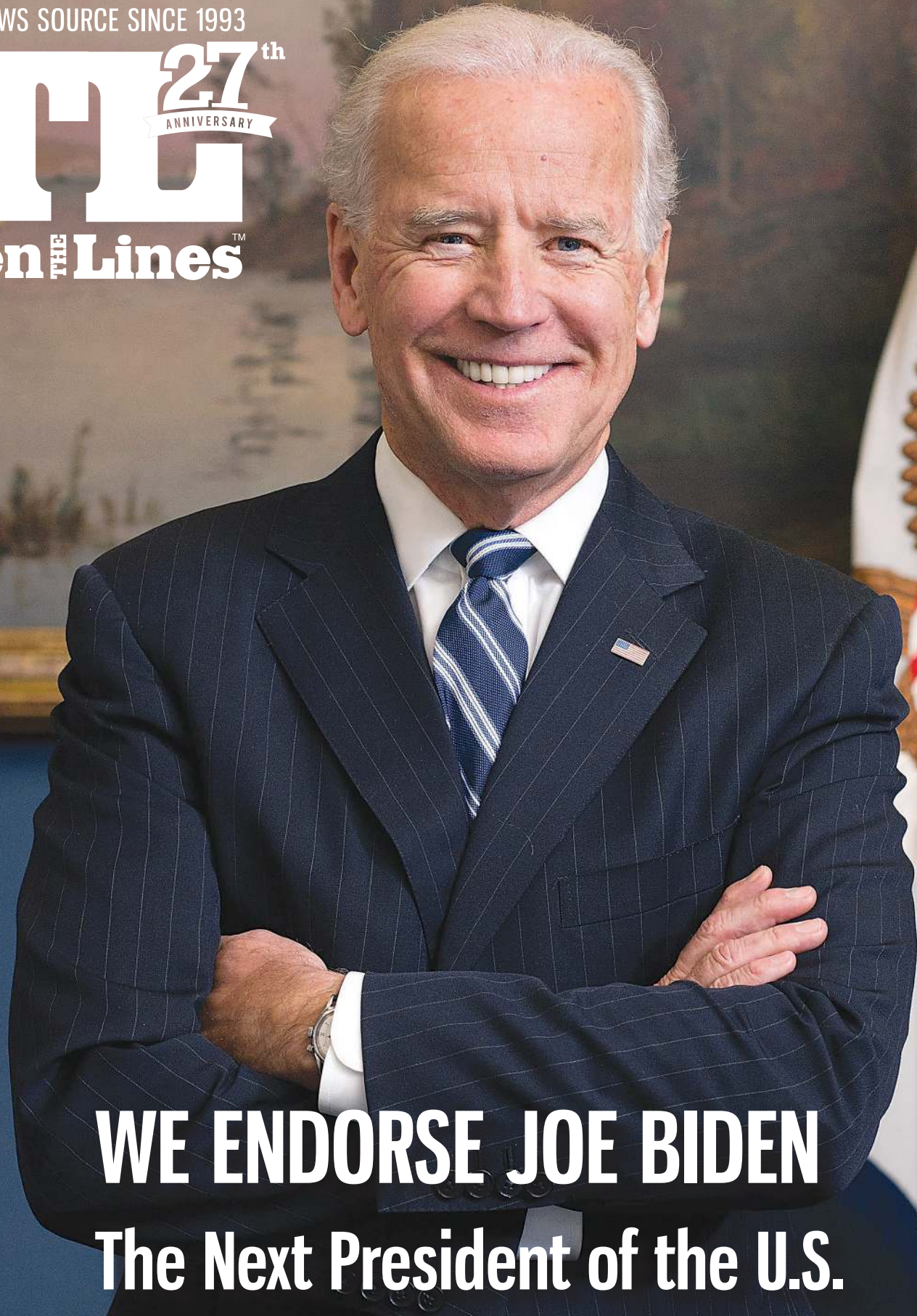
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The Trevor Project Talks COVID-19 Impact on Services
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Rea Carey to Step Down as National LGBTQ Task Force Executive Director
By Michael K. Lavers

Sarah McBride would make history if elected as the nation's first openly transgender state senator. (Washington Blade file photo by Daniel Truitt)

Also, make sure to check back for our LGBTQ Voter Guide at mivoterguide.com and continuing COVID-19 coverage.



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For Joe Biden, Push Relentlessly Until Nov. 3

NATIONAL LGBT NEWSPAPER GUILD, BTL MEMBER

Among the many compelling reasons to make sure that Donald Trump and Mike Pence are not reelected on Nov. 3, perhaps the 26 most compelling are the transgender Americans — most of them trans women of color — known to have been murdered this year.

We needn't be simple-minded in making this argument. Trump and Pence did not pull the trigger, and those who did must, of course, bear the consequences for their horrific acts.

But the all-too-toxic environment that too many of our transgender siblings have endured in their lives has gotten immeasurably worse over the past four years.

For this reason and many more, in a historic move, the 12 newspapers of the National LGBT Media Association, which represents the nation's oldest and most established LGBTQ publications with a combined circulation of more than 1 million readers, are issuing this joint endorsement of the Joe Biden/Kamala Harris ticket this week.

From the start, Donald Trump has used the trans community as a punching bag to prove his toughness to his socially conservative base hungry for a strongman willing to turn back the clock. He has denied trans folks the ability to serve openly in the military, sought to strip them of nondiscrimination protections in health care, worked to rob trans youth of dignity

in their schools and battled to take away the right of student athletes to compete in sports.

And against the trans community as well as lesbian, gay and bisexual Americans, Trump's administration fought tooth and nail to prevent the pivotal advance we won at the Supreme Court in June — the recognition that we enjoy employment nondiscrimination protections thanks to the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Still, Trump and his see-no-evil GOP Senate allies refuse to move the Equality Act, which would extend those nondiscrimination protections across the board in areas like housing and public accommodations. For them, the nation's most embattled minority are bigots who want to enshrine their right to discriminate under the cloak of "religious liberty."

As in every other aspect of this endorsement, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris offer a stark and redemptive alternative.

After Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell denied President Barack Obama federal judicial appointments in his last year in office, he and his colleagues have rubber-stamped an unprecedented number of judges — many of them viciously right-wing, others lacking in even the most elementary judicial qualifications — whose influence will last for decades to come. The cornerstone decision in protecting reproductive freedom — Roe v. Wade — may already be doomed by the Trump court's configuration. Give him another chance or two to name a member to the high court, and the ball game will definitely be over.

Trump's governing has been much like his court appointments — where he is not cruel, he is merely incompetent. Mexican and other Latin American immigrants have been slurred in overtly racist terms and their children have been caged. Muslim newcomers to America have also been stigmatized where they have not been blocked outright. The damage is not limited to the newcomers. Latinx- and Muslim-American citizens have faced increasing levels of hostility and hate crimes.

Trump saw "very fine people, on both sides" during the 2017 neo-Nazi invasion of Charlottesville, but he's been snide in reacting to the Black Lives Matter movement, telling Bob Woodward in response to a question about why he can't bring himself to empathize with African-American citizens, "You, you really drank the Kool-Aid, didn't you?"

The novel coronavirus' most recent surge — in the Midwest — and the wild fires raging through wide swaths of the West are only the most calamitous indicators of Trump's refusal to accept the basic facts of science, a posture at one with his hostility to fact-based discourse on almost any public policy issue. It's no surprise that the nation's free press and the unfettered right of Americans to vote — the twin jewels of American democracy — are, in his mind, enemies of the people.

Meanwhile, Trump is most at ease with fellow authoritarian figures around the globe, whether it's Russia's Putin, North Korea's Jong-Un, Turkey's Erdoğan, or Brazil's Bolsonaro.

Since Hillary Clinton lost the presidency in 2016 even while winning almost three million more votes than Trump, the Democratic Party has undergone an internal battle of sorts for its soul, pitting insurgent, left-leaning candidates, many of them young newcomers, against more moderate establishment figures — on issues from racial justice to health care policy, economic inequality and climate change action. Those are all areas on which debate is legitimate, and indeed needed.

But here's the thing: with four more years of Trump, there is no real consequential venue for having those debates. Trump and his enablers are draining the oxygen out of our democracy. Debating between left and center in the House of Representatives is no substitute for regaining the White House and the Senate. Only then can we have our debates, lick our wounds and set a course for a better tomorrow.

This election will be decided in a small number of states — perhaps as many as a dozen, more likely just a handful. In all of the battleground states, LGBTQ activists and our progressive allies are on the ground working to elect Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. Especially in a year when much of the campaign will be carried out on the air and online rather than in person, all of us — everywhere across the nation — can pitch in to help in those states where a boost for Biden is most needed. Grab a bucket, adopt a state and dive in to the battle. None of us should wake up Nov. 4 wishing we had done more.

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See pages 19 - 35, compiled by Congressional District, to learn how your candidate is endorsed

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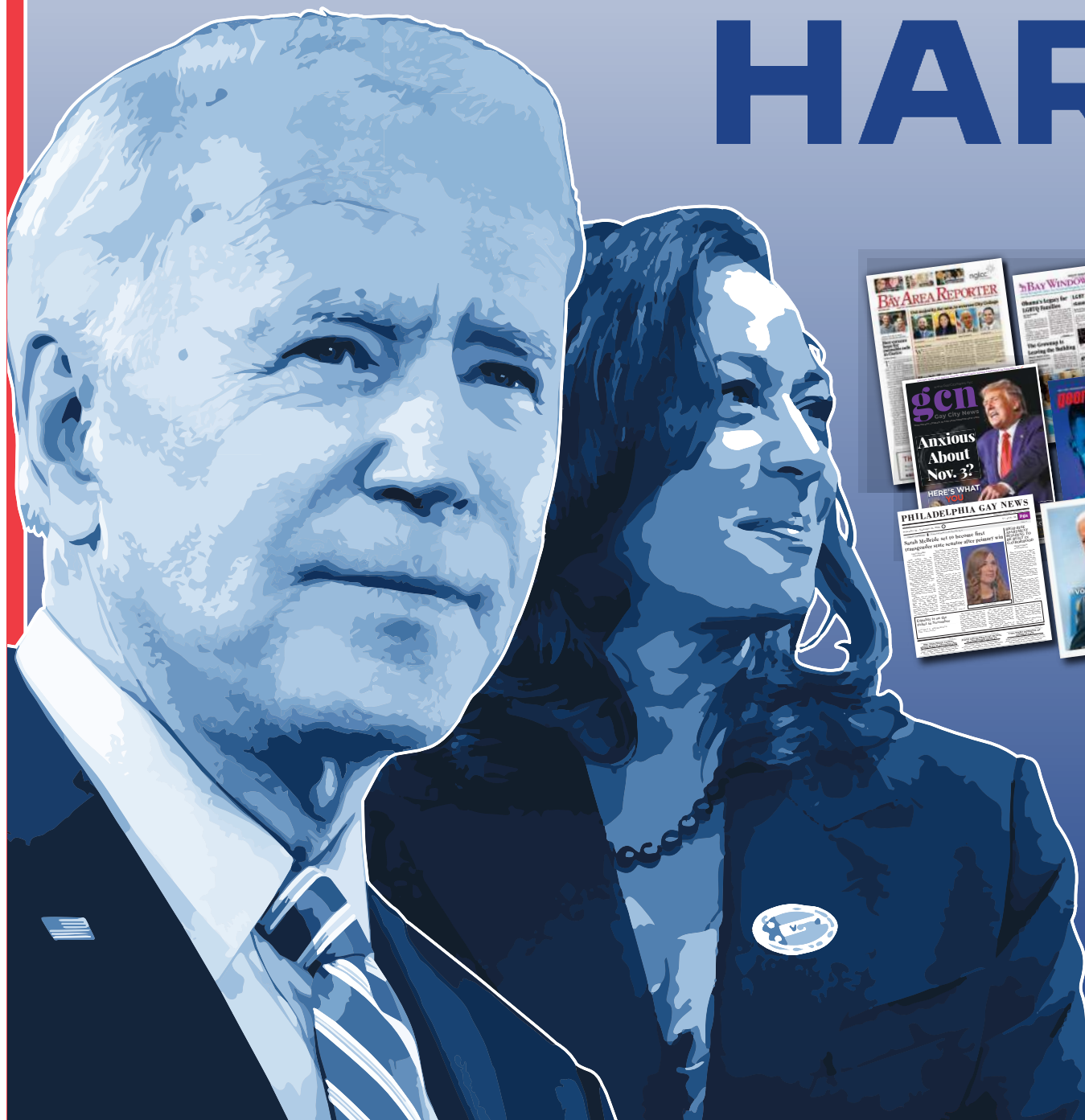
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Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death leaves LGBTQ rights on the Supreme Court open to religious claims. (Blade photo by Michael Key)

Ginsburg's Death Leaves LGBTQ Rights on Supreme Court Vulnerable to Religious Claims

BY CHRIS JOHNSON

In the aftermath of Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death, the resulting conservative shift on the U.S. Supreme Court may enhance the prospect of wins for religious freedom at the expense of LGBTQ rights, including in a pending lawsuit that will decide if a Catholic foster care center in Philadelphia can reject same-sex couples.

The remaining 8-member court will lack a reliably progressive voice as it adjudicates where to draw the line on contentious social issues—and that disparity will be compounded if President Trump gets to pick a replacement from his list of potential judicial nominees, many of whom with extensive anti-LGBTQ records.

Nan Hunter, a law professor at Georgetown University who has written on LGBTQ issues, said with Ginsburg gone the “biggest area of jeopardy for LGBT rights at the Supreme Court will be in the area of religious claims from anti-discrimination principles.”

“She was rigorous in assessing the impact of religious liberty claims with regard to protecting employees and others who are protected by civil rights laws,” Hunter said. “You can see that in Masterpiece Cake[shop] for example, or in the Christian law student case where she wrote the opinion, so the issues that I worry about most are the issues involving those sorts

of religious grounds.”

The issue of religious freedom versus LGBTQ rights, in fact, is presently before the court in the case of *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*. Catholic Social Services, which operates foster care services in Philadelphia, is asserting a First Amendment to reject same-sex couples as parents based on religious objections, even though it signed a contract with the city agreeing to abide by LGBTQ non-discrimination terms.

The Supreme Court is set to hear oral arguments in the case on Nov. 4, which is the day after Election Day. The stakes are incredibly high in the case because a ruling in favor of Catholic Social Services could mean exemptions for religious entities to all non-discrimination laws and policies—whether it be based on LGBTQ status or any other category, such as race, gender or national origin.

Lori Windham, senior counsel at Becket Law who's set to argue on behalf of Catholic Social Services before the Supreme Court, previewed her argument on behalf of plaintiffs Sharonell and Toni Fulton in a conference call with reporters Tuesday, although she explicitly didn't address how Ginsburg's factors into her litigation plan.

“Our litigation strategy is what it always been,” Windham said. “Philadelphia has violated the Constitution, and done it in a way that is particularly harmful for foster moms like Sharonell and Toni, and for foster

children. The city of Philadelphia admitted there were 250 children who were in institutions in Philadelphia and needed to be placed in loving homes, and yet it refuses to move any of those children into homes that are empty like Sharonell's, just because thaws families work with Catholic Social Services of Philadelphia.”

Hunter said Ginsburg—who joined each of the landmark Supreme Court decisions for LGBTQ rights and is remembered as a steadfast LGBTQ ally—would have taken a skeptical view of the religious freedom claims raised by Catholic Social Services.

“I just don't think Justice Ginsburg would stand for that,” Hunter said. “I think she would say that in a completely privately funded space, there are ways in which religious groups can live out what they believe their faiths commands them to do, but ... the city has a right to use public funds and to contract with agencies that will abide by the city's own anti-discrimination laws.”

One possibility is without Ginsburg, neither side in the case would be able to reach a majority and the court would issue a split 4-4 decision.

Jon Davidson, legal counsel for the LGBTQ group Freedom for All Americans, said “Ginsburg's death is a serious blow to the LGBTQ community, among others” and a tied decision would leave the issue open to further litigation.

“If a new justice is not sworn in by Nov. 4, when the *Fulton* case is set for argument, and the court rules 4-4, that ruling would affirm the result of the 3rd Circuit, which rejected claims that a religious agency has a constitutional right to an exemption from a city nondiscrimination requirement in contracts under which the city pays groups to provide government foster care services,” Davidson said. “A tied decision, however, would not create any precedent binding on lower courts.”

Even with an 8-member court, there are signs a majority of the court could rule against LGBTQ families. Already three members on the court—Associate Justices Neil Gorsuch, Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas—have signaled they would have granted relief to Catholic Social Services in a dissent to an earlier order the court had issued. That was before any briefing took place in the case at any level.

Moreover, Senate Republicans are chomping at the bit to replace Ginsburg with a Trump appointee before the presidential election in less than two months. They may succeed in confirming a justice such as Amy Coney Barrett, a judge on the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals who's Catholic and indicated her judicial philosophy is with infused with her religious views.

Davidson, however, said all is not lost if Senate Republicans get their way with a new confirmation, pointing to conservative justices

who joined with liberal justices in LGBTQ rulings.

“The Fulton case is incredibly important. Its outcome could have broad implications for the application of nondiscrimination laws and government policies around the country,” Davidson said. “But even though freedom of religion matters to all of us as Americans, it shouldn’t be used to create a license to discriminate. The justices should oppose sweeping, extraordinary exemptions that could create a broad license to discriminate based on a taxpayer-funded agency’s religious beliefs, and we are hopeful that any new justice would recognize that as well.”

It wasn’t immediately clear at what point it would be too late for a newly confirmed Supreme Court justice to weigh in on the Fulton case. The Supreme Court public affairs office didn’t respond to repeated requests to comment on what the rules say for when a Senate confirmation would be too late for a justice to intercede on any particular case pending before the court.

Could past LGBTQ wins be in peril?

Meanwhile, fears persist with Ginsburg gone that LGBTQ victories previously won at the Supreme Court will be in jeopardy. The range of these victories include the decriminalization of same-sex relations in the U.S., same-sex marriage nationwide and, most recently, a

guarantee that LGBTQ people are protected under civil rights laws.

Hunter, however, downplayed the idea these wins could be in peril, making the case they’re “thoroughly accepted in the law and in society more broadly.”

“For example, take Obergefell, you can’t unmarry people,” Hunter said. “I think the degree of acceptance of that issue is now so widespread throughout the country that I don’t think there would be any significant effort to try and reverse it. I just don’t think that would go there.”

Hunter made a similar assessment with the Supreme Court’s *Lawrence v. Texas* ruling in 2003, which struck down state laws criminalizing same-sex relations, and the *Bostock v. Clayton County* decision this year, which found anti-LGBTQ discrimination is a form of sex discrimination, thus illegal under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

“The power of *Bostock* was that it shifted the burden of inertia and Congress is so dysfunctional at this point that unless there’s a really transformational shift in the control of Congress, it’s unlikely to amend Title VII in either direction frankly — either to secure the decision in *Bostock* or to undo it,” Hunter said.

But while some past victories seem safe even with Ginsburg no longer on the court, chipping away at marriage equality remains a possibility.

Although the Supreme Court had ruled in favor of marriage equality nationwide in 2015, Arkansas had sought to relitigate the issue in 2017 the case of *Pavan v. Smith* by refusing to

grant birth certificates to children reflecting same-sex parents where one parent is a birth mother, the other a same-sex partner. The Supreme Court affirmed *Obergefell* applies in the cases, but Gorsuch led a stinging dissent suggesting marriage equality has limits, including in the area of birth certificates.

Hunter conceded that marriage equality remains an issue around the edges, such as employers who don’t wish to recognize same-sex marriage in terms of spousal benefits.

“I think the issue in terms of marriage, there the concern would be whether such an extremely conservative majority could dominate the Supreme Court that although the right to marry would remain in place, there might be exceptions in terms of solely equal treatment of same-sex marriage at least by some employers or some institutions,” Hunter said. “And the most likely category would be religious institutions or religiously affiliated institutions, or even as we saw in Hobby Lobby businesses that are privately owned and owners claim to be acting on their religious beliefs in the way they run a business.”

Given the persistence in some of places of the U.S. were politicizing same-sex marriage would be still be politically popular, state actors might still be responsible. All it would take is one state to undermine marriage equality.

In fact, the question is before the Supreme Court in the form of a petition of review filed by the state of Indiana, which justices will consider ahead of the long conference at the start of its term next week. Indiana Attorney General Tom

Fisher is asking the high court to review a U.S. Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that sided with a gay married couple who challenged the state’s birth records law.

Another issue that may soon come before the court is whether or not transgender people are guaranteed access to public restrooms consistent with their gender identity. The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals refused this week to reconsider a decision determined Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 grants trans student Gavin Grimm access to shared facilities as a male. The next step in the case, if the Virginia school district continues litigation, would be a petition for review before the Supreme Court.

Davidson, however, cautioned he doesn’t expect the Supreme Court act on any of petition related to LGBTQ issues before it decides the Fulton case.

“While there are several cases touching on LGBTQ rights in which petitions for Supreme Court review are pending, I would be surprised if the Court granted review in any of those cases when it considers pending petitions on Sept. 29,” Davidson said. “I think it is more likely that the court will wait to decide Fulton before it takes on any additional LGBTQ cases.”

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

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Activists Believe Ginsburg Replacement Barrett Could Hinder LGBTQ Rights

BY LISA KEEN

President Trump announced Saturday, Sept. 26, that his nominee to replace U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is, as expected, a jurist that LGBTQ groups are expected to vehemently oppose. President Trump said his nominee, federal appeals Judge Amy Coney Barrett, would receive a “very quick” confirmation.

LGBTQ legal experts are both deeply concerned and somewhat confident that this nomination could spell doom for legal protections of LGBTQ people and close doors for future LGBTQ plaintiffs seeking their rights to be upheld under the Constitution.

Barrett comes to the nomination after serving just two years the 7th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals where she did not weigh in on any LGBTQ-related cases. However, in her years prior to that, as a professor at the University of Notre Dame School of Law, she signed onto a letter from Catholic Women supporting the church’s views on various issues, including that “marriage and family [are] founded on the indissoluble commitment of a man and a woman.”

During her 2017 confirmation process, one senator asked Barrett, via written questionnaire, how she could assure members of the LGBTQ community that she is committed to rendering decisions impartially and without bias or prejudice?

“I do not think it lawful for a judge to impose personal opinions, from whatever source they derive, upon the law,” Barrett said. “If confirmed, I will apply the law faithfully and impartially in accordance with the judicial oath.”

Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.s.) asked of Barrett in a questionnaire, “Do you agree that the church’s view regarding marriage as a union between a man and a woman is irrelevant to the legal question of the right of same-sex couples to marry?”

Barrett responded with one word: “Yes.”

She then repeatedly stated that several important LGBTQ decisions at the Supreme Court were “binding precedent that I will faithfully follow if confirmed.”

They included *Obergefell v. Hodges*, U.S. v. Windsor and *Lawrence v. Texas*.

LGBTQ groups opposed Barrett’s nomination then. They said her views on civil rights issues were “fundamentally at odds with the notion that LGBT people are entitled to equality, liberty, justice and dignity under the law.”

In a letter to then-Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Charles Grassley, 27 national and state LGBTQ groups said in 2017 that they were concerned that Barrett’s “religiously-infused moral beliefs would inform her judicial decision-making” on issues of specific interest to LGBTQ people. And they expressed alarm that Barrett had delivered a



Photo cap: The Trump Administration’s judicial nominee to replace Ruth Bader Ginsburg Amy Coney Barrett. Photo by ZI Jony. Photo license link: gaybe.am/Qu.

paid speech to the “most extreme anti-LGBT legal organization in the United States,” the Alliance Defending Freedom.

In reaction to the news that Trump would nominate Barrett to U.S. Supreme Court, Lambda Legal issued a statement, saying, “Barrett will unleash a Supreme Court majority that is hostile to all of our basic civil rights, and the impact will be felt for decades.”

In the coming U.S. Supreme Court session, the court is set to hear *Fulton v. Philadelphia*, a case in which a Catholic adoption service wants the court to declare that it has a First Amendment right to violate a Philadelphia law against sexual orientation discrimination. And a Virginia school district is expected to appeal its loss in a case that tests whether Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act — which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education — prevents discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

There is some optimism still around the Title IX case. That’s because, just last June, a 6-3 majority of the Supreme Court ruled that Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act, which prohibits job discrimination on the basis of sex, also prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. That ruling, *Bostock v. Clayton County*, is expected to serve as a precedent for the Title IX litigation, too.

While Ginsburg is gone now from that 6-3 *Bostock* majority, Chief Justice John Roberts, who joined the majority opinion, and Justice Neil Gorsuch, who authored it, are still there.

And “because Justice Gorsuch’s opinion for the Court was so relentlessly textual,”

said Stanford University Professor Pamela Karlan, who successfully argued the case for the gay employee in *Bostock*, “I don’t see the Court coming out the other way on Title IX’s coverage.”

Jon Davidson, former legal director for Lambda Legal and current chief counsel for Freedom for All Americans, agrees.

“That majority [in *Bostock*] also should agree that other federal laws prohibiting sex discrimination (including laws barring sex discrimination in education, housing, and credit) encompass discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity because the Supreme Court’s decision [in *Bostock*] did not rest on anything unique to the federal employment nondiscrimination, but rather on the correct conclusion that, as a general matter, one cannot discriminate based on

sexual orientation or gender identity without discriminating based on sex,” Davidson said.

But Both Karlan and Davidson expressed concern for what the Supreme Court didn’t rule on last session: accommodating religious employers, such as the one in the Philadelphia case, set for oral argument on Nov. 4.

“The outcome could have broad implications for the application of nondiscrimination laws and government policies around the country,” said Davidson.

Davidson said he doesn’t think existing marriages of same-sex couples are at risk.

“Those who married same-sex partners after the *Obergefell* decision did so in compliance with the law at the time and have strong due process rights in not having those lawful marriages dissolved against their will,” Davidson said. “Whether a new justice will respect the precedent of *Obergefell* going forward, however, is of course of concern.”

But Jenny Pizer, senior counsel at Lambda Legal, notes that, even with the marriage ruling in favor of same-sex couples, “we still have had to continue fighting for family equality for LGBTQ people and their children.”

“For example, we are in court now fighting for two married same-sex couples whose daughters are being denied citizenship by the Trump administration even though the law is explicit that their American citizen parents’ being married entitles them to citizenship,” Pizer said.

And Barrett, says Pizer, “has been outspoken in her belief that same-sex couples do not have the same fundamental Constitutional right

to marry that different-sex couples have and that the marriages of same-sex couples do not deserve legal respect.”

Barrett also wrote a law review article arguing that, while all Supreme Court decisions serve as a precedent for lower court decisions and subsequent Supreme Court decisions, some are “super precedents” and others are more susceptible to change. Barrett’s super-precedent theory, said Pizer, “seems designed to create room for reconsidering and reversing precedents that justices do not consider ‘super.’”

Barrett is Trump’s third opportunity to select a Supreme Court justice. He previously nominated, and the Senate confirmed, two other federal appeals court judges to the Supreme Court: Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh. Gorsuch’s nomination was marred by the controversy that ensued when Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell refused to give consideration to then-President Obama’s nominee, Merrick Garland, even though Obama still had 11 months to go in his second term. McConnell left the seat open until after the 2016 presidential election and, because Trump won that election, the Republican president was given the opportunity to appoint the seat left open by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia in February 2016.

Kavanaugh’s confirmation was controversial as well following the accusations that emerged after his nomination that he had sexually assaulted women. He denied those accusations, and the Republican-controlled Senate approved his nomination.

The Senate approved Gorsuch’s nomination by a vote of 54-45, and it approved Kavanaugh by 50-48.

Barrett’s nomination also begins in controversy: While McConnell claimed he couldn’t advance President Obama’s nominee because it was a presidential election year, he has promised to rush through Barrett’s nomination even though this, too, is a presidential election year.

McConnell has made clear he has to votes to confirm the nominee and that he intends to rush through that confirmation process ahead of the Nov. 3 presidential election.

President Trump said Saturday that Barrett “will defend the sacred principle of equal justice for citizens of every race, color, religion and creed.”

Barrett professed “love” for the U.S. Constitution and said she is “mindful” of the legacy of Justice Ginsburg, whose seat she has been nominated to fill. Ginsburg died at age 87 on Sept. 18, following a long struggle with cancer.

Barrett noted that Ginsburg was good friends with Justice Antonin Scalia, for whom Barrett clerked, despite the fact that Ginsburg was one of the court’s most liberal jurists and Scalia one of its most conservative.

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LGBT Detroit Co-Hosts Voting Event with Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist, BTL Publisher Jan Stevenson

BY BTL STAFF

Voting in any election is an important display of civic duty, but in regard to LGBTQ equality, the upcoming presidential election in November could have farther-reaching consequences than most. To help educate voters on the importance of making their voices heard and all the ways in which they can do so, LGBT Detroit hosted its PRIDE Decides 2020: OUT and Voting event alongside SAGE Metro Detroit, LGBT Detroit Mobilization, United Precinct Delegates and For Michigan's Future last week. The event was moderated by Between The Lines' Co-Publisher Jan Stevenson. Sharon Dolente, the American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan voting rights strategist, began the meeting with a message about Michigan's extended voting rights this year due to Proposal 3.

"It's a challenging year for any number of reasons, but the fact that Michigan has so many options and ways to make their voices heard in this election is a great opportunity and I'm really happy that Michiganders came together in 2018 to make sure that we have a voting system that works for everyone," Dolente said, referring voters to the aclumich.org page for a full breakdown of voting rights.

Next, Bilal Hammoud of the Michigan Department of State and Ani Manolatos of For Our Future demonstrated the process of requesting, completing and dropping off ballots early if opting not to vote traditionally on election day. In addition to traditional voting options, Prop 3 brought back straight-ticket voting, expanded voters' ability to participate in absentee voting for whatever reason and vote up to 40 days early at their local clerk's office.

Among the featured speakers, Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist keynoted the event, and he emphasized his pride in talking with the group "on the day voting began in 2020."

"What I am heartened by is that at the core of all the things that have happened [in 2020], I actually see agency. I see the power within all of us as individuals and as a collective to impact these situations, to change them for the better, to lead our communities forward to a place where we are all safe and healthy and productive and supportive and supported," he said. "... And all of things that we've been dealing with this year and, frankly, some of the things that some of us have been dealing with for our lifetimes, whether you are a person of color, whether you are a member of the LGBTQ+ community — you name it. Whether you are a woman who has had patriarchy have its proverbial knee on your neck for eternity, we have an opportunity and we can do something about that."

To view the entire meeting visit the [Between The Lines Newspaper Facebook page](#).

Michigan Secretary of State, ACLU, MichiganVoting.Org Coalition Host 40-Day Early Voting Campaign Kickoff

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

On Thursday, Sept. 24, in front of a "Vote" mural by artist Ndubisi Okoye on the American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan headquarters in Detroit, the organization's Executive Director Dave Noble addressed the crowd at a socially distanced press conference event.

"Prior to 2018, voting in Michigan could be complicated. You couldn't vote early without an excuse, you couldn't register to vote on election day, and this system made it harder for everyone to participate. So the ACLU, with partners across the state, launched Proposal 3, the promote the vote initiative, to change that. Thanks to the overwhelming support of the voters in Michigan, now voting is simple and accessible to all," Noble said. "You can vote by mail, you can vote at your polling place on election day and, starting today, you can vote early in person at your clerk's office or local satellite location."

This press conference was held in partnership with the Secretary of State and the MichiganVoting.Org Coalition and marked the official announcement of Michigan's 40-day period to cast a ballot for the November presidential election. Additionally, it focused on the importance of creating opportunities to increase the votes of historically disenfranchised communities like African American voters.

Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson addressed the crowd second, citing the record numbers of voters anticipated to participate not only in-person on election day but through other methods.

"I'm proud to stand here as a Detroit resident, as a Detroit voter in celebration of the work that the community has done to ensure that every voice is heard and every vote is counted this year. We're in one of the most remarkable moments in the history of our democracy," Benson said. "In the midst of a global pandemic, we anticipate record numbers of citizens, perhaps more than ever before in our state and in our city, will be casting their ballots in the next 40 days. And we know many of them, in fact 2.4 million have already signed up for this, will be getting their ballots through the mail and will be either returning them through the mail, at a local dropbox or in person at their clerk's office."

She emphasized the importance of spreading voter awareness about their rights with partners across the state over the next 40 days because of a "historic level of efforts to misinform them about those very same rights."

The Rev. Dr. Wendell Anthony, president of the Detroit Branch NAACP, then took



Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson

"In the midst of a global pandemic, we anticipate record numbers of citizens, perhaps more than ever before in our state and in our city, will be casting their ballots in the next 40 days. And we know many of them, in fact 2.4 million have already signed up for this, will be getting their ballots through the mail and will be either returning them through the mail, at a local dropbox or in person at their clerk's office."

the podium. He cited the significance of the number 40 in religious texts as a test and trial period, like when Jesus had to fast for 40 days in the wilderness or Noah had to withstand a period of rain, stating that, "If they could do all that in 40 years and 40 days, we can certainly go to the polls in this 40."

"I'm pleased to join with my colleagues in an effort to remind every Michigander — and particularly those in the city of Detroit — that it's time to take your souls to the polls and vote. Forty days prior to a national election, the likes of which we have never, ever seen. And missed attempts by the president of this nation and his effort to suppress our Constitutional franchise by eliminating the Postal Service and falsely declaring absentee or mail-in balloting is rigged or conspired by illegitimate sources," Anthony said. "We must vote."

Anthony then went on to say that the NAACP is assembling a "cadre of lawyers in the spirit of justices Thurgood Marshall and Ruth Bader Ginsburg to make certain that our election process is protected and respected."

"They will be on duty on Election Day

through the time period in which the vote is finally counted. There must not be any obstacles or impediments placed on the voting electorate by any negative forces on the day of the election. If they are designed to intimidate, threaten or even prevent people from voting, we will take you to court and prosecute you," he said. "If you really believe in justice for Breonna Taylor, justice for George Floyd, justice for Ahmaud Arbery and justice for Ruth Bader Ginsburg, then you must vote."

Anthony's statements were echoed by Hassan Jaber, the president and CEO of the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services. He stated that through November, ACCESS has pledged to make 50,000 calls to voters to reach marginalized immigrant communities. Rhonda Saxton, area director for the Michigan League

of Conservation Voters Education Fund then took the microphone to encourage Michiganders to sign up as poll workers. Executive Director of LGBT Detroit Curtis Lipscomb was the last of the speakers to address the crowd. He encouraged those interested to become poll workers, reminding the audience that while most people are eligible to work the polls those who have committed a felony cannot. Lastly, he cited LGBT Detroit's LGBTQ-specific PRIDE Decides 2020: Out and Voting campaign and left with a final plea to get Michiganders to the polls.

"We encourage everyone to exercise their right to vote early. Now. Between now and Nov. 2, you can vote early in Michigan," he said. "Details are available at MichiganVoting.org."

For those who are interested in voting but unsure of which candidate to choose, mivoterguide.com contains a ZIP code-specific guide of each politician's endorsements and who is running in Michigan.


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Election Q&A: Supreme Court Chief Justice Bridget Mary McCormack Talks Reelection

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

As the November election draws nearer, Americans won't be voting just for a presidential candidate, both state and national candidates will be voted upon, too. In Michigan, there will be dozens of candidates running for the first time and for reelection across the state. Between The Lines has reached out to pro-equality candidates to get a sense of their goals and priorities for the LGBTQ community if they are to be elected. To get a full list of the pro-equality candidates running, visit mivoterguide.com.

Here, Supreme Court Chief Justice Bridget Mary McCormack answers questions about why she would be a good fit for reelection to her Chief Justice seat on the Court.

BOLD Why do you think that you're a good fit for reelection?

I hope that people are confident that the work that I have done so far on the court is worth continuing to support me in doing. I think that in addition to my contributions in the court's decisions, I've taken up leadership roles not only since I've been the chief justice but even before that on a lot of the other courts. I've done administrative oversight work where I think it has a tremendous impact on how people experience justice throughout our state. Michigan has 242 trial courts and they adjudicate 4 million cases a year and the Supreme Court has administrative oversight over them. And through that administrative oversight role, we have a real opportunity to improve the way people experience justice and I've been working very hard on a number of ways in which we can do that, including my co-chairing with the lieutenant governor and the governor's task force on jail and pretrial incarcerations and the Justice for All Task Force, which is something we announced last year. And it's a partnership between the courts and we try to address the extremely high number of people in Michigan who cannot afford lawyers when they have to figure out how to deal with a legal problem. Eight out of 10 people in Michigan can't afford lawyers, and our Justice for All Task Force is aimed at closing that civil justice gap. So I hope people are confident that the work I've done is worth supporting me to continue doing.

BOLD What have you learned during your time on the court that sets you apart from other candidates?

Well, having served on the court for 7 1/2 years now, I guess it's fair to say that I've learned a lot about how the Supreme Court functions as well as all the ways it can have a positive impact on people's lives. And I've put a lot of time into how we can do that effectively and efficiently, and we're undergoing some of the most important changes in the court system



over the last six months. We've seen more change than we have in the last 30 years and I've been at the center of all of that and it puts me in a good position to continue to make sure that that change is for the benefit of the people of Michigan.

What would be your top three priorities if elected?

I think the top three priorities are finishing the work of the Jail and Pretrial Task Force. We delivered 18 recommendations to the legislature in January and a number of those recommendations have already been reflected in bill draft and a number of those have already had hearings. I see that a couple of them were passed unanimously by the House Judiciary Committee, but there is still more work to do and I'd like to finish it. With the help of The Pew Charitable Trusts, [it's] the first time we're collecting statewide data to try and understand why Michigan's county jail populations have tripled in the last 30 years while crime is at a 50-year low. And not only do we now understand what's driving those numbers, we also heard from people across the state, studied best practices and we have an opportunity to make Michigan a national leader in pretrial and jail reform. And with all the work we've put into it, I'd like to push it across the finish line. I also really think the work of the Justice for All Task Force is critical to making Michigan a national leader in civil justice reform. Eighty percent of people in Michigan, if they're facing a civil legal problem like eviction or a family problem or a consumer debt problem, they have to navigate courts on their own because they can't afford lawyers and that really can undermine equal access to justice — which is

the foundation upon which all the rest of it stands. So I think it's really important to finish that work. We also are going to start doing some important work in the area of juvenile justice, and I think there's a lot of opportunity to make a difference in so many families' lives when they have kids entangled in the juvenile justice system, and I think that's going to be a priority if I'm reelected as well.

In light of the recent Black Lives Matter protests, many communities around Michigan and the nation are looking closely at existing justice systems and considering reform. In your role, what are steps you're taking to promote fairness in your courtroom?

Every decision in every case that we have to make we have to approach it with a commitment to the law and the Constitution. But as I try to make clear, very few cases make it to the Michigan Supreme Court. And that doesn't mean they're not important, those issues become the rule of law for the whole state, so each one is important. But most people experience [the law] in their local courts, in their trial courts and that's where it really matters what our approach is to the people who come to those courts. And we have had incredibly successful problem-solving courts in Michigan where the entire theory of the court process is to connect people to resources to help them solve the problem that resulted in them ending up in court in the first place. And we have all kinds of data now to justify how important and critical those programs are and I think we're always looking at ways to expand our restorative justice model in our courts, but some of these other structural changes — like the way we think

about front end of the criminal justice system through the recommendation of the jail Task Force and the ways in which we can think about the function of the juvenile justice system — have a far greater ability to impact more people and impact whole communities.

Why is fighting to maintain LGBTQ equity valuable to you as a judge?

Well, I think the only thing courts have is the confidence in our decisions and our outcomes. I mean by that, we don't have any army, we don't have any weapons, we don't have any money, we don't have the enforcement mechanisms that other branches of the government might have.

All we have is public confidence in what we do. And the public loses confidence when people aren't treated equally; it's fairly simple and understandable from little kids to your grandparents. Equal treatment under law is as foundational as it gets. And if you want people to have confidence in the court's outcomes, and therefore abide them, then that basic foundation principle has to be the center of what you do.

What would you like more people to understand about the Supreme Court?

How much it matters. The [Supreme] Court has this tremendous ability to make a difference in how the courts at the state operate through our administrative oversight role. So many people have to use their local courts — think of the 3 or 4 million cases a year. That's a lot of people in Michigan who are impacted by those courts. So I guess I hope people will focus on how important this job is and how important the court is.



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MCC-D Ordains 3 Local Pastors

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

Hattie Alexander-Key, Karen Dillaman and Roland Smith, all longtime deacons at Metropolitan Community Church – Detroit, were ordained as local pastors by MCC-D senior pastor and teacher the Rev. Dr. Roland Stringfellow. The ordination took place at an in-person service Sunday, Sept. 20, the first in-person service the church has had since the beginning of the pandemic.

“The term ‘local pastor’ is another way of saying ‘lay pastor,’ meaning they are not being ordained as clergy into our denomination but they are being recognized by this local congregation as pastors,” Stringfellow explained. “Each are taking on more responsibility than their role of deacon to respond to the new challenges we face providing pastoral care and launching a hybrid model — in person and online — of worship as we respond to COVID-19.”

The newly ordained pastors we will not have the title of reverend, which is reserved for those who have met the MCC denomination’s criteria and are not recognized outside the church as clergy. Stringfellow said he also started off his ministerial career in the Baptist church as a local/lay pastor.

“Hattie Alexander-Key, Karen Dillaman and

Roland Smith have demonstrated within our church their leadership and spiritual maturity to be ordained as local pastors,” Stringfellow said. “Each engaged in a pastoral formation process over the past six months with Bishop Yvette Flunder of the United Church of Christ who mentored all of us on becoming a pastoral team. This is the new model we will be embracing as we move forward — letting go of a ‘top-down’ hierarchy of leadership and replacing it with a team model. These three have the skill set to lead well in this church.”

Meet the new pastors

Alexander-Key had attended MCC-D at various points throughout the years before becoming a member in 2015.

“I am a preacher’s kid of a preacher’s kid,” she said. “My religious affiliation has been what I call Bapti-Costal, meaning that I was reared in the Baptist Church and in my late teens I became an active member of the Pentecostal Church of God in Christ, where I began active work in the ministry.”

Alexander-Key has served as a deacon at MCC-D since 2017. She has also served as lead for the Prayer Team and the Christian Education Department, as well as Children’s Church and as a lay delegate to the Universal

Federation of MCC churches.

“I believe that we have been and are continuously being equipped with the skill needed to help lead MCC-D on to a fuller responsibility and obligation to broaden our scope our service and outreach. The Lay Pastoral Triad is a team built to strengthen pastoral in-reach and outreach to the community. ... I see MCC-D as a bridge from the marginalized communities everywhere to our new structure of ‘Church Outside of the Box.’ We are the Church Alive in service to all through the leading of the Divine.”

Dillaman, of the three new pastors, has been with the church the longest.

“I started attending in 1985 and have been a member since February 1986,” she said. “I was raised Presbyterian. I spent about a decade away from church before finding MCC-D.”

In her almost 35 years with the church, Dillaman has served in most of the available volunteer positions, most recently as a senior deacon.

“I am excited about the idea of our church having a pastoral team — each bringing our unique skills and talents to the table,” Dillaman said. “My recent retirement from GM gives me available time to take on this role.”

The future of the church, said Dillaman, is sure to be exciting.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that there are possibilities for church ministry that we never even considered previously. I see that, ultimately, we will have a mix of online and local and in-person church worship, activities and ministries,” Dillaman said. “We are working on our strategic planning currently with our goal to be a radically inclusive, welcoming, loving, justice-seeking community.”

Finally, there is Smith, who grew up in the Baptist church but found out early he preferred a more non-traditional style of worship.

“Being a person who was rooted and steeped in the word of God, prayer, scripture and my faith has always been a major part of my life. Growing up, all I knew was going to school, doing homework and then whatever activities were going on at church. Then we were there all day on Sundays.”

Smith said that for him, answering the call to ministry was a “no-brainer.”

“I have always been a person to help and encourage people. I do this in my professional life. The difference is at my local church, so many are broken, confused and have a love-hate relationship with God because of the challenges and circumstances in their lives,” Smith said. “Our people need hope and a restored faith that God loves them unconditionally.”

“I love people and view [ministry] as an opportunity to lead guide and encourage God’s people and people everywhere so that they may know there is a place for them to come and worship freely and unashamed of who



Roland Smith, MCC-D senior pastor and teacher the Rev. Dr. Roland Stringfellow, seated Hattie Alexander-Key and Karen Dillaman, all longtime deacons at Metropolitan Community Church – Detroit, were ordained as local pastors.

they are,” Smith continued. “Being a pastor of a church that is progressive, inclusive and teaches the love of Jesus is where I want to be.”

Preparing for a departure?

Stringfellow has been the senior pastor of MCC-D since 2014, when he moved to Detroit with his then partner Jerry Peterson, who was taking on the position of executive director for the Ruth Ellis Center. The two were married the same year. But this summer, the couple announced they were separating, leading some to wonder whether the triple ordination was part of an exit strategy for Stringfellow, who maintains ties to the west coast and is on faculty with the Berkeley, California-based Pacific School of Religion.

But Stringfellow said there’s no cause to worry.

“I have no plans for leaving this ministry and I am committed in developing this new ministry model,” he said. “In the upcoming year of 2021, MCC-D will begin an active search for a permanent home for the church. It is our preference to no longer rent space but own our property. This is a part of our plans for growth. I have my eyes set on expanded outreach and a radical inclusion of our ministry.”

One thing is changing, or at least evolving, and that’s how the church meets the needs of its parishioners in the middle of a pandemic.

“As MCC-D continues to respond to the needs of our community during these challenging times, we strive to be a steady presence and a resource to help others with their physical and spiritual needs,” Stringfellow said. “The ordinations took place on our 48th church anniversary. It was a great time for us to reflect upon our legacy of community service and look towards our future of being there for the people of Southeast Michigan. And now our outreach extends beyond our region as we have others who are tuning in to our services from a far away as California and Florida.”

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Parting Glances

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Wagtail Talents Count

The Grim Reaper in the guise of a mild-mannered tabby named Oscar made interesting news a year or so ago in many New Age magazines and journals. Apparently, Persian feline beauty Oscar was psychic.

A visit by him to the bedside of a hospice patient was a sure sign the patient has only four hours to live. Oscar's feline psychic prognosis proved correct at least 25 times. Or, so it was observed and record attending nurses — but who's counting?

On a lighter note, I personally knew a guy who had a parrot named Bette. Bette said three things with camp inflection: "What a dump!" "Come up, see me some time!" "Get you, Mary!"

Curiously, Bette said these classic movie lines only to gay men. She outed several closet cases.

I also remember years ago at downtown Detroit's notorious lesbian Palais Bar there was a dyke nicknamed — I kid you not — Drano, who usually brought along her male poodle Patsy Belle.

She'd rack the pool balls, plop perfumed PB down on the table, pat his manicured derriere, and one by one the miniature pool expert would wet-nose each ball into a pocket. His butch fans cheered. For what it's worth, I learned to shoot pool at the Palais. Wet-nosing, elsewhere.

My favorite dog story concerns Hector, a fox terrier owned by a Willem Mante, captain of the S.S. Simaloer, a Dutch freighter docked at Vancouver, British Columbia. My own fox terrier Suzuki was an intelligent companion for 10 feisty, often-disobedient years — on her part, not mine. I saved money by clipping her. It took three nippy, but-determined, hours to do so.

Hector liked to "explore" port cities, but one day failed to return from his amorous shore leave. Captain Mante, understandably, was heartbroken but had a tight cargo delivery schedule and couldn't wait out the truant canine Lothario.

When Hector did return dockside he was seen by three separate crews to board their respective ships, sniff about, disembark. Only when the Yokohama-bound S.S. Hanley was hours at sea was Hector discovered as a stowaway.

Nineteen days later, as the ship unloaded cargo at Tokyo, Hector became sparky, jumped overboard, swam to a landing craft then leaving the dock.

Familiar faces were on board, including Hector's owner, Captain Mante. Dog and master were united 5,000 choppy miles later!

"What puzzled the overjoyed Mante," writes author Dennis Bardens in "Psychic Animals: A Fascinating Investigation of Paranormal Behavior," "was how the dog knew which vessel to choose at Vancouver. How did he know the Hanley was Japan-bound? There's no logical explanation, was all Mante could say. We can only marvel

See next page



Transmission



BY GWENDOLYN ANN SMITH

JK Rowling and the Outdated, Dangerous Trope

Over the last few months, "Harry Potter" author JK Rowling has developed from beloved children's author to the trans equivalent of reviled anti-gay crusader Anita Bryant. Rowling has evolved over the last two years, from having what her representative called a "clumsy and middle-aged moment" by somehow accidentally retweeting transphobic comments from others, to now openly writing lengthy transphobic screeds on her own website.

"Harry Potter" is not her only book series, however. She also has written four detective novels under a pen name, Robert Galbraith. The texts, known as "The Cormoran Strike series," follow the eponymous investigator and his business partner, Robin Elliott, as they solve brutal crimes.

I have to take a moment here to discuss Rowling's pseudonym. She claims the first name came from her personal hero, Robert Kennedy, while the last name coming from a fake name she crafted for herself as a child, "Ella Galbraith."

This said, because of her attitude toward transgender people, it seems suspicious that there existed a Robert Galbraith Heath, an American psychiatrist who pioneered a lot of what is now known as conversion therapy.

I also have to critique Rowling for using a pseudonym to distance "The Cormoran Strike" novels from her more child-friendly persona. While I've known many authors to use pseudonyms, this feels more blatantly cynical than most, providing a buffer from more controversial works.

Rowling's fourth "Cormoran Strike" novel is surely a fine example of said controversy. The story introduces us to the character of Dennis Creed, described as a "transvestite serial killer" who often dresses as a woman to insert themselves into women-only spaces as a way to stalk their prey. It should not be a surprise that this is exactly what Rowling claims transgender people are doing when they transition.

This is also not the first time Rowling has introduced a trans pastiche in "The Cormoran Strike" books, with a character named Pippa showing up in another book of the series, stalking the titular detective. The character is described unflatteringly, focusing on her hands and her Adam's apple. "Strike" even makes a prison rape comment at Pippa's expense.

I also feel I should mention a character in "Harry Potter"

See Transmissions, next page

► Transmissions

Continued from p. 12

that, in retrospect, may be the prototype for Pippa and Creed — and no, I am not referring to that time that Professor Snape ended up in a dress during “Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban.”

The character of Rita Skeeter, a “poison pen” journalist seen throughout the series, is curiously described. While much is said of her scarlet fingernails, her penciled-on eyebrows and her blonde curly hair, she is also described as having large, masculine hands — the same as Pippa, perhaps — and an “an oddly square-jawed face.” It could certainly fit that Rowling would write a character known for fabrications and falsehoods to be transgender, in light of now-revealed views.

Now I need to reveal something of my own. First off, I am not a big fan of “Harry Potter.” I never read the books, and I really only watched the films because my partner was a fan. I didn’t hate them, mind, I just really wasn’t able to get that much into them.

Even as everyone touted her originality, I saw stories that seemed to follow common fantasy tropes. The “fantastic beasts” all seemed to be fantasy staples — giants, dragons and so on — and while the notion of Hogwarts itself was largely original, a lot of the underpinnings hadn’t been that new since the days of J.R.R. Tolkien.

Her killer in drag is just as dated.

In 1959, Robert Bloch wrote the book “Psycho.” This was made into a film a year later by Alfred Hitchcock. In it, Norman Bates, a murderer, has been impersonating and dressing up as his dead mother. The story is likely an allusion to the Ed Gein case from

1957. Psychiatrists had believed Gein was attempting to make a “woman suit” to pretend to be his dead mother.

This notion of a “woman suit” was later revisited in “The Silence of the Lambs,” a 1991 novel by Thomas Harris that became the much better known film version a decade later. In it, a serial killer named Jame “Buffalo Bill” Gumb is making his own “woman suit.” Though the story tries to separate him from transgender people, the notion stuck in most minds.

Between “Psycho” and “The Silence of the Lambs,” there were dozens more such stories, from the pulp novel “Killer in Drag” penned by schlock director Ed Wood Jr. in 1965, to Brian De Palma’s slasher film “Dressed to Kill” in 1980. You’ll see this played out — and I mean played out — for comedy in “Ace Ventura: Pet Detective” and “Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery.” You could even say that the big bad wolf who dons Granny’s nightgown and cap in order to eat little red riding hood is yet another permutation.

So, to Rowling: Not only is your transphobia harmful, not only does it have real-world consequences on people who really just want to live their lives and have no interest in these bathroom-assault fantasies of you or the bigots who echo your feelings, but, quite frankly, your transphobia is trite and old.

It deserves to be sent to the remainder rack between a dog-eared copy of “Microsoft Windows 3.1: Step By Step” and a 1977 “Starsky & Hutch” novelization, and it has no place in the world of today.

Gwen Smith hopes Rowling will someday learn from his mistakes. You’ll find her at gwensmith.com.

► Parting Glances

Continued from p. 12

at the fact that it really happened.”

Once when my Suzuki got lost — followed by two days of panic on my part and that of my then-partner Larry — we got a call. Suzuki’s safe but miles away.

“Your collar ID-tagged terrier hid under our dining table,” said the good Samaritan who rescued her. “She wouldn’t budge. She’d come out only when my husband or another man enters. Never for me or my women friends.”

Scent of course is key. And it goes without saying that guys aroma was key. They physically scent differently than gals — especially ICON leather types.

According to Jim Lessenberry, director of a locally based Animal Learning Systems, “We know that dogs can identify and track to discreet scents emanating from five or more miles away. Animals can also zero in on clues

that we provide without knowing it.”

Clever Hans, the world-famous Russian ‘counting horse,’ to everyone’s amazement tapped out math answers with his hooves. Turns out, the Arab stallion scored $6 \times 2 = 12$ simply by watching his owner’s subtle facial giveaways.

To be on the safe side, I keep goldfish. On a DVD aquarium, at that. They don’t kiss, watch anything not going on or smell. They just keep going with the swim of things. I’ve named them L, G, B and T. (Let’s get booting Trump!)

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

Donald Trump

BY D’ANNE WITKOWSKI

When I learned that Ruth Bader Ginsburg died I was eating these little peanut butter granola bites I really like. I immediately felt like I was going to be sick. I don’t think I’ll ever want to eat them again.

The next morning my sister sent me a photo of my four-month-old niece reaching for the image of a little woman with a bun on her head and wearing a black robe. It was a board book about RBG. That image, more than any op-eds about what her legacy meant or how Trump and Mitch McConnell would shit on it, put things in perspective for me. Every day the future seems bleaker and bleaker. But there is still a future to fight for.

Some people are feeling more hopeless than ever. Others are stepping up and getting involved in ways they never dreamed of before. If you fall into the later category, great. Welcome. Thank you for coming.

If you fall in the former category, no judgment here. The last four years have been psychological warfare on every good and decent person. So much pain in so little time! It’s exhausting.

But if you’re looking for something to do with your anxious energy, I highly recommend volunteering for a campaign. Find someone who is running who shares your values. Someone who makes this current hellscape a little less shitty. And then help them win.

And here’s the thing: the top of the ticket is important, but you don’t have to choose to volunteer for Joe Biden. Here’s the truth: down-ballot races — and “down-ballot” literally means races further down the ballot underneath the presidential ticket — are just as important as the presidency. Unfortunately, they are also the races most likely to suffer from what is called “drop-off” voting. That means someone gets a ballot, fills in the circle next to Joe Biden and Kamala Harris and then leaves the rest of the ballot blank because said voter has never heard of these other people.

It’s tragic.

Now in some states you can vote “straight-ticket,” which has nothing to do with heteronormativity and everything to do with checking one box that means, “I vote for all of the Democrats” — the Republican option also exists but, you know, gross. But, of course, not everybody does this.

See, here’s the thing with, say, a State House race. If you get someone to commit to voting for your Democratic State House candidate, that helps all of the Democratic candidates on the ballot because that voter is much more likely to vote for other

Make phone calls; knock on doors — some campaigns are doing this, some aren’t. Any campaign worth volunteering with should have a strict protocol of mask-wearing and social distancing to keep you and the people you’re talking to safe — write post cards, deliver yard signs, make more phone calls.

Democrats, especially the ones who appear on the ballot before your State House race.

In fact, the more investment a voter feels in an election, the more likely they are to bother voting in the first place. If the only people you know on the ballot are Trump and Biden, it’s easy to think that your little vote doesn’t make much of a difference — you would be wrong, but I understand the thinking. But if you know that your State House candidate is a badass and she has been knocking on doors, safely, with, say, a county commission candidate you will be more invested in voting.

If you’re thinking, “I don’t have the time to volunteer, I’m trying to homeschool my child while also working from home and trying not to get COVID-19,” I understand. Everybody’s busy. But if you’re doom scrolling through Twitter to see when Trump calls RBG a “hag” — and, really, it’s only a matter of time — then you have time to do something positive to make sure that Trump and his supporters don’t win more elections.

Another good argument for working on a state race: should Trump manage to replace RBG with another conservative, things like abortion rights, LGBTQ protections and marriage equality are all on the line. If overturned, those will all go back to the states who can decide what is illegal and what isn’t.

Here are some of the things you can do for campaigns: make phone calls; knock on doors — some campaigns are doing this, some aren’t. Any campaign worth volunteering with should have a strict protocol of mask-wearing and social distancing to keep you and the people you’re talking to safe — write post cards, deliver yard signs, make more phone calls.

I have done all of these things and more, and I’ve lived to tell the tale. It’s not always fun — there are some people who love to call voters, for example, and those people are weird but also golden wonders any campaign would love to have — but it’s necessary work.

Nobody said defeating fascism would be easy. Let’s go.

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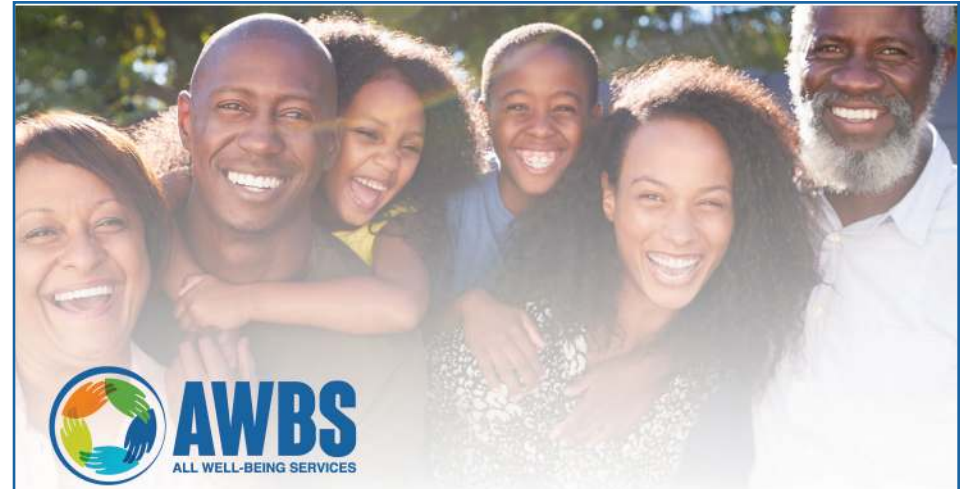
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For more information about PrEP and prevention services please contact our Lead Prevention Specialist Keith Hughes at khughes@miunified.org

WWW.MIUNIFIED.ORG

MICHIGAN'S LGBTQ NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1993



MiVoterGuide.com

A Project of Pride Source Media Group

Michigan's 2020 **Progressive** Voter Guide

YOUR PRO-LGBT, WOMAN, ENVIRONMENT, GUN SENSE & LABOR GUIDE TO THE ELECTION



Vote NOV. 3

Guide To the Guide

Between The Lines presents the Progressive Voters Guide for Michigan, which includes endorsement information from five key progressive sectors of the electorate – LGBT Issues, Women’s Rights, Labor, the Environment and Gun Control. All in one place, voters can see which candidates would support fairness and equality on a host of issues. The

Guide also provides right wing, conservative endorsements so voters can see which candidates, if elected, would actively work against progressive values in Michigan.

Here is a key to each of the organizations that have endorsements included in this Progressive Voter Guide:

LGBTQ Issues

BTL – Between The Lines is Michigan’s weekly newspaper serving the LGBT community in Michigan. BTL has produced a LGBT Voter Guide every other year since 1996. Endorsements are based on responses to questionnaires, incumbents voting records and candidates public positions on LGBT issues including workplace fairness, access to healthcare, adoption and family rights, marriage and safety, including their positions on bullying. Learn more at www.PrideSource.com

EQMI – The Equality Michigan Pride PAC is an independent Political Action Committee that evaluates and endorses candidates based on their responses to a questionnaire that is sent to every candidate running for public office. Learn more at www.eqmipridepac.com

HRC – The Human Rights Campaign represents a force of more than 3 million members and supporters nationwide. As the largest national LGBTQ civil rights organization, HRC will endorse a candidate based upon these criteria; support for issues of concern to the LGBTQ community, demonstrated leadership on HRC’s issues, and viability. They also grade incumbent legislators, assigned a

percentage of pro-LGBTQ votes. Learn more at www.hrc.org

Women’s Rights

EMILY’S LIST – A national PAC committed to electing pro-choice Democratic women to office. Learn more at <https://www.emilyslist.org>

MICHIGAN NOW – A chapter of the National Organization for Women dedicated to bringing women into full participation in the mainstream of American Society. Learn more at <http://www.michnow.org>

THE PROGRESSIVE WOMEN’S ALLIANCE – is committed to influencing public policy through the election of candidates and the advocacy of progressive values.

PLAN’D P’HOOD – Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan is a 501©(4) nonprofit focused on fundraising to endorse pro-choice candidates and electoral work in Michigan. <http://miplannedparenthood.org>

Environmental Groups

SIERRA CLUB - Michigan Political Committee is responsible for electing

environmentally-minded officials and lobbying in Lansing. They also created a 2014 legislative scorecard for both the Michigan House and Senate. www.michigan.sierraclub.org

MLCV – Michigan League of Conservation Voters is the leading non-partisan political voice for protecting Michigan’s land, air, and water. MLCV seeks to elect and hold accountable public officials to ensure the right policies are enacted to protect our families’ - and future generations’ - health, economic well-being, and ability to enjoy the pure beauty of our state.

Labor

AFL-CIO – The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations is a national trade union center made up of 56 national and international unions representing over 11 million people worldwide. They endorse candidates and initiatives that support collective bargaining and workers rights. <http://www.miaflcio.org/>

UAW – United Auto Worker’s Community Action Program (CAP) endorsements are based upon membership input and leadership

ratification. Decisions are made after examining the voting records of incumbents and previous officeholders or the stated positions and pledges of new candidates. Members often get to grill candidates directly on important issues facing workers.

Gun Control

Moms Demand Action - Michigan – Moms Demand Action is a grassroots movement fighting for public safety measures that can protect people from gun violence. They have over 6 million supporters with chapters in every state. www.gunsensevoter.org

Brady United – A national organization that promotes a comprehensive approach to preventing gun violence. Jim Brady became permanently disabled from a gunshot wound during a 1981 attempted assassination of President Ronald Reagan. Brady and his wife, Sarah, founded Brady United in 1993.

Right-Wing XXX

CTV – Citizens for Traditional Values political action committee supports candidates that are anti-LGBT, anti-choice, support teaching creationism in schools and want the government to reflect Judeo Christian values. <http://www.ctvmichigan.org>

MI-RTL – Michigan Right to Life political action committee endorses candidates who support a federal Human Life Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would outlaw all abortions, even in cases of rape, incest or to protect the mother’s life.

NRA-PVF – The NRA Political Victory Fund (NRA-PVF) is the National Rifle Association’s political action committee. The NRA-PVF states that “gun control” schemes are an infringement on the Second Amendment and a proven failure in fighting crime. www.nrapvf.org

U.S. Congressional Districts - Michigan

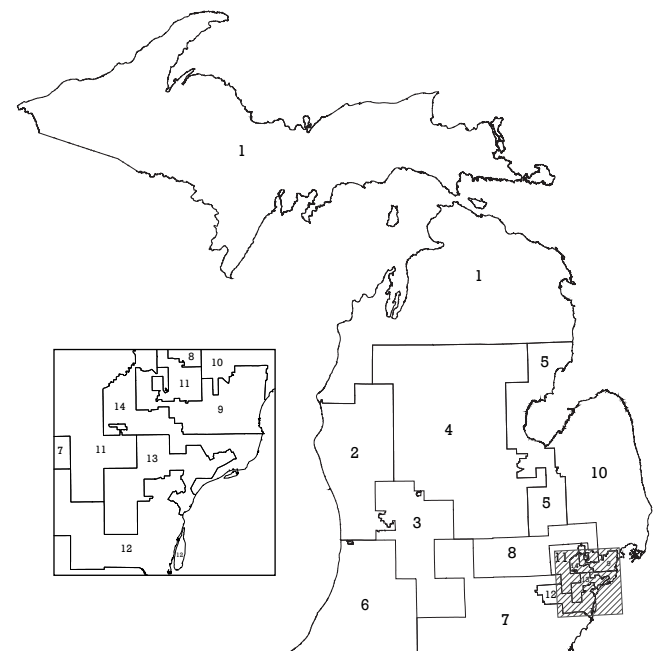
Use this map to determine which Congressional District’s voter grid is yours!

Unsure of your district? Go to www.MIVoterGuide.com and enter your zip code to receive a more specific ballot!

Did you know... You can see an example of your ballot before Nov. 3 by entering your voter information at www.Michigan.gov/Vote

Make sure you know as much about whose running in your region today!

More links and resources are available at www.PrideSource.com



1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	F'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA
1	Ferguson, Dana	D															
	Bergman, Jack (I)	R															
	Boren, Ben	L															

State Representatives

101	McGill-Rizer, Beth	D															
	O'Malley, Jack (I)	R															
103	Rendon, Daire (I)	R															
	O'Neil, Dan	D															
104	Roth, John R.	R															
	Crum, Jason	L															
105	Burke, Jonathan	D															
	Borton, Ken	R															
106	Allor, Sue (I)	R															
	Johnson, LeeAnn	D															
107	Page, Jim	D															
	Damoose, John N.	R															
108	Richer, Renee	D															
	LaFave, Beau Matthew (I)	R															
109	Cambensy, Sara (I)	D															
	Wagner, Melody	R															
	Hafeman, Jim	TAX															
110	Metsa, Janet	D															
	Markkanen, Gregory (I)	R															
	Sauermilch, Rick	G															

STATEWIDE RACES

Between The Lines Strongly Endorses These Statewide Candidates



Joe Biden

President



Kamala Harris

Vice President



Gary Peters

U.S. Senate



Bridget McCormack

Mi. Supreme Court



Elizabeth Welch

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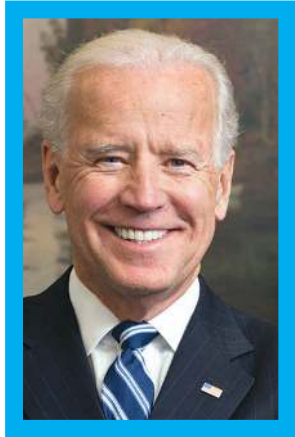
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Learn more online www.MiVoterGuide.com

See the key to endorsements on page 20 of this issue

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2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA
2	Berghoef, Bryan	D	█				█					█	█				
	Riekse, Max	L															
	Creviere, Jean-Michel	G															
	Huizenga, Bill (I)	R													█		█
	Van Sickle, Gerald T.	TAX															

State Representatives

72	Cheng-Schulting, Lily	D	█	█		█	█		█	█		█	█				
	Johnson, Steven (I)	R													█	█	█
74	Hintz, Meagan L.	D						█									
	Huizenga, Mark (I)	R									█				█	█	█
77	Brann, Tommy (I)	R													█		█
	Smith, Bob (I)	D	█	█					█				█				
80	Almquist, Erik	D	█	█					█				█				
	Whiteford, Mary (I)	R													█		█
88	Cornielle, Franklin	D															
	Meerman, Luke (I)	R													█		
89	Brown, Anita Marie	D															
	Lilly, Jim (I)	R													█		█
90	Banks, Christopher P.	D										█					
	Slagh, Bradley (I)	R													█	█	█
91	Hosticka, Brian	D	█				█		█			█	█				
	VanWoerkom, Greg (I)	R													█		
92	Sabo, Terry J. (I)	D	█	█					█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Haueisen, Michael L.	R															
100	Clarke, Sandy	D					█						█				
	VanSingel, Scott A. (I)	R									█				█	█	█
101	McGill-Rizer, Beth	D	█	█					█	█		█	█	█			
	O'Malley, Jack (I)	R													█		█
			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

Learn more online www.MiVoterGuide.com

See the key to endorsements on page 20 of this issue

3RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA
3	Scholten, Hillary	D	█		█				█	█		█	█	█			
	Meijer, Peter	R													x	x	x

State Representatives

62	Haadsma, Jim (I)	D	█						█	█	█	█	█				
	Dave Morgan	R													x	x	
63	Howell, Luke	D							█								
	Wolf, Rafael	L															
70	La Pietra, John Anthony	G															
	Hall, Matt (I)	R													x	x	x
72	Garvey, Karen	D	█	█					█			█	█				
	Outman, Pat	R															x
73	Cheng-Schulting, Lily	D	█	█		█	█		█	█		█	█				
	Johnson, Steven (I)	R													x	x	x
74	Saxton, Bill	D	█	█			█		█				█	█			
	Posthumus, Bryan	R													x	x	x
75	Gerrard, Theodore	TAX															
	Hintz, Meagan L.	D							█								
76	Huizenga, Mark (I)	R									█				x	x	x
	LaGrand, David (I)	D	█						█	█	█	█	█	█			
77	McKeiver, James	R															
	Palus, Louis	WC															
86	Bulnes, Marco T.	G															
	Hood, Rachel (I)	D	█	█	█				█	█	█	█	█	█			
87	Zandstra, Doug	R															
	Brann, Tommy (I)	R													x	x	
88	Smith, Bob (I)	D	█	█					█				█				
	Hayes, Sue	D															
89	Albert, Thomas A. (I)	R													x	x	
	Molette, Jay	D															
90	Calley, Julie A. (I)	D													x	x	x
			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	x	x	x

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Kamala Harris
Vice President



Gary Peters
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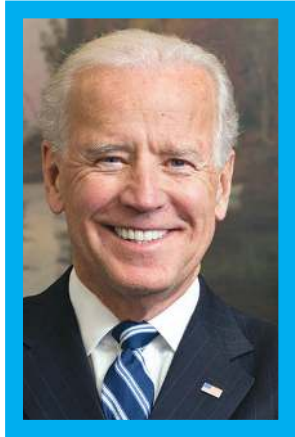
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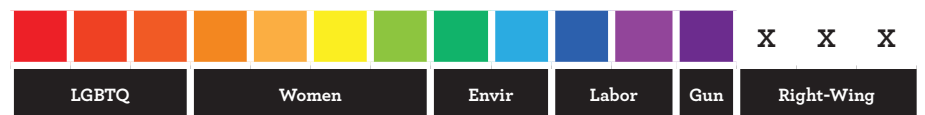
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U-M Regents

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4TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA
4	Hilliard, Jerry	D															
	Moolenaar, John (I)	R															
	Canny, David	L															
	Slepr, Amy	G															

State Representatives

70	Garvey, Karen	D															
	Outman, Pat	R															
85	Garrison, Andrea Kelly	D															
	Frederick, Ben (I)	R															
93	Rais, Muhammad Salman	D															
	Filler, Graham (I)	R															
94	Tibbs, Demond L.	D															
	Wakeman, Rodney (I)	R															
95	O'Neal, Amos	D															
	DeMaet, Charlotte	R															
97	Young-Wenkel, Celia	D															
	Wentworth, Jason (I)	R															
98	Schulz, Sarah	D															
	Glenn, Annette (I)	R															
99	Zang, John	D															
	Hauck, Roger (I)	R															
102	Lambert, Melissa Noelle	G															
	Siggins, Amanda	D															
103	Hoitenga, Michele (I)	R															
	Rendon, Daire (I)	R															

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5TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	EYL	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTLTM	CTV	NRA
5	Kildee, Daniel T. (I)	D	█		█				█	█		█	█	█			
	Kelly, Tim	R													█		
	Goodwin, Kathy	WC															
	Harris, James	L															

State Representatives

34	Neeley, Cynthia R. (I)	D							█		█	█	█				
	Miraglia, James	R															
48	Martin, David W.	R													█	█	
	Kennedy, Sheryl Y. (I)	D	█			█	█		█	█	█	█	█	█			
49	Cherry, John	D	█						█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Lutz, Bryan	R															
50	Sneller, Tim (I)	D	█						█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Fitchett-Hickson, Christina	R														█	
51	May, Brad	D															
	Mueller, Mike (I)	R													█		█
84	Wood, Patrick J.	D									█						
	Green, Phil (I)	R													█	█	█
94	Tibbs, Demond L.	D	█	█							█	█	█				
	Wakeman, Rodney (I)	R													█	█	█
95	O'Neal, Amos	D									█	█					
	DeMaet, Charlotte	R															
96	Elder, Brian K. (I)	D	█	█							█	█					
	Beson, Timothy	R														█	
97	Young-Wenkel, Celia	D	█	█					█		█	█	█				
	Wentworth, Jason (I)	R													█	█	█
98	Schulz, Sarah	D	█		█	█	█		█		█	█	█				
	Glenn, Annette (I)	R													█	█	█
106	Allor, Sue (I)	R							█	█					█	█	█
	Johnson, LeeAnn	D	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

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STATEWIDE RACES

Between The Lines Strongly Endorses These Statewide Candidates



Joe Biden
President



Kamala Harris
Vice President



Gary Peters
U.S. Senate



Bridget McCormack
Mi. Supreme Court



Elizabeth Welch
Mi. Supreme Court

Ellen Cogen Lipton & Jason Strayhorn
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Brian Mosallam & Rema Reynolds-Vasser
MSU Trustees

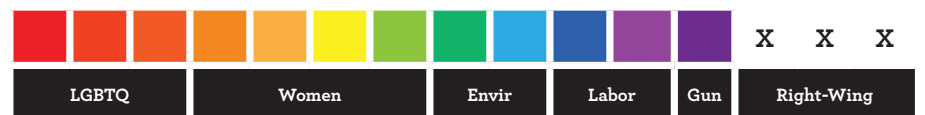
Eva Garza-Dewaelsche & Shirley Stancato
WSU Governors

Mark Bernstein & Shauna Ryder-Diggs
U-M Regents

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6TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA
6	Hoadley, Jon	D	█	█	█		█		█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Upton, Fred (I)	R															
	DePoy, Jeff	L															
	Lawrence, John	G															

State Representatives

59	East, Amy L.	D							█					█			
	Carra, Steve	R															█
60	Rogers, Julie M.	D	█	█		█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Mitchell, Gary	R															█
61	Morse, Christine	D	█	█	█	█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Haltom, Bronwyn	R															█
63	Howell, Luke	D							█								
	Wolf, Rafael	L															
	La Pietra, John Anthony	G															
	Hall, Matt (I)	R													█	█	█
66	Wheeler, Abigail	D	█		█	█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Griffin, Beth (I)	R													█		█
72	Lisa Cheng-Schulting, Lily	D	█	█		█			█	█		█	█				
	Johnson, Steven (I)	R													█	█	█
78	VandenHeede, Dan	D	█	█					█				█	█			
	Paquette, Brad (I)	R															█
	Warner, Andrew J.	NL															
79	Pitchford, Chokwe	D	█	█					█			█	█	█			
	Wendzel, Pauline (I)	R													█		█
80	Almquist, Erik	D	█	█					█				█				
	Whiteford, Mary (I)	R													█		█
			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

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7TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E/L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA
7	Driskell, Gretchen D.	D	█						█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Walberg, Tim (I)	R													x	x	x

State Representatives

17	Slat, Christopher	D	█	█					█			█	█				
	Bellino Jr., Joe (I)	R													x		x
52	Lasinski, Donna (I)	D	█		█				█	█	█	█	█				
	Marquis, Greg	R															
55	Brabec, Felicia	D	█	█			█		█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Baird, Bob	R															
56	Kitchens, Keith W.	D															
	Clements, TC	R													x	x	x
57	Rubley II, Jeffrey Jon	G															
	Garcia, Will	D							█			█	█				
58	Kahle, Bronna (I)	R													x	x	x
	Barnes, Tamara C.	D															
64	Fink, Andrew	R													x	x	x
	Hofman-Kingston, Sandra	D	█	█					█	█		█	█	█			
65	Alexander, Julie (I)	R													x	x	x
	Lightner, Sarah L. (I)	R													x		x
71	Smith, Nancy (I)	D	█	█					█				█	█			
	Witwer, Angela (I)	D	█	█			█		█	█	█	█	█				
	Johnsen, Gina	R													x	x	x
	McCuiston, Dalton R.	G															
			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	x	x	x

STATEWIDE RACES

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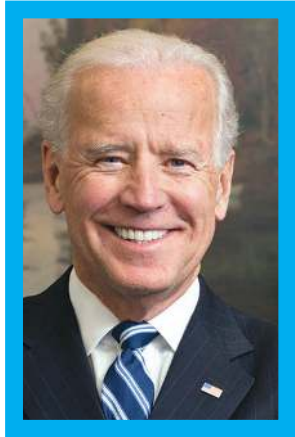
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U-M Regents

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8TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress

District	Candidate	Party	Endorsements															
			BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA	
8	Slotkin, Elissa (I)	D	█	█	█		█	█	█	█	█	█	█					
	Junge, Paul	R														█		█
	Hartman, Joe	L																

State Representatives

District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA
42	Bettes, Donnie	D						█						█			
	Bollin, Ann (I)	R													█	█	█
43	Breadon, Nicole	D	█				█	█	█	█		█	█	█			
	Schroeder, Andrea K. (I)	R													█	█	█
44	Forrest, Denise	D					█		█	█				█			
	Maddock, Matt (I)	R													█	█	█
45	Anness, Barb	D	█		█	█		█	█	█	█	█		█			
	Tisdell, Mark	R														█	
46	LaMacchia, Jody	D	█	█	█	█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Reilly, John (I)	R													█		█
47	Smiddy, Adam	D						█									
	Bezotte, Robert J.	R													█	█	█
51	May, Brad	D															
	Mueller, Mike (I)	R													█		█
67	Hope, Kara (I)	D	█	█				█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Ross, Nate J.	R															█
68	Anthony, Sarah (I)	D	█	█				█	█	█	█	█	█				
	Atkinson, Robert J.	R														█	
69	Brixie, Julie (I)	D	█					█	█	█	█	█	█				
	Norris, Grace S.	R															
69	Gutierrez, Gene	G	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

Congressional Dist. 8 - Local Races:

Lorie Savin, Circuit Judge of Circuit Court Dist. 6
 Carol Koenig, Circuit Judge of Circuit Court Dist. 30
 David Coulter, Oakland County Executive
 Lisa Brown, Oakland County Clerk & Register of Deeds
 Vincent Gregory, Oakland County Sheriff
 Karen McDonald, Oakland County Prosecuting Attorney
 Robert Wittenberg, Oakland County Treasurer
 Micelle McClellan, Oakland County Commissioner Dist. 3

Barb Byrum, Ingham County Clerk
 Derrick Quinney, Ingham County Register of Deeds
 Eric Schertzing, Ingham County Treasurer
 Carol Siemon, Ingham County Prosecutor
 Scott Wriggelsworth, Ingham County Sheriff
 Erin Graham, Ingham County Commissioner
 Mark Grebner, Ingham County Commissioner
 Robert Orlando Pena, Ingham County Commissioner

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9TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA
9	Levin, Andy (I)	D	█	█	█				█	█		█	█	█			
	Langworthy, Charles J.	R													█		
	Kirby, Andrea L.	WC															
	Saliba, Mike	L															

State Representatives

18	Hertel, Kevin (I)	D	█						█	█	█	█	█				
	Babat, Michael	R															
22	Steenland, Richard M.	D	█	█					█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Warner, Steven G.	R															
24	Woodman, Michelle	D							█					█			
	Marino, Steve (I)	R										█			█	█	█
25	Shannon, Nate (I)	D	█						█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Smith, Paul M.	R													█		
26	Ellison, Jim (I)	D	█						█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Meister, Chris	R															
27	Weiss, Regina	D	█	█		█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Goss, Elizabeth	R															
	Stempfle, Gregory Scott	L															
28	Wells, Sherry A.	G															
	Stone, Lori M. (I)	D	█	█		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Colegio, Stephen	R															
30	Horndt, Frederick	L															
	Chehab, Michael A.	D	█	█					█				█	█			
31	Mohamed Chehab,																
	Farrington, Diana (I)	R															█
35	Sowerby, William J. (I)	D	█	█					█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Davis, Daniela	R															
40	Yow, Tim	L															
	Manoogian, Mari (I)	D	█	█	█	█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
41	Cleary, Kendra	R															
	Kuppa, Padma (I)	D	█		█	█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Sosnoski, Andrew J.	R													█	█	█

Congressional Dist. 9 - Local Races:

Lorie Savin, Circuit Judge of Circuit Court Dist. 6
 David Coulter, Oakland County Executive
 Lisa Brown, Oakland County Clerk & Register of Deeds
 Vincent Gregory, Oakland County Sheriff

Karen McDonald, Oakland County Prosecuting Attorney
 Robert Wittenberg, Oakland County Treasurer
 David Woodward, Oakland County Commissioner Dist. 17
 Dan Cherrin, Oakland County Commissioner Dist. 18
 Jennifer LaTosch, Ferndale School Board

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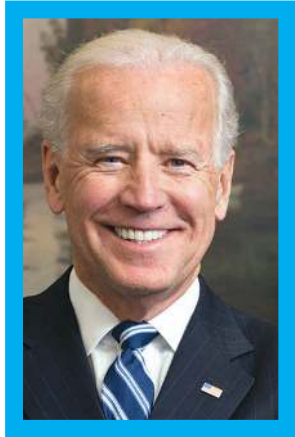
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10TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA	
10	Bizon, Kimberly	D																
	McClain, Lisa	R														X	X	X

State Representatives

24	Woodman, Michelle	D																
	Marino, Steve (I)	R														X	X	X
25	Shannon, Nate (I)	D																
	Smith, Paul M.	R														X		
30	Chehab, Michael A.	D																
	Mohamed Chehab, Farrington, Diana (I)	R																X
32	Boucher, Justin	D																
	Hornberger, Pamela (I)	R														X		X
33	Jabari, Olu	D																
	Yaroch, Jeff (I)	R														X		X
36	Murphy, Robert	D																
	Wozniak, Douglas C. (I)	R														X		X
81	Bourgeois, Debbie	D																
	Eisen, Gary R. (I)	R														X	X	X
82	Tkach, Jerry	D																
	Howell, Gary (I)	R														X		X
83	Armstrong-Helton, Stephanie	D																
	Beeler, Andrew	R																X
84	Wood, Patrick J.																	
	Green, Phil (I)															X	X	X

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See the key to endorsements on page 20 of this issue

11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	ICV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA
11	Stevens, Haley (I)	D	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Esshaki, Eric S.	R															█
	Schwartz, Leonard	L															

State Representatives

11	Jones, Jewell (I)	D							█		█	█	█	█			
	Townsend, James C.	R															
19	Pohutsky, Laurie (I)	D	█	█	█	█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Ptashnik, Martha	R													█	█	█
20	Koleszar, Matt (I)	D	█	█	█				█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Lacny, John	R													█	█	
21	Puri, Ranjeev	D	█	█					█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Hess, Laurel	R													█		
29	Sullivan, S. Dave	R															
	Carter, Brenda (I)	D	█					█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
37	Steckloff, Samantha	D	█	█					█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Swoboda, Mitch	R															
38	Young, James K.	L															
	Breen, Kelly A.	D	█	█	█	█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
39	Turner, Chase	R													█	█	█
	Pulver, Julia	D	█	█	█	█		█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
40	Berman, Ryan (I)	R															█
	Croff, Anthony	L															
41	Manoogian, Mari (I)	D	█	█	█	█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Cleary, Kendra	R															
43	Kuppa, Padma (I)	D	█		█	█		█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Sosnoski, Andrew J.	R															█
44	Breadon, Nicole	D	█		█	█		█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Schroeder, Andrea K. (I)	R													█	█	█
45	Forrest, Denise	D	█		█	█		█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Maddock, Matt (I)	R													█	█	█
45	Anness, Barb	D	█		█	█		█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Tisdell, Mark	R														█	█
			█	█	█	█		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

Congressional Dist. 11 - Local Races:

Lorie Savin, Circuit Judge of Circuit Court Dist. 6
 David Coulter, Oakland County Executive
 Lisa Brown, Oakland County Clerk & Register of Deeds
 Vincent Gregory, Oakland County Sheriff

Karen McDonald, Oakland County Prosecuting Attorney
 Robert Wittenberg, Oakland County Treasurer
 Melissa Daub, Wayne County Commissioner
 Anne Marie Graham-Hudak, Supervisor Canton Twp.
 Sommer Foster, Trustee Canton Twp.

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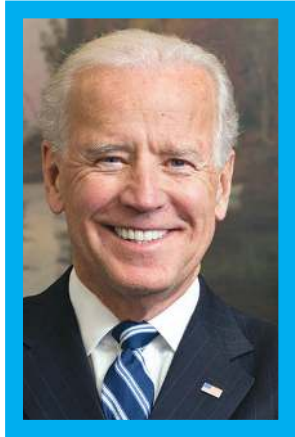
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12TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTLTM	CTV	NRA
12	Dingell, Debbie (I)	D	█		█		█		█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Walkowicz, Gary	WC															
	Jones, Jeff	R															

State Representatives

9	Whitsett, Karen (I)	D							█								
	Stephens, James	R															
12	Garza, Alex (I)	D	█	█					█	█	█	█	█				
	Bailey, Michelle	R															
13	Liberati, Tullio	D	█	█					█		█		█				
	Frump, Megan	R															
14	Clemente, Cara A. (I)	D	█						█	█	█	█	█				
	Stasik, Darrell	R															
15	Coleman, Simone R.	WC															
	Hammoud, Abdullah (I)	D	█		█				█		█	█	█				
17	O'Neill, Carla	R															
	Betts, Larry Darnell	WC															
21	Slat, Christopher	D	█	█					█			█	█				
	Bellino Jr., Joe (I)	R													█		█
23	Puri, Ranjeev	D	█	█					█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Hess, Laurel	R													█		
52	Camilleri, Darrin (I)	D	█	█	█				█	█	█	█	█				
	Poe, John	R													█	█	█
53	Lasinski, Donna (I)	D	█		█				█	█	█	█	█				
	Marquis, Greg	R															
54	Rabhi, Yousef (I)	D	█						█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Holland, Jean E.	R															
55	Peterson, Ronnie Dean (I)	D	█						█		█	█	█				
	Church, Martin A.	R														█	
55	Brabec, Felicia	D	█	█		█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Baird, Bob	R															
			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

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13TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTL	CTV	NRA
13	Tlaib, Rashida (I)	D	█		█		█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
	Dudenhoefer, David	R															
	Bomer, Articia	TAX															
	Wilcoxon, D.Etta	G															

State Representatives

2	Tate, Joe (I)	D	█					█	█	█	█	█	█				
	Rodriguez, Mayra	R															
	Simpson, DaNetta L.																
3	Thanedar, Shri	D	█					█				█					
	Vinson, Anita	R															
	Boyle, Stephen	G															
4	Aiyash, Abraham	D	█	█				█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Weathington, Howard	R															
	Rayburn, Linda	WC															
	Alam, Md Rabbi																
5	Johnson, Cynthia A. (I)	D	█			█		█	█	█	█	█	█				
	Day, Harold M.	R															
6	Carter, Tyrone (I)	D	█					█	█	█	█	█	█				
	Scott, Helena	D				█		█		█	█	█	█				
7	Cole, Ronald	R															
	Givens, Kimberly	WC															
	Belle, Anita	G															
8	Young, Stephanie A.	D								█	█	█	█				
	Gorak, Miroslawa Teresa	R															
9	Whitsett, Karen (I)	D						█									
	Stephens, James	R															
10	Cavanagh, Mary	D	█	█		█		█		█	█	█	█				
	Alcorn, Cathy L.	R															
11	Jones, Jewell (I)	D						█		█	█	█	█				
	Townsend, James C.	R															
12	Garza, Alex (I)	D	█	█				█	█	█	█	█	█				
	Bailey, Michelle	R															
13	Liberati, Tullio	D	█	█				█		█		█	█				
	Frumpp, Megan	R															
14	Clemente, Cara A. (I)	D	█					█	█	█	█	█	█				
	Stasik, Darrell	R															
	Coleman, Simone R.	WC															
16	Bauman, Emily	R															x
	Coleman, Kevin (I)	D	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█			

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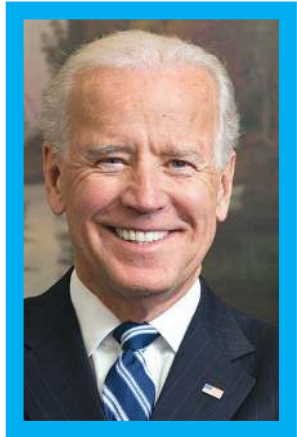
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WSU Governors

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U-M Regents

Congressional Dist. 14 - Local Races:

Lorie Savin, Circuit Judge of Circuit Court Dist. 6
David Coulter, Oakland County Executive
Lisa Brown, Oakland County Clerk & Register of Deeds
Vincent Gregory, Oakland County Sheriff
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14TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

U.S. Congress



District	Candidate	Party	BTL	EQMI	HRC	E'L	MIPC	NOW	PP	SC	LCV	AFL-CIO	UAW	GSV	RTLTM	CTV	NRA
14	Patrick, Robert Vance	R															
	Kolody, Philip	WC															
	Gioia, Lisa Lane	L															
	Shabazz, Clyde K.	G															
	Lawrence, Brenda (I)	D	█		█				█	█	█	█	█	█			

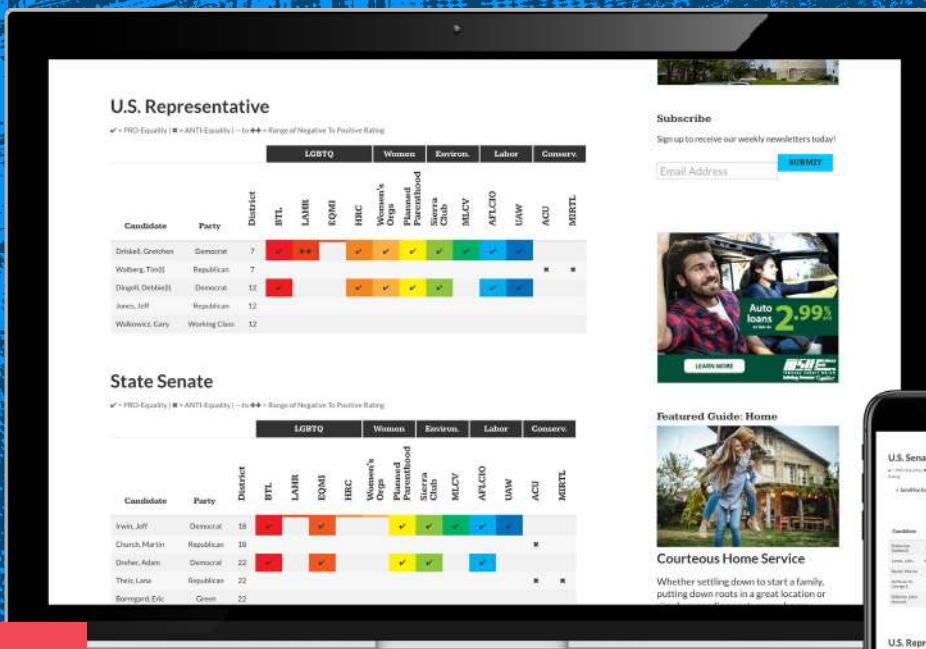
State Representatives

1	Wiejaczka, Kathy	D															
	O'Malley, Jack	R															
2	Tate, Joe (I)	D	█						█	█	█	█	█				
	Rodriguez, Mayra	R															
3	Simpson, DaNetta L.																
	Thanedar, Shri	D	█						█			█					
4	Vinson, Anita	R															
	Boyle, Stephen	G															
5	Aiyash, Abraham	D	█	█					█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Weathington, Howard	R															
6	Rayburn, Linda	WC															
	Alam, Md Rabbi																
7	Johnson, Cynthia A. (I)	D	█			█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Day, Harold M.	R															
8	Carter, Tyrone (I)	D	█						█	█	█	█	█				
	Scott, Helena	D	█			█			█		█	█	█				
10	Cole, Ronald	R															
	Givens, Kimberly	WC															
27	Belle, Anita	G															
	Young, Stephanie A.	D									█	█	█				
35	Gorak, Miroslawa Teresa	R															
	Cavanagh, Mary	D	█	█		█			█		█	█	█				
37	Alcorn, Cathy L.	R															
	Weiss, Regina	D	█	█		█		█	█		█	█	█	█			
39	Goss, Elizabeth	R															
	Stempfle, Gregory Scott	L															
40	Wells, Sherry A.	G												█			
	Sullivan, S. Dave	R															
39	Carter, Brenda (I)	D	█					█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Bolden, Kyra Harris (I)	D	█	█		█		█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
40	Davis, Daniela	R															
	Yow, Tim	L															
37	Steckloff, Samantha	D	█	█		█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Swoboda, Mitch	R															
39	Young, James K.	L															
	Pulver, Julia	D	█	█	█	█		█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
40	Berman, Ryan (I)	R															█
	Croff, Anthony	L															
40	Manoogian, Mari (I)	D	█	█	█	█			█	█	█	█	█	█			
	Cleary, Kendra	R															
			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█			█

See page 9 of this issue to learn more on how registered voters can turn in your ballot early.

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From COVID-19 to Black Lives Matter, How Bingo Pet Salon is Navigating 2020

Brian Lane is the owner of Bingo Pet Salon in Royal Oak. BTL Photo: Andrew Potter

BY ELLEN SHANNA KNOPPOW

Following the Rules

The third time it happened Brian Lane notified the police. An angry client, likely drunk, was calling Lane in the middle of the night to curse him out for refusing to schedule a hair appointment during the novel coronavirus-related shutdown. But Lane, who is not a stylist, owns Bingo Pet Salon. And the man in question was calling on behalf of his shaggy dog.

“It was a little disturbing to get those [calls] day after day after day,” Lane admitted. “That was the only one that was really that bad. Most people were understanding. I do know that some people went to places that were still open that weren’t supposed to be. I wasn’t going to tell people no. They’re desperate to get their dogs groomed.”

Lane said at Bingo, they were adamant about following the guidelines as posted.

“I’d have people calling, and we’d be like, ‘We can’t groom your dogs. We can’t do nail trims. We can’t do anything,’” Lane said.

To offer guidance to his desperate clients,

Lane shared videos with instructions on how to brush one’s dog and do nail trims at home. Still, he was fielding 20 to 30 calls per day.

Temporarily shutting Bingo’s doors was not the only virus-related woe that afflicted Lane: he contracted the illness himself. Lane think his husband, Clinton, caught the virus from the restaurant where he works in Royal Oak during the city’s St. Patrick’s Day bar crawl. But Clinton didn’t exhibit signs of COVID-19, so they concluded he was asymptomatic and then passed it to Lane.

“I felt like I ran a marathon every day for about a week,” said Lane, describing the effect the illness had on him. “My body just ached. I was sore. I was tired. And then I couldn’t lay down, so I was pacing a lot, ‘cause when I laid down, whatever part of my body I was laying on hurt.”

At that point, the hospital refused Lane a test because his fever wasn’t high enough to warrant one. When he did finally receive a test, the results were delayed, then lost. Ultimately, Lane got a clean bill of health.

“Even though I was sore for about a week, a lot of people had it way worse,” Lane

acknowledged. “But while I was home, I was telling people, ‘Continue to call me, I’m just sitting home, quarantined.’”

But Lane wasn’t just worried about his own health. He had his business and his staff to take care of. He said the hardest thing for him when Bingo was closed was making sure his groomers got their unemployment payments.

“I told them to relax, enjoy your time off,” Lane said. “Let me worry about the business. Let me worry about this stuff. I felt like I tried to take on as much as I could to relieve that from them.”

Good news for Bingo came in the form of approval for a Paycheck Protection Program loan, a grant from Oakland County and an economic disaster relief loan through the Small Business Association.

New Space


As if navigating a business through a pandemic wasn’t stressful enough, Lane had the added challenge of the planned relocation of his Royal Oak shop. Formerly located on 4th St. in downtown Royal Oak, Bingo can now be

found at 719 E. 11 Mile Road, several blocks east of the Emagine theater and just west of the Hotel Royal Oak.

Whereas Lane and his groomers had 1,000 square feet to work with in the old space, the new place has more than doubled the staff’s workspace at 2,500 square feet. There’s now a small area for retail, including CBD products for pets. And not only that, Bingo has gained a parking lot, which has become a much-appreciated amenity for owners of teacup Yorkies and bull mastiffs alike — not to mention cats, which Bingo also grooms.

“We were supposed to be moved prior to the shutdown but the city couldn’t do their inspections, so we finally moved in here July 1,” Lane explained. “So, that was hard and stressful. Our industry is kind of a little more recession-proof. Anything pet-related. People love their pets. They’ve done studies. People will skip getting their own hair cut to get their dog’s hair cut ‘cause they don’t want to be around their stinky, smelly dog. So we’re in a good industry that can bounce back.”

See **Bingo**, continued on p. 38



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Brian Lane purchased T-shirts in support of social justice causes for his staff and posted a photo of him and his employees wearing them on social media. Lane said having a platform like social media with so many followers has enabled the business to take a stand and set an example. Courtesy photo.



Photo: Andrew Potter



Photo: Andrew Potter

► Bingo

Continued from p. 36

When Bingo finally did reopen, the demand to book appointments was overwhelming. For a week Lane received 400 to 500 calls per day from their 6,000-plus clients.

“We told people we’re not judging anyone on the condition of your dogs when they come in, ‘cause we know everyone was in the same situation. We call it the COVID shave-downs or the corona shave-downs, where everyone came in, and it was just like, yeah, everyone’s getting shaved. We don’t have time to spend three hours brushing out a matted dog, unfortunately, ‘cause of the amount of dogs we were taking in.”

Just as Lane doesn’t judge clients by the condition of their pets, he doesn’t judge them by their personal circumstances either. In fact, he’s shown compassion for his customers’ hardships.

“I had some clients who came in and were like, ‘I lost my job and I can’t pay much.’ So there were times when I was like, ‘Well, what can you afford?’” he said. “If you don’t have empathy for people, you suck.”

New Uniform

It’s clear that under Lane and head groomer Helen Quinn’s leadership, Bingo is a business with a conscience. Further proof of that is Bingo Cares, Lane’s nonprofit that offers free grooming for rescue organizations and shelters, which increases the likelihood that the homeless animals will be adopted, as long as the agency is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Those services are provided by Bingo Institute of Grooming, a school for groomers that Lane opened with Jessica Conway five years ago.

Yet Bingo sets an example that goes beyond good stewardship of animals. Evidenced by him and his staff wearing black T-shirts with slogans like “Black Lives Matter,” “Trans Lives Matter” and “Women’s Rights are Human Rights,” Lane doesn’t shy away from carrying a pro-social justice message.

“I’m a huge proponent in social [justice] matters,” Lane said. “And I would absolutely be willing to tell any person who came in here who was like, ‘I don’t support that,’ to be like, ‘Fine, turn around and leave.’ Because a big problem of what I see in where we are as a

country is too many people are like, ‘Well, I don’t want to talk about that; it’s uncomfortable.’ Change is uncomfortable,” Lane said. “Change needs to be uncomfortable. And uncomfortable conversations need to happen for ... meaningful change to happen.”

Lane said having a platform like social media with so many followers has enabled the business to take a stand and set an example. That was on display when Quinn arrived one morning in tears after the murder of George Floyd and Lane wanted to do something.

“I bought those shirts for them,” Lane said. “‘Trans Lives Matter,’ ‘Love is Love,’ ‘Science is Not a Liberal Conspiracy,’ ‘Black Lives Matter.’”

Lane told his employees that along with their Bingo logo scrubs, the new T-shirts were now among their uniform choices.

“Something needs to be done and something needs to be said and people need to listen, and the more places they see things the more that I think there’s an opportunity for change to happen,” Lane said. “People just shut up and don’t say anything.”

Lane shared the story of meeting a new neighbor when he and his husband moved to Hazel Park.

“I have a neighbor who has a Confederate flag in their backyard and they have the Trump signs on their car,” Lane said. “And my husband was like, ‘But they’re nice to us.’ But the first thing they said to us when we moved in [was], ‘We’re OK that you’re gay. At least you’re not Black.’ That’s not OK with me.

“Nothing’s gonna change if we just let status quo be just what status quo is,” Lane continued. “So I posted that picture.”

The photo of Bingo’s staff received mostly positive feedback on social media.

“I’ve always said that any person that feels uncomfortable, this is a safe place to come,” Lane said. “If someone were walking by and they felt like they were being accosted by somebody because they were a woman or they were gay or trans or Black or Muslim, you can come into my shop and it’s a safe place to be. I don’t tolerate intolerance in here.”

Learn more about Bingo Pet Salon online at bingopetsalon.com or by calling 248-544-7424. The shop is located at 719 E. 11 Mile Road in Royal Oak.



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Low Cost Pet Prescriptions

Pet Reiki Service can Provide Stress Relief and Relaxation for Dogs

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

As animal owners already know, pets can provide companionship and often times a much-needed mood boost. And beside them being cuddly companions, the National Institutes of Health report that pets may also “decrease stress, improve heart health, and even help children with their emotional and social skills.” But as much stress-relief as Bingo or Spot might provide to their owners, they’re not immune from it themselves. A Finnish study found that as many as 70 percent of dogs exhibit some sort of anxiety-related behavior, like noise sensitivity and compulsion. While there are many options that owners can utilize to help with that issue, some can be potentially invasive like medication. Radiant Paws Pet Massage Owner Jill Valuet said that reiki for pets can be a great, hands-off option.



Jill Valuet of Radiant Paws Pet Massage offers reiki treatments to pets. Courtesy photo.

“Reiki is very gentle and non-invasive, so what that means is that it can be totally hands-off with the dogs. So, a session to an outsider might look like I’m sitting in a room with a dog not doing anything, but really what’s going on is I am in a meditative state with this dog, and I am channeling energy from the ground through me and into the dog, and, basically, it kind of acts like a battery for the dog, if you will,” Valuet said. “The energy goes into them and recharges them and kind of boosts their own natural healing abilities, their own natural calming abilities.”

Reiki originated in Japan and is a practice that Johns Hopkins describes as “energy healing, in which hands are placed just off the body or lightly touching the body, as in ‘laying on of hands.’ Reiki can also be done ‘long-distance, as a form of prayer.’ And those who practice it regularly report feeling that, among other benefits, their anxiety is lessened. Though there are many versions of reiki’s origin story, it is commonly agreed that Dr. Mikao Usui brought the practice into popularity in 1922. Valuet herself said that it wasn’t until four years ago that she found out about the practice.

“And it wasn’t until three years ago that I actually got certified in level two reiki [which

gives students the ability to practice on others] — and just more for understanding of what it was than how I could use it,” Valuet said. “At the time, I didn’t understand how I could use it on other people, but then, when I started doing the dog massage, reiki just kind of seemed like a natural fit for that.”

Through Radiant Paws Pet Massage, Valuet charges clients \$40 for a half-hour reiki session and \$75 when coupled with a massage for an hour-long experience. She said that both alone and in combination with massage, reiki brings about positive changes in her clients’ dogs quickly.

“I have a client who is a large great Dane who is older in life, and [her owners] came to me wanting to do the energy work just to help her. They know she has some hip issues and just is not moving as well as she used to, so they wanted me to come in with the reiki

See **Reiki**, continued on p. 41

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Transgender Michigan Hosts its Health Fair Virtually

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

In light of the novel coronavirus pandemic, many nonprofits and community organizations have been forced to cancel regularly scheduled programming and events to adhere to social distancing guidelines. In the case of organizers at Transgender Michigan, a nonprofit dedicated to providing advocacy and support to transgender Michiganders across the state, they've opted to move the annual health fair online. Currently, its resources can be accessed at transgendermichigan.org.

"We have the Transgender Health Fair because very often transgender people are afraid to see health care providers because of bad experiences in the past, and this can really cause health problems to get even worse," said Rachel Crandall-Crocker, Transgender Michigan's executive director.

So far at the online event, attendees have had the opportunity to hear from Dr. Paul Benson, who is the medical director of the Be Well Medical Center, and Zil Goldstein of the Callen-lord Center in Manhattan on various

health issues related to the transgender community. Additionally, Dr. Patricia A. Schmidt has discussed hormonal health for the transgender community. Last weekend, Sept. 26, a presentation on intimate partner violence and the transgender community was included, which was moderated by Kye Campbell-Fox, a prevention education specialist at HAVEN, an anti-domestic violence organization.

"Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a leading healthcare concern in the United States and transgender individuals are disproportionately impacted with over half of transgender individuals reporting experiencing IPV (2015 US Transgender Survey)," reads the TGMI website. "HAVEN will define intimate partner violence, break down the myths and misconceptions around IPV, identify trans-specific barriers and resources, and discuss models for community accountability and support within the transgender community."

To learn more about TGMI or see its Health Fair, visit transgendermichigan.org.



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Building Dreams Together

► Reiki

Continued from p. 41

and see what I could do to kind of boost her natural healing process," she said. "All of a sudden, [after sessions] she was using her voice more. ... It was a positive sign because it meant she was feeling better and she was moving around more and she actually started running with her humans for a while. She was feeling so much better and had a better attitude overall."

And as successful as a single session can be, Valuet recommends that "like with human maintenance and chiropractic care, regular sessions are better." Before the novel coronavirus pandemic, Valuet would meet clients at their homes to complete sessions, but she's since moved to Bingo Pet Salon at 719 E Eleven Mile Road in Royal Oak. While a change from her previous setup, Valuet said the move to a single environment has allowed her to take standardized COVID-19 precautions.

"We're the only ones in the space at that time and I can make sure that everything is clean before and after," she said. "The humans aren't going to run into anybody else, and that way we can control everything to minimize exposure for everybody involved — and I can still create a decent space for the dogs to come and relax and not feel stressed out."

And even for those animals that don't seem to struggle with anxiety disorders, Valuet recommends giving the practice a try.

"A half-hour session is the equivalent of a half-hour walk, so for people who aren't able to walk their dogs as much as they want to or for dogs who have high energy, this works to disperse a lot of the energy and makes the dogs feel really relaxed," she said. "I had a client this week whose dog was a five-year-old lab with boundless energy and he had been barking all morning and interrupting her meetings and she couldn't get them to settle down. ... The first thing I did was to ground him and that



calmed him right down. ... She said that he was quiet and sleepy and back to her normal dog for the rest of the day. So, it really does work and it's amazing what it can do to help these animals."

Learn more about reiki and how it could benefit your dog online at radiantpawspm.com.

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Reba, Still Fancy

Country Legend Talks 30 Years of Drag Queens Doing 'Fancy' and Ripping Off Barbra Streisand

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

It was 30 years ago when Reba McEntire – music legend, gay icon, the epitome of country glamour – made Bobby Gentry’s “Fancy” her own. A feminist statement about a woman who turns to sex work to overcome childhood poverty, the story-song became synonymous with McEntire after her version surpassed the original on the country music charts. McEntire’s remake was featured on her 1990 album “Rumor Has It,” her 17th studio album. It has resurfaced three decades later in an anniversary edition, featuring two new versions of “Fancy.” One, a dance mix, was produced by DJ Dave Audé; the other is an acoustic live version.

On Zoom from her home just outside Nashville, McEntire greets me on my computer screen with her signature Southern charm and a full-face smile. Strands of her fire-red hair are being repositioned by an assistant’s floating hand. “I’m never my own glam squad,” she says. “I have (makeup artist) Neil (Robison) here with me. We were up bright and early this morning gettin’ ready, and I have my team to make sure I am decent.”

Even amid a pandemic, the sight of an undone Reba is ... well, let’s just say there’s a better chance of getting a reboot of her hit TV series “Reba” (she’s on board). Because no-frills Reba? “I wouldn’t do that to ya,” she jokes.

During our conversation, the superstar reflected on how “Fancy” solidified her gay icon status, what impresses her most about drag queens who have performed the song, and

why she doesn’t “judge the book by the cover” when it comes to the queerness of out country artists Orville Peck and Lil Nas X.

What do you remember about the photoshoot and that whole look for the “Rumor Has It” cover?

I don’t remember much about the photoshoot except (that) it was Sandi Spika who did my clothes and my hair back in the, oh, late ’80s and ’90s, and then all the way up until I went to do “Annie Get Your Gun” in 2001. She did my clothes, my hair, and it was her idea to do the rip-off inspired by the Barbra Streisand photoshoot album cover. So we did that and everybody loved it. Of course it was the last setup of the day because she had worked two hours on all this hair and then, of course, we had it underneath that little scarf and the hat.

When you go to Walmart like you did to show your Twitter followers the “Rumor Has It” vinyl – well, first of all, do you always go out to Walmart looking like yourself?

No! Ha! We just popped in to visit the record department and sign a few albums. They were rippin’ the plastic off the record cover and I was signin’ some. It was fun. It was fun just to pop in and kind of make a little surprise appearance and then leave.

So you went there expecting to be noticed as Reba.

Yeah, yeah. Well, I had my mask on.

Photo: Universal Music

When you go as yourself do people actually believe it's you or do they think they're getting a Reba look-alike?

No, pretty much they go right for it, especially when I talk.

It's the voice.

If I say something, then they're (like), "I knew it was you!"

Are you saying no drag queen could duplicate that voice?

Some have gotten real close!

It's been 30 years since "Fancy" was released, and by the time it was released in 1990, you already had a fairly devoted LGBTQ following. But with "Fancy," is that when you knew you were a gay icon?

If I wasn't sure, I was *definitely* sure after I released "Fancy," yes. I don't have any reason to think that I had a big gay following before that, but I think I did. But it just increased a lot by the time "Fancy" got out, and then the clothes changes and all that kind of stuff.

There was a whole drag explosion because of the song. Is that what you're referring to?

Yeah.

For your gay fans, hearing "Fancy" at a gay bar after midnight was sort of just another day. Do you have any memories of hearing "Fancy" at a gay bar yourself?

No, no. Can't say I have.

I feel like you've missed out. These 30 years have gone by and not one time have you stepped into a gay bar and heard "Fancy."

I'm gonna have to make that happen!

What do the drag queens who have done "Fancy," including Kennedy Davenport and Miz Cracker's performance on "RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars," get wrong and right when they're performing that song?

Any time I have seen on television or YouTube anybody doing "Fancy" in drag I am in awe of their makeup and the time that they have spent to get all dolled up and just look fantastic. Anybody who can sing that whole song in heels and the outfits that they wear, hey, I'm applaudin'. There's not gonna be any criticism from me at all.

I watched when you dropped the dress at the CMAs and a lot happens in the face. It's a lot of acting.

Oh, attitude. Lots of attitude.

Well, drag queens have that.

You bet. I do know this: That they get my hand motions down pat, and the way I stand, and it's just very flattering. I love it.

The "Fancy" remix on the anniversary reissue is produced by Dave Audé. What kind of input did you give Dave on what you wanted for the dance

mix?

I didn't. When a person knows how to do that, do a dance mix, I'm not one to give advice or say, "Do it this way or that way." That's their forte. Let them do their job. I think he did a great job.

I've talked to you twice in the past about LGBTQ issues. One of our conversations was about marriage equality, and you came out in support of it. It was a big moment. I remember seeing the headlines: Reba McEntire says everybody deserves marriage rights no matter their sexual orientation. And you illustrated why with a couple of friends of yours. Do you think that you've been able to be a bridge between the LGBTQ community and the conservative community who had or have trouble embracing LGBTQ people?

Maybe. I haven't asked. I'm not the type of person who forces my views and my opinions on other people when they are so adamant about it, but I am a person that will discuss it and say why I am the way that I am. I walked (my friends) Nathan and Justin down the aisle. It's all because of love. It has nothing to do with anything except those two boys I love with all my heart and I wanted to be there for 'em. And if we just love each other and quite judgin', I think this world would be a lot better place. It's not my job to judge. I don't want that job, at all. I just want to love people.

I wanted to know if you have heard Orville Peck's version of "Fancy" and what you thought of it. Also, what do you think of him and his contribution to country music as an out gay artist?

I loved his version of "Fancy." I thought it was different. I liked how he kept the music, the production, real low until the end of the song and then it got real big. I was expecting it earlier, so that was a great surprise. But I've just got introduced to him, because of his remake of "Fancy," and so I'm not that familiar with him to answer the second part of the question.

What do you think is the significance of Lil Nas X being the first openly gay Black artist to win a CMA award for "Old Town Road"?

See, here's the deal: You're putting more emphasis on him being gay. To me, I looked right past that. I saw he was a very talented young man who had a vision about this song and he pursued it and it turned into a huge thing. I respected him for that. That he's gay – that didn't change my mind about how much I admired him for pursuing his dream.

Yeah. I guess in an industry where it has felt that it's difficult for a gay person to breakthrough – and a Black person, for that matter – on my end, it seems like a big deal.

Yeah, I can see why. But it's kind of like, I don't

See **Reba**, continued on p. 44



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► Reba

Continued from p. 43

judge the book by the cover; you gotta know the person, and if I don't know the person, I'm taking the information I can get – talent, ambition, perseverance, a gift – and going with that.

Have you met Lil Nas?

I haven't. But I know Billy Ray (Cyrus, who appears on the "Old Town Road" remix with Lil Nas X). I've looked and seen a lot of things about (Lil Nas X) in different stories. I think it was a Sunday morning program that I learned more about him. But admiration. Total admiration for him doing that.

How's life in quarantine been for you? Is everybody healthy? Are you healthy?

All of my bunch are doing very well, thank you for asking. And I've really enjoyed the quarantine because I never had this much time off. I'm enjoyin' it. I'm just relaxing. I grew a garden this year and I'm cookin' out of it. I'm lovin' it. It was weird, the first two months. In March, April and May I was in Oklahoma after my mom passed and we were cleaning her house out and separating everything, and then I came back to Tennessee after Mother's Day and just kind of stayed out in the country, so not around big crowds at all.

I know you're an "everything happens for a reason" person, and I was thinking about that because of what is happening to all of us in some way, shape or form right now. We're all going through our own challenges with the pandemic. What do you believe is the reason for what is happening to us right now? Have you thought about that?



I've got different philosophies. Sometimes when things happen to me – like when I broke my leg skiing in '96 – I always thought that was God's way of saying, "Slow down, slow down, you're going way too fast." Not only skiing – but in life in general. So I see the good things that have come out of the pandemic and the quarantining, where families are sittin' at the table again eating supper together and breakfast and being a unit instead of everybody going (in) different directions, running 100 miles per hour.

There are bad things that have happened because of people being sick and losing their lives and people losing their loved ones. That hurts my heart. But if I had to say the good

parts about the quarantine, it's that we've slowed down. Everybody goes too fast. And if we can just focus on the good and not so much of the bad, I think we'll just be better off. Just take the good out of every situation you can get and not just dwell on the bad.

How do you stay so optimistic through everything that's been happening that has me all shook up?

It comes with age because you can't do anything about it, one way or the other. So you can choose to dwell in the misery or you can just search with all your might to try to find the more positive things that are coming

out of the situation. That's just what I try to do. I remember a long time ago, (I decided) to stay away from negative people because that's infectious and it's contagious, and I try to stay and hang out with positive people. It just makes the day so much brighter and easier. It just flows easier. Everything goes better.

To end, since we're here for "Rumor Has It," what have been some of the craziest rumors you've read about yourself?

There was one out just this past week about everybody up in arms about me investing in a CBD store or company or something. Well, I've never done that. And then somebody was



telling me, "Well, I saw it; here it is," and I said, "Well, I didn't do that," and then another friend in another part of the country sent it to me and said, "Did you do this?" I did not invest in a CBD company. And then there was a lot of very famous entertainers in this article that said, "Reba's turned me onto this CBD; I am just so thrilled." Garth Brooks being one of them. I don't see how they get away with it.

So, you're not having CBD gummies with Garth? That's never happened?

No! Ha!

Well, we're gonna nip that one in the bud.

Thanks. I need all the help I can get. Ha!

It was great to talk to you, Reba.

Good talkin' to you too. Stay well, stay healthy and be safe, and I hope we get to talk soon in person or over the phone. I enjoy visitin' with you.

As editor of Q Syndicate, the LGBTQ wire service, Chris Azzopardi has interviewed a multitude of superstars, including Cher, Meryl Streep, Mariah Carey and Beyoncé. His work has also appeared in The New York Times, Vanity Fair, GQ and Billboard. Reach him via Twitter @chrisazzopardi.

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Peppermint Talks New R&B Album, Authenticity and the ‘Dirty Game’ That Is Dating

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

Peppermint has a habit of breaking the mold. Both the first out transgender woman cast on “RuPaul’s Drag Race” and the first to originate a principal role on Broadway in “Head Over Heels,” the versatile performer is just as comfortable acting in the Emmy award-winning series “Pose” as she is taking the stage to headline an international tour. Now, as she prepares for the release of her new album “A Girl Like Me: Letters to My Lovers” on Oct. 16, the seasoned singer-songwriter is taking a different approach yet again: this album is her rawest and most intimate creative work yet.

The first part of a trilogy, each of the upcoming three albums will take listeners on a deep dive through a year of Peppermint’s dating life, and “A Girl Like Me” explores the rosy side of the “honeymoon period” at the start of a relationship. She said that in addition to it being full of “open and light” R&B tracks, Peppermint hopes it’ll be a helpful tool for people in the LGBTQ community to use in reflecting on their own relationships.

“I want people to like it and identify with it, and if it helps people with their breakups? Great. Or, if it helps people understand more the experiences of someone who is queer or what a Black trans woman can go through, then I obviously want that. And so, hopefully, it will be helpful. And if they say, ‘We wanted a dance song where you were just saying, ‘Look at my shoes,’ this is not the album for you,” she said with a laugh. “That’s all.”

And when not working on creative projects, Peppermint is no stranger to using her platform for LGBTQ activism. She’s worked to help the Ali Forney Center prevent LGBTQ homelessness, bring awareness about the trans experience through roundtable discussions, uplift the voices of Black LGBTQ people through events like the Black Queer Town Hall and much more. Ahead of a busy release schedule, Peppermint caught up with *Between The Lines* over the phone to talk more about why she hopes this album will inspire other LGBTQ musicians to create, why artistic honesty is more important now than ever, the lessons she learned making “A Girl Like Me” and why “dating is a dirty game, honey!”

What was your musical inspiration when you were putting the album together?

My musical inspiration was really everything from my childhood. I’ve done dance music before and since I’m an independent artist, I have the luxury or the ability to just create



Photo: Magnus Hastings

what I want. I don’t necessarily have a label telling me, “You need to be this brand or that brand.” And I think that goes along with being an independent artist, but now that feeling is really growing in the music industry where labels aren’t really dictating everything that an artist does. And so, I really wanted an opportunity to do a straight-up just R&B, nitty-gritty album that was very real and would talk about feelings and emotions in a way that we’ve never seen a drag artist do before.

The interludes between songs definitely gave me an R&B feeling. Was your intention with them to give a backstory to the listener?

One-hundred percent. I really like the idea of interludes on an album, and I think it’s pretty obvious that my approach to album-listening

is more from the experience or perspective of somebody who listens to a full CD or a cassette tape. And so, I still wanted to be able to present this as though people were listening to it on a record player, and I wanted to take them through this journey because this album is really one part of a journey that I went on. The interludes and the songs are really the first season of last year when I fell in love and met someone and was in a relationship getting to know them and flirting and having wonderful sex with them — all of the great things that can happen at the beginning of a relationship, the honeymoon period. And so, that’s what the album is. And more than the songs, I wanted really to explain what was in my mind and I knew that, other than talking with you, I wouldn’t necessarily have a lot of opportunities to express or explain what was

going on behind the album.

This is a trilogy, so is the material already being written for the second and third installments?

Yeah! They’re almost finished. Everything’s written and some things are recorded, but they will be coming out next year. I want people to kind of go on this year-long experience with me just how it was a year-long experience creating it. This first album, I literally met my lover in this album in the summer, and we were together for a year. And by the time we broke up, it was around the fall around the end of the year. That’s exactly the timeframe that this all takes place. So the first album is the first few months of our relationship and the next one will be the middle of it and then the final one will be the end of it, but I won’t say how it ends (laughs)!

So many people can relate to having a transformative relationship like this one, but not many people make something creative out of it. Has reflecting on this relationship to make the record changed how you approach relationships?

Well, I can’t say that just writing this album has changed how I approach relationships. Really, writing the album is how I’m coping. I was in love, and writing the album is how I’m dealing with the end of the relationship — spoiler alert (laughs), but that’s probably pretty obvious. And, to be honest with you, I’ve had other breakups — as we all have, they’re a part of life — and I remember having a different relationship.

And although I want to say that this is heavily inspired by one relationship last year, it’s me speaking, so there are other parts and experiences and things that I’ve had that are reflected in this album, too. I’ve had another relationship before this one where it ended terribly. It was [like] a song! I couldn’t eat, I couldn’t sleep, I didn’t want to listen to music. I believe I was clinically depressed, and that was a tough thing. This is the first time I was able to take something that felt so painful and something that felt so depressing and upsetting and triggering and turn it into something that I feel is so beautiful. I’ve taken all these experiences and all this pain and turned it into art that I’m very proud of.

This album seems really timely because it’s a raw and honest work released during a time when people are having a lot of frank conversations about major issues like COVID-19 and systemic racism. Do you hope that this

“Well, I can’t say that just writing this album has changed how I approach relationships. Really, writing the album is how I’m coping. I was in love, and writing the album is how I’m dealing with the end of the relationship — spoiler alert (laughs), but that’s probably pretty obvious.”

willingness for discussion, in art and one-on-one, will continue on even after this quarantine period is over?

Well, look, I hope so. I definitely think it’s high time that we have these conversations. Obviously, I think that’s why people are participating in them, so it almost feels as though there is no alternative to having these honest conversations that people have been having. And, I do think that — and this is me speaking for myself — it feels as though the world, or at least America, hit a rock bottom when it comes to the actions and the act of doing everything that we were doing before. And it’s really interesting. So, I do think that the pandemic, it took us a minute. I think for a month everyone was just stunned. Industries stopped, people weren’t working, and people were having a hard time, and people were dying and that’s very serious.

So, it’s really difficult to come from something like that and go, “OK, let’s party!” I feel like that’s disingenuous. And so, an artist’s job, I think, by definition is to express how they see the world through their eyes and run it through their processor and put it out to everyone. So, what we were seeing when we were captive in our homes, what was happening on the news, the world around us, a lot of the problems that were still happening, we had no choice. I was a little bit afraid that people are just going to want this lighthearted dance CD or album, and that’s not where I am. And then when I saw Taylor Swift’s album [“Folklore”] and when I listened to what she released last month, I was like, “OK, we’re good.” And people were more receptive to these deeper conversations, and I think that they’re more receptive to change.

Going back to the point you made about artistic expression, your Carole King cover of “Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow” is a great example of the relatability of a classic, in that people might think they have nothing in common with a Black trans woman, yet this song resonates in your life as much as anyone who has had a breakup. Was your intention when covering that song to use it as a message as well as a piece of art?

Well, it was definitely a little bit of both. I don’t know what Carole King was feeling when she wrote it, but it seems pretty apparent, right? And when I first heard the song and the lyrics to the song, it was kind of one of those ruses. I knew the song was obviously a big hit

and has been around for ages, but when I first heard it, it was a dance hit. I heard it from the ’60s and it’s a beautifully written song. The melody’s lovely and it’s so catchy and it feels like you’re humming along with a platitude, “Will you still love me?” Everyone wants to know the answer to that question. But when you actually listen to the words, it’s about this romance that happens undercover and at night only, and that’s something that’s so vulnerable and that’s something that does describe a lot of the experiences that I’ve had as a trans woman romantically.

Especially dealing with cis, hetero-identified men who are definitely 100 percent attracted but 100 percent equally scared to let other people know that these are the people who they love or are into or whatever it is. And so, I just found that to be really interesting. And then, maybe it’s ironic that Carole King wrote a song that allows a Black trans woman like me to so easily express how she feels about her experiences in love and romance. And so, I wasn’t very calculated about it — I certainly didn’t feel it was a chore. It was a song I absolutely loved and I’ve listened to it, not necessarily my own version of it, and the words alone could make me cry.

Do you hope an EP like this one will inspire other artists to speak their truth the same way? Of course, we do have LGBTQ artists doing this, but it feels like we could absolutely have more and from different perspectives than we’re seeing now.

Yes! The answer is yes. It wasn’t that long ago that if you were out, period, you were in danger of losing your job and your career, and there’s countless stories of folks in entertainment having to marry beards and have a fake partner or hide this and that about their identity. And, luckily, we’re in a place now where queer people and everyone, hopefully, feels free to express what it is that they need to say. And when it’s your identity and when it’s about your love and those emotions and how they connect your identity, you need to say it. You need to. So, I think that’s certainly how I felt writing this, and I certainly hope that other artists who are queer feel free enough to talk about their experiences that’s not so coded. And so, hopefully, they can sing about it in a way that’s so much more truthful and allows them to connect with other queer people in a much easier way.

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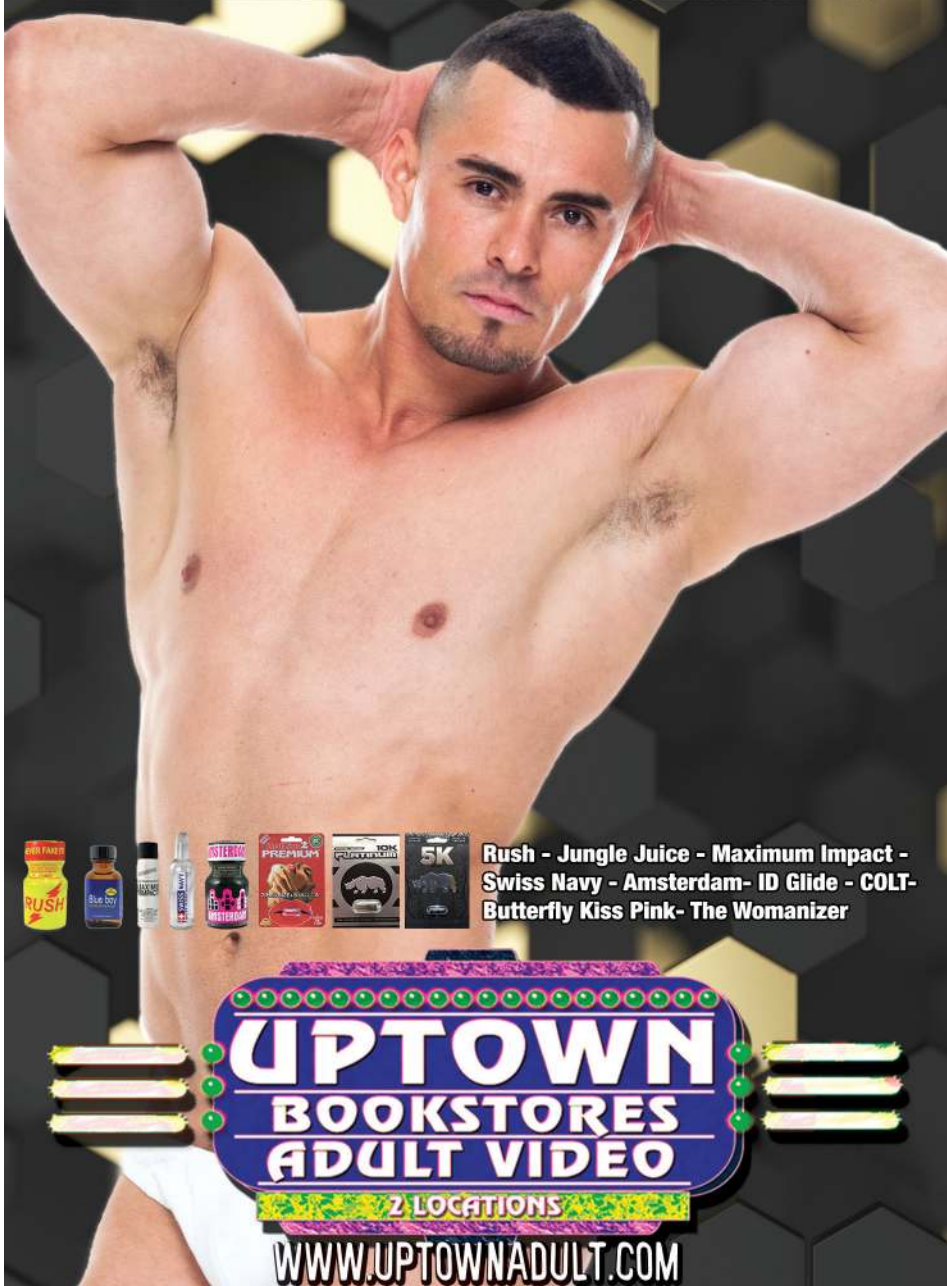
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Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

Bradley Cooper and Carey Mulligan make music in 'Maestro'

The late, legendary American composer/conductor Leonard Bernstein was gay. He was also married to a woman, Felicia Cohn Montealegre, who understood his homosexuality, and chose to be with him. It was the 1950s, and this sort of thing was not uncommon for queer people, and it makes for a fascinating entry point for a drama about the closet. Enter Bradley Cooper, moving on to his next directorial project after "A Star Is Born," with a new film for Netflix called "Maestro," in which he'll star as Bernstein. Joining him on screen as Montealegre will be Carey Mulligan. Cooper's been working with the Bernstein family for a few years now, developing the project, one that will cover the couple's more than 30-year relationship. Keeping in mind that nobody likes a wallow in queer misery for the sake of prestige entertainment, we'll trust Cooper to do right by this important subject matter. Now that the United States is, in general, somewhat less treacherous for many in the LGBTQ+ community, these complex stories from the past become even more vital to keep in our collective memory. The project shoots in spring 2021.



Sarah Paulson. Photo: KathClick

'Run' from horror-mom Sarah Paulson

It's always the Smother Mother's fault, isn't it? That's what the movies like to tell us, anyway. But as long as the drama is high and the suspense suitably tense, we seem to enjoy watching trapped kids escape whatever hell Mommy has devised for them. And who else to play such a woman than Sarah Paulson, a veteran of multiple "American Horror Story" trips down the path of madness? Well, she'll be doing it again in "Run," from filmmaker Aneesh Chaganty ("Searching"), co-written by Chaganty and "Searching" collaborator Sev Ohanian. Co-starring newcomer Kiera Allen as Paulson's daughter, it's the story of a young woman raised in total isolation by a mother who controls her every move. Then the cracks begin to develop in Mom's narrative and it becomes time to do the thing in the title. It's due to land in select re-opened theaters and Hulu in late November, so you don't actually have to run anywhere to see it.

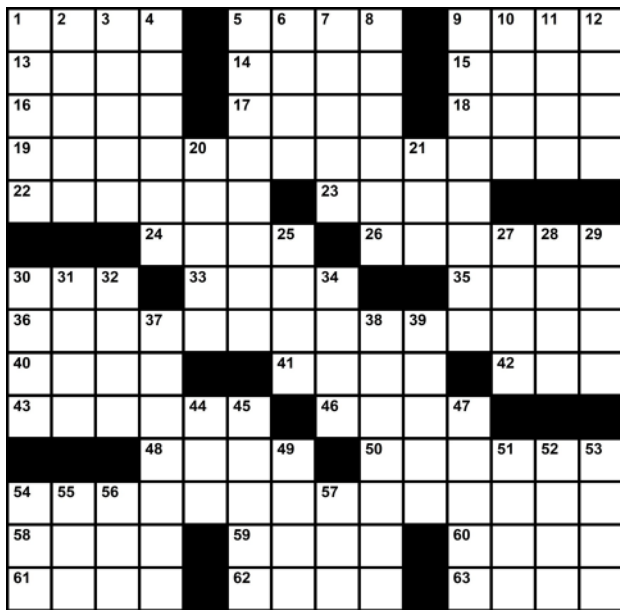
'The Extinction of Fireflies' the next step in streaming theater

Want to see a new play? You can't, we know, all the theaters are closed. But what if, in the manner of "Hamilton" on Disney+, you could stream a new play at home? It's not the ideal situation, obviously, but is anything ideal right now? The answer to that would be a supersize no, so you'll want to dig into the opportunity to watch "The Extinction of Fireflies." It stars Drew Droege ("Bob's Burgers," all those amazing "Good evening, America, I'm Chloe Sevigny" videos on YouTube) as a would-be playwright who invites his friends over — played by Tracie Bennett ("Coronation Street") and "Buyer and Cellar's" Michael Urie — to read his latest work. The comedy is from James Andrew Walsh, and it's now in production in Walsh's own Rhode Island home, where it will be shot and delivered to an as-yet-unspecified streaming platform (ticketing and dates also to be announced). We love this idea, naturally, because it makes inventive use of space not designed for theater. And now we've also got fantasies of Urie and playwright Jonathan Tolins reviving "Buyer" in Barbra Streisand's actual basement.

But I'm 'An American Island Cheerleader'

It's time for the trans POC rom-com. It's been time, really, but now one's actually on the horizon. From the beautiful minds of Filipinx queer creators Rain Valdez (the Emmy-nominated web series "Razor Tongue") and Rachel Leyco ("Batman Beyond") comes "Re-Live: A Tale of An American Island Cheerleader." The story revolves around a 10-year class reunion where the theme is the "do-over," the chance to fix that one thing high school didn't provide. Valdez will star as a successful movie star who goes home for the event to fulfill the unrealized dream of being a high school cheerleader. What she encounters instead is her mother's worsening cancer diagnosis, a sister (Leyco) in need of some sibling support, and then a little as-yet-undefined romance. Still in development, this is the kind of non-traumatic story about queer people of color that needs Hulu or Netflix to give it the push and production cash it deserves to get in front of audiences. We'll be waiting and watching.

Romeo San Vicente rejects pumpkin spice latte, but dives face-first into pumpkin pancakes.



Q Puzzle

Rom-com, All Ye Faithful

Across

- 1 "I've never done this before," et al.
- 5 Lorca's room
- 9 "The Great Masturbator" painter
- 13 "Be that ___ may..."
- 14 Small songbird
- 15 Hot to trot

- 16 Uncommon, to Nero
- 17 Melissa Etheridge's "___ It Heavy"
- 18 Q to a Scrabble player
- 19 She plays Harper in 54-Across
- 22 "Julia" costar Maximilian
- 23 Big name in soft balls
- 24 Rotary phone feature
- 26 Eleanor's husband's middle name

Down

- 1 Sows one's seed, etc.
- 2 Hayes of "South Park"
- 3 Canoe material
- 4 Killed a vampire, Buffy style
- 5 Tchaikovsky ballet
- 6 N. Mex. neighbor
- 7 Big dictator of Nureyev's land
- 8 Chipped in

- 30 Gay history mo.
- 33 "I've had better..."
- 35 Wife of Buck's Wang
- 36 She plays Abby in 54-Across
- 40 "Mod Squad" character
- 41 Antibiotic target
- 42 Gomer's Sgt. Carter, for one
- 43 Penetrating
- 46 Hoppers, in Barry Humphries' land
- 48 Tibetan holy man
- 50 Gives voice to
- 54 Gay Christmas rom-com to be released in November
- 58 Loads
- 59 South Korea's Syngman
- 60 Bucks prefix
- 61 Peter by the piano
- 62 Will of "The Waltons"
- 63 Get ready for action
- 64 Maria's "do" equivalent
- 65 They may be split
- 66 Admission exams

- 9 Computer information path
- 10 Month in the land of the cut
- 11 Taylor of "I Shot Andy Warhol"
- 12 Fateful March day
- 20 She's George
- 21 Anal insertion procedure (abbr.)
- 25 "Big Boned Gal" singer
- 27 "American Beauty" screenwriter
- Ball
- 28 Undercover crack investigator
- 29 Atop
- 30 Abbreviated Broadway musical?
- 31 Singer Williamson
- 32 Windshield feature
- 34 Belgian border river
- 37 Michelangelo was one
- 38 Suit bottom
- 39 Be a ham in "Hamlet"?
- 44 Mai ___ cocktail
- 45 Come out
- 47 Terence's family
- 49 White as a ghost
- 51 Former NFL player Tuaolo
- 52 Big name in synonyms
- 53 Moves the ball between one's legs
- 54 Full house, e.g.
- 55 Protected, to seamen
- 56 Sweater?
- 57 Began a hole, with "off"

Clues p. 47



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Lansing-Area Libraries Offer National Read Woke Program Through Oct. 31

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

The National Education Association has been presenting Read Across America, which is billed as the nation's largest celebration of reading, since 1998. It is, according to the Association's website, "a year-round program focused on motivating children and teens to read through events, partnership and reading resources that are about everyone and for everyone."

But Cicely Lewis, a Georgia high school librarian, did not feel that "everyone" was appropriately represented by the effort.

"Read Across America is an exciting time for students and teachers across the world," Lewis posted on her blog, cicelythegreat.wordpress.com. "Many schools have used this opportunity to also celebrate Dr. Seuss and his contribution to literature. In light of recent news about blackface and minstrel caricatures found in Dr. Seuss's work, many people are frustrated and looking for ways to diversify Read Across America. I started the Read Woke challenge at my school for high school students."

That school, Meadowcreek High School in Norcross, Georgia, has approximately 2,600 students and 240 teachers. And Lewis, who started Read Woke three years ago, was named Librarian of the Year for 2020 by School Library Journal.

Lewis started Read Woke as a reading challenge for her students.

"I curated a list that reflected current events in our society," she explained. "This list featured characters that looked like my students. From African Americans to LGBTQ protagonists, Read Woke books cover a variety of topics and deal with many issues plaguing our society."

According to Lewis's strict guidelines, a Read Woke book must challenge a social norm, give voice to the voiceless, provide information about a group that has been disenfranchised, seek to challenge the status quo and have a protagonist from an underrepresented or oppressed group.

"You are never too young to learn more about other people's cultures, struggles and dreams," Lewis said. "There are so many picture books with powerful messages about immigration, racism and other social justice issues. Also, picture books can be used with high school students, too. From English Language Learners to students with learning disabilities, all students can benefit from picture books."

Here in Michigan, the Capital Area District Libraries in Lansing is participating in the Read Woke challenge now through Oct. 31. Participants can read titles in categories such as social injustice, diverse abilities and Hispanic American voices. These books have been selected by CADL to reflect a wide variety of cultures, places and experiences that promote dignity and respect for all.

To date, Read Woke, which has truly become a movement, has reached schools and libraries across the country as well as in Canada, the United Kingdom and Norway.

"I started Read Woke to help empower my students," Lewis said. "I never in my wildest dreams imagined it would take off like it has."

Children, teens and adults who are interested in participating in Read Woke can sign up for CADL's Read Woke Online Reading Challenge by visiting cadl.org/woke now through Oct. 31.

Community Connections

Walk to End Alzheimer's Slated for this Month and Next, Team Rita Hayyyworth is Ready to Go

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

More than 5 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's Disease, according to the Alzheimer's Foundation. Further, the Foundation estimates that one in three seniors dies with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia, taking the lives of more people than breast cancer and prostate cancer combined. And although the novel coronavirus won't allow for a large crowd to assemble for the Walk to End Alzheimer's this year, small groups and teams will still take to the streets – or more likely sidewalks – throughout the state from the end of September until mid-October. Daniel Horrigan works for PACE, and he took place in the Metro Detroit walk scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 26.

"The PACE program is a Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly," Horrigan explained. "Our primary mission is to help low-income, nursing-home eligible adults remain independent in their homes for as long as possible. In graduate school, I focused a lot of my work on older adults and this mission that is dedicated to both health care and dignity was really in line with my values. PACE was at the top of my list when seeking post-grad employment."

Horrigan did not always dream of becoming a geriatric social worker. Living in New York, he ran a theater company for 15 years.

"A lot of the work our company did was social justice-oriented," he said. "As my colleagues and I decided to move on to new endeavors, I became eager to dedicate myself more directly to social change and decided on social work as a new career path. I did some volunteer work with older adults. I chose them because I had no experience working with this population and I wanted to lean into that discomfort. I volunteered at an adult daycare center in my neighborhood and it was like coming home. Turns out having a background in theatre is really helpful when working with people who have dementia."

"Creativity and improv are helpful skills when handling dementia symptoms," Horrigan continued. "Also being loud and animated is a good fit for people who have low vision or hearing. Haha. So, it was after this experience that I committed to a social work career focusing on older adults. My boyfriend Roman had his sights set on moving to

Detroit. I was in love with him and thought Detroit would be a unique social work experience. So, five years later, I'm still in love with him and very much in love with Detroit."

But it's not always an easy job. He said that his biggest challenges are the people who have limited social support and are in the early stages of dementia.

"These people are often not aware of or not in agreement with their diagnosis," he said. "They're at risk for self-neglect and unsafe decision making. That's a tough situation. It can be a tricky balancing act of keeping them safe, independent, and maintaining their dignity."

Still, the job must have its rewards?

"That's a great question for a social worker because it's a nice reality check. The successes for me are all of the clients I have who are thriving in their homes with my help and PACE' Southeast Michigan's services ... and that's honestly the majority of them," he said.

The COVID-19 crisis has, however, brought with it its own set of difficulties. Horrigan said that seniors and people with dementia often have very little social and recreational opportunities and the pandemic has limited the options even further.

"People who generally attend an adult day program or senior center are no longer able to," he said. "This is affecting depression levels, which is very interwoven with cognition. So we are seeing many older adults coming through this pandemic debilitated, depressed and with cognitive decline."

Caregivers are feeling the impacts, too. "Some caregivers are home all day, 24 hours a day with their loved one. These folks counted on these day programs, senior centers and respite opportunities so that they can recharge or get work done," Horrigan said. "We can assume that there is a higher level of caregiver burnout during the pandemic."

For all those reasons and more, Horrigan said he felt like it was more important now than ever to join the Walk to End Alzheimer's.

"This is my first year doing Walk. I interned with the Alzheimer's Association in my second year of grad



Daniel Horrigan

school. Their approach, programs and interventions for people with dementia and their caregivers are so simple, elegant and effective," he said. "I decided to walk this year because I see the impact that the pandemic is having on people with dementia every minute of every day on the job. I see it with their caregivers. So, I'm walking for my clients and their caregivers in a year where fundraising is especially challenging."

In line with his theatrical background, Horrigan has found a way to make the walk fun.

"I reached out to some friends to walk with me and asked for a name. I wanted something sort of gay and fabulous. My friend Jodi, who is a classic film buff, suggested The Rita Hayworths. Rita Hayworth was a glamorous and prolific film star of the '30s and '40s. She passed away from Alzheimer's at 68 in 1980, which is pretty young for this disease," he said. "She is considered to have had early onset Alzheimer's. Given her star power and diagnosis, this seemed a good fit. We just added two additional Y's to her name to make it extra gay."

Individual walks are taking place across the state from Sept. 12 to Oct. 11 and donations continue to be accepted from those who missed the walks in their areas. Visit alz.org/walk or call 800-272-3900 if you are interested in participating in or donating to the Walk to End Alzheimer's or to learn more about the Alzheimer's Association's programs and services.

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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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