How One Teen Made the Equality Act Her Mission

PAGE 8

How Volunteers Help Make Pride What It Is

PAGE 14

Diane Keaton Q&A

PAGE 20

MAY 16, 2019
VOL. 2720 | FREE
SPRING CLEANING MADE EASY WITH HAGOPIAN!

Nothing compares to the feeling you get from a home freshly cleaned by Hagopian. Let Hagopian make it look, feel and smell clean! We'll clean your Carpet, Furniture, Rugs, Tile & Grout, and Air Ducts so you'll fall in love with your home all over again!

AIR DUCT CLEANING
$100 OFF
must mention coupon when scheduling service
some restrictions apply
EXPIRES 5/31/19

CARPET CLEANING
3 ROOMS $89.99
some restrictions apply
EXPIRES 5/31/19

RUG CLEANING
2 FOR 1
Bring your rugs to any of our drop-off locations and we'll clean every other one FREE!
some restrictions apply
EXPIRES 5/31/19

1-800-HAGOPIAN
(424-6742)
SCHEDULE ONLINE! HagopianClean.com
The Most Trusted Name in Cleaning Since 1939

CLEANING DROP-OFF & 2-DAY RUG EXPRESS SERVICE
OAK PARK

SHOWROOMS & CLEANING DROP-OFF
BIRMINGHAM • NOVI

ADDITIONAL DROP-OFF LOCATIONS
ANN ARBOR • CLARKSTON • PLYMOUTH • UTICA
Trans, Religious, Thriving

BY EVE KUCHARSKI

As a faith leader, the Rev. Kate Malin, Rector of Christ's Church in Rye, New York, wears a variety of hats: teacher, theologian, preacher. She is used to giving informed guidance to her parishioners and to the process of researching and preparing thoughtful answers to discussions and questions not only spiritual but regarding all aspects of life. However, when she learned several years ago that one of her identical twins is transgender she admitted her knowledge of the subject was sorely lacking.

"There was definitely for me a period, a space of time, where I felt like I just didn't know and I had to get up to speed super quickly because my child, Emmie, was leading me," Malin said. "'Then, what I had to do as a priest was stand before my congregation and basically say to them, 'I need you to know this and I need you to know that I don't know the answer to a lot of the questions that you may have. And I can share with you what I know so far.'"

Today, Emmie Smith and her mother appear to be just as, if not closer, than they were before Smith came out. The duo has appeared in various publications speaking out in favor of transgender visibility ranging from SELF, Huffington Post, Cosmopolitan and most notably National Geographic, where three years ago a 17-year-old Smith allowed a camera crew to document the journey of her gender reassignment surgery in an effort to demystify and humanize a part of the transgender experience. In a continuation of those activism efforts, both Malin and Smith will be featured in a weekend event titled Thriving as a Trans* Family, put on by Christ Church Cranbrook from Saturday, June 8, through June 9.

Re-Examining Faith

Now years removed from the initial announcement Malin made to her parish about her daughter’s true identity, she’s had time to take stock and re-examine how the experience changed her approach to faith. She said she first began to grapple with her understanding of how members of the transgender community fit into her Episcopal beliefs.

"There's been a lot of conversation in the church about the role of gay and lesbian and bisexual individuals as far as leaders in the church and participants in the life of the church, but a transgender individual is on a different road," she said.

She went on to say that that honest re-examination of her beliefs and their potential shortcomings regarding the LGBTQ community generated a lot of discussion among parishioners, too, which allowed her to see how an even unintentionally repressive religious environment could generate significant anguish for those who lose their support system.

"I've been approached by strangers on phone and email and people who heard me preach or talk, and some are parents and they're frightened and they think their child is going to hell. And some are children who believe they will never be able to go to church again, that God considers them an abomination," Malin said. "I realized that there's a lot of spiritual questioning and sometimes real crisis and pain. And oftentimes, these family members are quite faithful and they now need support. And, from the very place that should be a great source of support, they don't even know how to ask for it and their own priests and fellow parishioners don't know what to say or what to do."

Combatting that feeling of loneliness and isolation is part of the reason that Malin makes a point to share her and her daughter’s story and continue being an activist for those in the transgender community. Smith agrees. Regarding her own relationship with God, she said that it’s also gotten more introspective and stronger since she’s transitioned and begun to live her authentic self. And that’s largely because of the immense support of her mother and the parish.

"I feel like my relationship with my faith got a lot clearer because I was able to more effectively communicate with my own understanding of the divine, with my own relationship with my mom and the people who work with her,” Smith said. "I feel like everything just got more vibrant, it was like putting on a pair of glasses for the first time when you’re nearsighted or farsighted; all of a sudden things just snapped a little more into focus because they could have before when I was speaking to God through a pretty thick pane of glass. I think being honest and true to yourself is the only way that I really felt I could have a spiritual relationship with God."

Mindful of an Accepting Gospel

The Rev. Canon William J. Danaher Jr. is the rector at Christ Church Cranbrook and reached out to Smith and Malin to invite them to share their experience. Although not part of the LGBTQ community himself, as an ally and the father of a non-binary child, Danaher said that it’s imperative that his congregation use this upcoming weekend to help re-examine the gospel being preached.

"I do want to say that I’m really, really honored that Emmie and Kate are going to be coming to Christ Church Cranbrook and part of the reason why we’re doing this is because I do think it’s a relevant question about the times in which we’re living. It’s not so much that we’re preaching the gospel it’s, ‘What gospel are we preaching?’” he said. “And the kind of gospel that I believe should be preached at my church is one in which people are beloved as they are and as God created them to be and they are nurtured and loved in a relationship with God that brings them deeper into who they are, but also deeper into the love of God and has them experience the body of Christ.”

Danaher added that having spent six years of his career in Canada in a more LGBTQ-affirming area than Metro Detroit, his eyes were opened to a possibility that even in more traditionally conservative religious circles there could be acceptance for members of the LGBTQ community.

"It was there that I met people who were in the church and outside of the church who identified with the trans community for whom their transition was completely mainstream,” Danaher said. "I don't see that as much here in the United States and I think part of it is that there's less openness and there's also much more suspicion of the trans community and I was initially astounded by it when I would encounter it even among people who identified with the LGBTQ community, but wouldn't identify with the ‘T’ in the trans community.”

He cited activists like Pauli Murray as inspiration for the inclusion of Smith and Malin at the upcoming event with an ultimate goal to “lift up people who are hidden in plain sight,” even when experiencing backlash from those not supportive of the cause.

"And I had a bit of resentment, I’m not going to deny it, there have been people who have come after me in the ways that people come after leaders in a church when you make a decision. That’s the price of being honest,” adding that he knows Malin has faced resistance, too.

Reaching the Resistant

In response, Malin said that the best way to reach those who don't approve of a transgender-affirming gospel is by holding
Tickets On Sale NOW!

4th Annual Go Girl Saugatuck!

MAY 31 - JUNE 2, 2019

WWW.GOGIRLSAUGATUCK.COM
News

First Ever Royal Oak Family Pride to Take Place June 12

By Jason A. Michael

The first ever Royal Oak Family Pride will take place at the June Food Truck Rally at the Royal Oak Farmer’s Market on June 12. The event, which will feature a full schedule of fun and family-friendly activities including drag queen story time, a dog fashion show, face painting, a bounce house, photo booth, a performance by the Sing Out Detroit Choir and more, was the brainchild of Royal Oak resident David Mates Knapp.

“Pride events come in all shapes and sizes, and all of them are so wonderful and necessary,” Mates-Knapp said. “Since my husband and I are currently in the process of adopting, I’ve been trying to find more queer-friendly things to do in the area that are appropriate for kids, too. Most Pride events are fun and friendly, of course, with activities for people of all ages, but I was thinking of something a bit different when I brought this idea to the city of Royal Oak.”

Mates-Knapp said he’s seen very few Michigan pride events across the state that are specifically focused on queer families and their children.

“I also wanted to create an event that served as a resource for queer couples that wanted to learn more about the adoption process or wanted to connect with other queer family hopefuls,” he said.

“Those resources are priceless. More importantly, I just wanted to see a pride event in Royal Oak.”

There hasn’t been an official pride event since 2001, when PrideFest changed its name to Motor City Pride and relocated to Ferndale.

“Royal Oak has such a queer and diverse community with amazing business owners who run queer-friendly shops and restaurants,” Mates-Knapp said. “I love the idea of having pride in every city we can. With the help of Royal Oak’s Judy Davids and Carol Schwanger, Royal Oak Public Library’s Mary Karshner and Emily Dumas and volunteers Ellen Knoppow (BTL contributor), the Rev. Preston Boyd, and myself, we came up with an event that is educational and fun, as well as family friendly.

“We plan on highlighting the wonderful history of queer culture while lifting up the vibrancy of the queer community as a whole, focusing on family support for all,” Mates-Knapp continued. “We were able to partner with many individuals and businesses in Royal Oak to really shape a Pride event that will highlight the very best Royal Oak has to offer, from food trucks to local supports to adoption agencies that will help queer families thrive. This is truly a community event perfect for families of all shapes and sizes.”

Royal Oak Family Pride will take place Wednesday, June 12, from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Royal Oak Farmer’s Market, which is located at 316 E. 11 Mile Road in Royal Oak. For more information, visit gaybe.am/4G.

370,000 LGBTQ People in Michigan are Vulnerable to Discrimination

The State Lacks Important Legal Protections for LGBT Youth and Adults

By BTL Staff

Michigan’s legal landscape puts the state’s 311,000 LGBTQ adults and 61,000 LGBTQ youth at risk of discrimination and harassment. The social, economic and health effects of stigma and discrimination against LGBTQ people negatively impact Michigan’s economy by tens of millions of dollars each year, according to a new study by the Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law.

The study documents the prevalence and impact of several forms of stigma and discrimination against LGBTQ individuals in the state, including harassment and discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations; harassment and bullying in schools; and family rejection of LGBT youth.

“Michigan has an opportunity to create a more supportive climate for LGBT people by, for example, adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the state’s hate crimes law, and banning the use of conversion therapy on youth,” said lead author Christy Mallory, State & Local Policy Director at the Williams Institute.

Key findings of the report include:

Many LGBTQ people in the state experience economic instability.

• 28 percent of LGBTQ adults in Michigan reported having an annual household income below $24,000, compared to 20 percent of non-LGBTQ adults, according to Gallup data. Similarly, 25 percent of LGBTQ adults in Michigan reported that they do not have enough for food compared to 15 percent of non-LGBTQ adults.

• 10 percent of LGBTQ adults in Michigan reported that they were unemployed compared to 5 percent of non-LGBTQ adults, according to Gallup data.

• The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey found that 19 percent of transgender respondents in Michigan were unemployed and 30 percent were living in poverty.

LGBTQ people in the state experience negative health outcomes associated with stigma and discrimination.

• LGBT adults in Michigan are significantly more likely to have been diagnosed with a depressive disorder and to be current smokers than non-LGBTQ adults: 44 percent of LGBTQ adults in Michigan reported having been diagnosed with a depressive disorder compared to 21 percent of non-LGBTQ adults, and 38 percent of LGBTQ adults in the state are current smokers compared to 20 percent of non-LGBTQ adults, according to data from the “2015–2016 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System surveys.” Depression and smoking are two health outcomes that have been linked to experiences of stigma and discrimination.

• 53 percent of LGB students in the state had seriously considered suicide compared to 17 percent of non-LGB students in the prior year, according to data from the 2017 Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

• LGB students in Michigan were also more likely than non-LGB students to report smoking cigarettes, drinking, and using marijuana in the prior, according to data from the 2017 Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

Health disparities for LGBTQ people negatively impact the state’s economy.

• Reducing the disparity in major depressive disorder between LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ people in Michigan by 25 percent to 33.3 percent could benefit the state’s economy by $122.5 million to $163.9 million annually.

• Reducing the disparity in current smoking by the same proportion could benefit the state’s economy by $107.9 million to $143.8 million in increased productivity and reduced health care costs each year.

• Discrimination can lead to lower earnings and unemployment, which can result in an increased reliance on public benefits. For example, discrimination in the workplace against transgender people annually costs Michigan approximately $256,000 in state Medicaid expenditures.

To find out more about the upcoming visit go online to chriscrichmanbrook.org.

Read the report online at http://gaybe.am/wr.

Thriving

Continued from p. 4

candid conversations.

“Get to know the people the vocabulary they need so that they can really talk and hear each other. And let them know personal stories and meeting people is so important,” Malin said. “Many kids in my parish have come out as gay back in the time back in the time when it was really hard and scary and it’s different, that’s changed so much and now we have another major social shift. And a lot of suspicions from folks are, ‘Is this for real? Are these folks just going through a phase?’ There’s all sorts of rationalizations and diminishing and mistrust and we need to hear trans people talk.”

Smith, currently a student at The University of Michigan, agrees that there is too little transgender representation in the religious community and elsewhere. Also an actress and writer, Smith is interested in sharing transgender voices in the media, too.

“For me, the most powerful tools against dehumanization are stories and art. We as humans are so good at connecting with a character that we see on screen or on stage or on the page; it lets us into the humanity of other people in a way that I think is really super rare except for, I think, service like church and religious practice,” she said. “But there is something so similar about being [with] a person’s experience and going through their story that lets you empathize with them in a way that I think just is not possible in other circumstances.”

One of her latest projects is a theater production called “Elektrik,” which follows a transgender-inclusive cast and is based on a Greek myth. Smith collaborated on the production with her brother, Caleb, and the project won a NEO or New, Emerging, Outstanding artist grant. Smith said she hopes that one day it, and other shows like it, can make it to Broadway.

“It’s not about someone discovering their identity because this character, Elektra in the show, is not struggling to figure out her identity and putting on dresses for the first time and going through that process, she is an active character in her own story and while her identity as a trans woman is important to her, it’s not the focus or the engine behind the story, it is just another facet of her character, which comes into play like other aspects of her identity as a woman, a daughter, as a queen,” she said.

“That’s why I push for LGBT characters ... to keep away from the stories we’ve heard too many times.
All You Need is Love - Let Me Help You Find the Home of Your Dreams

Lynn L. Stange
Realtor Associate
70 West Long Lake Rd., Troy MI 48098
248.561.6967 | LLStange@aol.com
Full Service Residential Real Estate
Local Neighborhood Specialist Representing Buyers & Sellers

Hodges SUBARU
21205 Woodward Ave • Ferndale • MI • 48220
248.547.8600 • www.hodgessubaru.com
HOURS: TUES, WED, THU • 9 AM - 8 PM
FRI • 9 AM - 6 PM | SAT • 9 AM - 2 PM
MON & WED • 9 AM - 6 PM | THU • 9 AM - 7:30 PM
SUN: 10 AM - 2 PM | 12 PM - 6 PM

HODGES SUBARU
Metro Detroit’s “Subaru Only” Dealership

#TIME2KNOW
GET TESTED
NOW OFFERING INTEGRATED TESTING

- Rapid HIV
- Rapid Hep C
- Gonorrhea
- Chlamydia
- Syphilis

CONVENIENT METRO DETROIT LOCATIONS
Matrix MAC Health in Ferndale & MidTown Detroit • Affirmations in Ferndale

MONDAY
Matrix MAC Health
FERNADE
9AM-4:30PM
By Appointment

 Affirmations
FERNADE
5:30PM-8:30PM
Walk-in or Appointment
Mpowerment Detroit
MIDTOWN
11AM-7PM
Walk-in

TUESDAY
Matrix MAC Health
FERNADE
9AM-7:30PM
Walk-in

THURSDAY
Matrix MAC Health
FERNADE
9AM-4:30PM
Walk-in

FRIDAY
Matrix MAC Health
FERNADE
9AM-5PM
Walk-in

SATURDAY
Mpowerment Detroit
MIDTOWN
3rd Saturday of each month
11AM-2PM
Walk-in

STD Testing ONLY
gonorrhea, syphilis, chlamydia, Hep C

Matrix MAC Health is a program of Matrix Human Services. Learn more. Give. Volunteer. Discover Matrix at MatrixHumanServices.org

1.888.226.6366 to make an appointment or for information.
How One Teen Made the Equality Act Her Mission

A Harsh Reality

It’s no mystery why 17-year-old Ellie Nagel-Bennett is so passionate about the Equality Act: she’s experienced discrimination and homophobia first-hand, despite not identifying as LGBTQ herself. “You know that your parents are sinful, right? You know that your parents are going to hell,” Nagel-Bennett recalls being told by a classmate when they were both 6.

“That was the moment I first cognitively realized my parents were different,” Nagel-Bennett said, adding that she was raised in the church to believe that God loves everyone. Because of that early experience, Nagel-Bennett said she began to doubt that her parents should even be together. But by middle school, she came to the realization that her family didn’t need to fit society’s preconceptions.

And although Nagel-Bennett learned self-acceptance, she said she recognized as she was growing up how she and her parents were sometimes treated as a family. She was also aware her parents had been fired from careers from their jobs for being gay. And with such protections codified in law, perhaps that would ultimately lead to wider acceptance — and less cruelty of the kind that Nagel-Bennett experienced when she was 6.

Ellie Goes to Washington

It wasn’t just Nagel-Bennett’s negative experiences growing up that launched her trajectory to become an outspoken advocate for the Equality Act. In terms of equal rights, there were the pride festivals she attended from a young age, but the activism piece really came a few years ago, following the Parkland, Florida, shootings when she saw people her age speaking out for the first time. She, too, became involved in student groups that advocated for common sense gun legislation.

Then, during the 2018 midterms, Nagel-Bennett volunteered for Matt Longjohn’s campaign for Congress, a race that was won by Republican U.S. Rep. Fred Upton, a 16-term incumbent. When one of the high school activists she met during the campaign invited her to lobby in Washington, D.C. for the Equality Act, she was eager to sign up. And after some initial protest from her parents, this was a last-minute request, Nagel-Bennett said they were in full support — provided that she pay for her own airfare.

“It was amazing,” Nagel-Bennett said. “It really made me realize that even though I am 17, and everyone else there had full-time jobs and families and everything, that I could still make a difference.”

After meeting representatives from the Human Rights Campaign during the trip, Nagel-Bennett returned to Kalamazoo and has been hard at work advocating for the Equality Act ever since. To that end, she said she’s presented to various high school and Young Democrat groups in Kalamazoo and Portage, to educate them on the Equality Act and provide opportunities to get involved — even though they can’t vote.

“I think it’s important to talk to people who don’t necessarily have that outlet to voice their opinion quite yet,” she said. “It’s been a really positive response.”

While some were hesitant to write letters to Congressman Upton to share personal stories, many have made phone calls and filled out postcards, she said.

In Michigan, HRC’s work on behalf of the Equality Act has focused on the west side of the state, where the organization is targeting Republican Congress members Justin Amash, whose district includes Grand Rapids, and Fred Upton, whose district includes Kalamazoo.

Regarding the meetings they had with staffers of the two west Michigan representatives when she was lobbying in D.C., Nagel-Bennett said she could tell the individual from Amash’s office seemed disinterested. The response from Upton’s aid, however, was different.

“She was definitely understanding of what we were saying,” Nagel-Bennett said, adding that the response they received afterward from Upton as well confirmed that he had a comprehensive understanding of the Equality Act — although he’s not expected to vote in favor of it. However, Upton’s dilemma in opposing the legislation while hoping to get reelected is that his only opposition right now is Michigan state Rep. Jon Hoadley, who is openly gay.

What’s Ahead

The Equality Act is scheduled for a vote in the House of Representatives on May 17, and Nagel-Bennett, like many others, predicts it will pass.

“We have the majority to pass it now,” she said. “But I think that the Senate is where our struggle will be. The party which favors equality legislation, especially when it comes to LGBTQ protections, is in the minority in the Senate right now.”

But Nagel-Bennett doesn’t sound too discouraged. If the bill dies in the Senate, she said, “We’ll just have to keep introducing new bills.”

What’s next for Nagel-Bennett? By the 2020 election, she’ll be old enough to vote and studying in her first year of college at Michigan State University’s James Madison College.

“And in the 2020 election cycle you will probably hear my name,” she said, “because I will be working tirelessly to elect a president who represents my ideals and not the ideals of... frankly, everything that’s been plaguing myself and my family.”

As for the here and now, Nagel-Bennett said her parents and friends have been largely supportive of her activism and advocacy for the Equality Act, although she’s received some negative feedback in the form of “liberal nicknames” from some peers at school who don’t really know her.

“It’s disheartening to see people make just ad hominem attacks at me, for something that I’m standing up for, even though it’s something that’s not part of my identity, right?” Nagel-Bennett said. “But even when they do make those comments, I know they are definitely ill-informed because the Equality Act is something we can all get behind. It’s just common sense. And it’s unfortunate that there are still people in the community and also legislators who don’t realize that we’re just trying to get protections for everybody.”
Trump Comes Out Against Equality Act

By Chris Johnson

With a vote on the Equality Act in the U.S. House expected on Friday, a senior administration official indicated exclusively to the Washington Blade that President Trump opposes the bill.

"The Trump administration absolutely opposes discrimination of any kind and supports the equal treatment of all; however, this bill in its current form is filled with poison pills that threaten to undermine parental and conscience rights," the senior administration official said via email.

More details about Trump's position on the Equality Act may come soon from the White House, which traditionally issues a Statement of Administration Policy when legislation comes to the floor of either chamber of Congress.

The statement is arguably a change in position for Trump. In 2000, when Trump was exploring a presidential run as a Reform Party candidate, he said in an interview with The Advocate he likes the idea of amending the Civil Rights Act to include sexual orientation — a key component of the Equality Act.

"I like the idea of amending the 1964 Civil Rights Act to include a ban of discrimination based on sexual orientation," Trump said. "It would be simple. It would be straightforward. We don't need to rewrite the laws currently on the books, although I do think we need to address hate-crimes legislation. But amending the Civil Rights Act would grant the same protection to gay people that we give to other Americans — it's only fair."

The Equality Act, as it will come up in the House, would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Fair Housing Act to ban anti-LGBT discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, jury service, education, federal programs and credit.

But the Equality Act goes further than what Trump said he supported in 2000. In addition to transgender inclusion, the bill seeks to update federal law to include sex in the list of protected classes in public accommodation and expands the definition of public accommodations to include retail stores, banks, transportation services and health care services. Further, the Equality Act would establish that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act — a 1994 law aimed at protecting religious liberty — can't be used to enable anti-LGBT discrimination.

The White House statement is consistent with the Trump administration's anti-LGBT actions, such as the transgender military ban, withdrawal of guidance to schools assuring transgender kids have access to the restroom consistent with their gender identity and actions taken in the name of "religious freedom" seen to undermine LGBT rights.

UPDATE: A House senior Democratic leadership aide told the Blade after publication of this article Trump's opposition to the Equality Act doesn't change anything in terms of plans for a floor vote on Friday.

This article originally appeared in the Washington Blade and is made available in partnership with the National LGBT Media Association.
Aging With HIV Requires Vigilance and Hope

BY JAN STEVENSON

It would have been an impossible dream 30 years ago, to live with HIV for decades and to actually grow into old age with the virus. Yet with the medical advances and reduced toxicity of the medications that suppress HIV, those who are aging with the virus now face a new set of challenges.

Living with HIV Over 50 was the title of an April 30 lecture presented by Dr. Paul Benson, a longtime specialist in the treatment of HIV/AIDS and the social movement to de-stigmatize HIV and the people infected with it.

“Times have changed and most of you in this room are old enough to remember that lots of people with HIV would have a hard time surviving from one year to the next. Birthdays and holidays were celebrated thinking that this may be the last,” Benson said. “But now, with all the advances in medicine and technology people with HIV are living longer and we find they are subject to additional health concerns that are not HIV itself.”

Benson explained that inflammation from other diseases is higher in people with HIV, and it is that inflammation that causes more health problems than the HIV virus itself in older people.

“HIV is not your biggest problem. We can control the HIV with drugs. Comorbidity is the issue. We need to use aggressive treatment of anything so as to not allow inflammation to get out of control.”

“Comorbidity is the issue,” he said. “We need to use aggressive treatment of anything so as to not allow inflammation to get out of control.”

Benson explained that inflammation from other diseases is higher in people with HIV, and it is that inflammation that causes more health problems than the HIV virus itself in older people.

“HIV is not your biggest problem. We can control the HIV with drugs. Comorbidity is the issue,” he said. “We need to use aggressive treatment of anything so as to not allow inflammation to get out of control.”

Benson said many doctors will wait to treat patients who have borderline high sugar levels or who have slightly higher cholesterol numbers and instead encourage their patients to try and reduce these risk factors with changes in lifestyle and eating habits.

“In the HIV realm of primary care, we can’t allow a little bit of anything. We need to be aggressive and treat all these comorbidities because at the end of the day that results in lower inflammation, which results in us living longer and healthier,” Benson said.

During a lively Q&A session, people asked questions about viral load measurements, future protocols, how to be more aware of their health, diet and alcohol consumption and more. Benson described some changes he is making in his practice to better serve his clients aging with HIV including more testing to find diseases earlier and treating those diseases as soon as they appear.

The practice is starting Group Medical Appointments, one-hour meetings with Benson and/or other staff members and eight to 10 HIV-positive patients to have a deep discussion on issues affecting their health, and allow patients to learn from each other.

He also empowered the group to become spokespeople for the use of PrEP, or Pre-exposure prophylaxis, drugs that can prevent HIV infection.

“You can be the ambassadors. You have the experience with HIV/AIDS. Encourage people to avoid infection by using PrEP,” Benson said.
JWs Go Trumpeting Door-To-Door

1. In the year of the Trumpeted Mongrel 666 Beast of War endlessly chasing his flea-bitten tail, a prophet of restless dudes scaled Mt. Rush-No-More, seeking counsel with the electrifying powers that sometimes to Be (or, not to Be).

2. Thus spake the Prophet Dude: "Eternal CEOs of centuries flushed down the oft-clogging, gas-driven drain of time. Ye who have dazzled and conned naive humankind with awe-inspiring displays – triune, quadraphonic to behold – hear my humble – but mainly cool – complaint.

3. "Yea, verily! Ye who made the Sunoco stand still in its skyward climb. Ye who made Noah's rebuilt, tax-free ark a crib for lowly ass and bellowing pachyderm tourists (our present pets).

4. "Ye who turned well water into Palestinian Perrier. Give us thy hands-on blessings of total space out for this the Age of Lukewarm Tea Baggery.

5. "Give us a push-button rod to conjure with, a change-channel staff to comfort us. Give us thy constant rerun soaps. Gridiron images of total adoration. Placebo messages of world dominion. Free-floating! Whiz-bang! Be here now! Do whatever thou wilt!"

6. Then atop Mount Rush-No-More spoke a voice from a burning George Bush, unlike any theocratic tumbleweed past, present or (hopefully) future. "O lowly assembly line kinda guy!" it said, echoing like 10,000 autoharps in perfect E-flat Pluribus Unison.

7. "May We, the autonomous Big Three, presume, that thou art not content to keep Sabbath, ritual, holy day? Lease and buy our chariots, used and otherwise? Kiddest thou us not?"

8. "Then answered the Prophet Dude (sun-glassing his eyes for the sight of the DayGlo, smoldering shrub was too much for mere mortal sight). "These are trying, ball-busting times. Years of zillion-dollar hidden tax-return debt. Trickle-down disaster. (All knowing Big-Three: Grant us, thy hallowed hocus pocus of zillion-dollar hidden tax-return debt. Trickle-down disaster. mere mortal sight), "These are trying, ball-busting times. Years of zillion-dollar hidden tax-return debt. Trickle-down disaster. (All knowing Big-Three: Grant us, thy hallowed hocus pocus of zillion-dollar hidden tax-return debt. Trickle-down disaster.

9. "Yea, and howdy doody!" he continued. "Ye whom the Angels, Cardinals and Cubs praise sky high, ad infinitum, ad nauseam, let our three-score-10 (so short a blue note gig) be sweet and 24/7 entertained, in this badass epoch of mumble-grumble, wife-swap politics, and rightwing, bleach-blond navel fuzzing. Give us top booking. Amen."

10. "'May the year of the Trumpeted Mongrel 666 Beast of War endlessly chasing his flea-bitten tail, a prophet of restless dudes scaled Mt. Rush-No-More, seeking counsel with the electrifying powers that sometimes to Be (or, not to Be). Thus spake the Prophet Dude: "Eternal CEOs of centuries flushed down the oft-clogging, gas-driven drain of time. Ye who have dazzled and conned naive humankind with awe-inspiring displays – triune, quadraphonic to behold – hear my humble – but mainly cool – complaint. "Yea, verily! Ye who made the Sunoco stand still in its skyward climb. Ye who made Noah's rebuilt, tax-free ark a crib for lowly ass and bellowing pachyderm tourists (our present pets). "Ye who turned well water into Palestinian Perrier. Give us thy hands-on blessings of total space out for this the Age of Lukewarm Tea Baggery. "Give us a push-button rod to conjure with, a change-channel staff to comfort us. Give us thy constant rerun soaps. Gridiron images of total adoration. Placebo messages of world dominion. Free-floating! Whiz-bang! Be here now! Do whatever thou wilt!"

11. Then atop Mount Rush-No-More spoke a voice from a burning George Bush, unlike any theocratic tumbleweed past, present or (hopefully) future. "O lowly assembly line kinda guy!" it said, echoing like 10,000 autoharps in perfect E-flat Pluribus Unison.

12. "May We, the autonomous Big Three, presume, that thou art not content to keep Sabbath, ritual, holy day? Lease and buy our chariots, used and otherwise? Kiddest thou us not?"

13. "Then answered the Prophet Dude (sun-glassing his eyes for the sight of the DayGlo, smoldering shrub was too much for mere mortal sight). "These are trying, ball-busting times. Years of zillion-dollar hidden tax-return debt. Trickle-down disaster. (All knowing Big-Three: Grant us, thy hallowed hocus pocus of zillion-dollar hidden tax-return debt. Trickle-down disaster. mere mortal sight), "These are trying, ball-busting times. Years of zillion-dollar hidden tax-return debt. Trickle-down disaster. (All knowing Big-Three: Grant us, thy hallowed hocus pocus of zillion-dollar hidden tax-return debt. Trickle-down disaster."

The Lines Blur

Caster Semenya is a South African middle-distance runner. She took home Olympic gold in both 2012 and 2016 and has won the world championships three times.

She grew up in the village of Fairlie, located in South Africa's Limpopo province in 1991. While she took up running to train for soccer, it was the former she has made her name in. She started on a career of dominating races in 2008, taking home an impressive array of accolades — and more than a little controversy.

The International Association of Athletics Federations decided to investigate Semenya, taking tests to determine that she was not doping as well as to verify her sex. As a result, the IAAF decided that Semenya had a "rare medical condition" and in 2018 that she had a "rare medical condition" and in 2018 that she had a "rare medical condition" that gives her an "unfair advantage."

"For me, this is a victory of identity politics and activism," Vilain said. "Now I'm really worried about the future of women in sports because if we push this argument, anyone declaring themselves female can compete as a woman. We're moving toward one big competition, and the very predictable result of that competition is that there will be no women winners."

This is the same argument we have heard from others requiring athletes participating in the women's 400m, 800m, and 1,500-meter races — not coincidentally the exact races Semenya would compete in — would need to lower their testosterone levels medically if they have too much of hormone naturally occurring in their bodies.

Semenya is not transgender, but arguments about transgender people in sports have been used against her. Likewise, Semenya has also been used in arguments against transgender people in sports.

In the New York Times, Dr. Eric Vilain, a medical geneticist at UCLA, evoked this specter as far back as 2015, while discussing a sprinter from India named Dutee Chand. Chand, like Semenya, was also asked to take hormone-suppressing drugs in order to compete.

"For me, this is a victory of identity politics and activism," Vilain said. "Now I'm really worried about the future of women in sports because if we push this argument, anyone declaring themselves female can compete as a woman. We're moving toward one big competition, and the very predictable result of that competition is that there will be no women winners."

This is the same argument we have heard from others...
In short, you'll rarely find a transphobe who isn't also bigoted in regards to race, sex, sexuality and any number of other identities that aren't white, straight and male — and this brings us back to Semenya.

Gwen Smith wonders if Joanna Jozwik will get tested, too. You can find her at gwensmith.com.

Rep. John Becker

H opefully by the time you read this the United States isn't routinely opening up criminal investigations into women who have miscarriages. And I say routinely because there are already cases where women have ended up in prison after their miscarriages were called baby murders. So imagine how much worse it will get for women if the radical right-wingers have their way and overturn Roe v Wade. And if you can't imagine it, I challenge you to talk to your grandma about what it was like back in HER day or just read a goddamn book. Conversely, you could also watch “The Handmaid’s Tale” on Hulu which is on track to win an Emmy for Best Documentary.

Right now conservative state governments — like Georgia, Ohio and Alabama — are hot to pass anti-choice legislation with the intent that these laws will be challenged all the way to the Supreme Court and that the end result will be to make abortions illegal.

Now, there are plenty of voices in the media and on Twitter (aka Trump’s Hellmouth) calmly reminding that nobody’s making abortion illegal right this very minute in these states. And that’s true. But when womenis right to make decisions about their own bodies is on the chopping block, don’t tell ladies to calm down. Especially since by and large it is men writing and passing these bills and from the looks of it, most of them don’t know a damn thing about health or anatomy.

Take state Rep. John Becker (R-Ohio) who thinks that you can magically take an ectopic pregnancy and abracadabra it into a viable pregnancy inside the uterus. Don’t know what an ectopic pregnancy is? Well, neither does Rep. Becker but that didn't stop him from writing laws about what happens inside women's bodies. If you do know what an ectopic pregnancy is, then you know that Becker and other supporters of this bill are deeply ignorant and/or they clearly think that all women are witches.

The thing is, Becker doesn’t even care that he’s ignorant. He told Local 2 news, “I’m not smart enough to know what causes abortions and what doesn’t. The bill’s just written ‘if it causes an abortion’ and people smarter than me can figure out what that means.”

Here’s the thing: PEOPLE SMARTER THAN HIM ALREADY KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS AND THEY ARE CALLED DOCTORS. He is not a doctor. And yet, here he is deciding what goes on between women and actual medical professionals.

Now, you might be wondering, what does this abortion stuff have to do with LGBTQ politics? The answer is, well, everything. If you were to make a Venn diagram of Anti-reproductive choice folks and Anti-LGBT folks you’d basically have a total eclipse of the hate.

I’ve been saying this for decades, but the same people who want to take away a woman’s right to make her own medical decisions and turn her into a mandatory incubator also aren’t very keen on LGBTQ people having any kind of legal rights.

I remember being told by a heterosexual person that it was “a stretch” when I claimed that the anti-LGBTQ folks would not be satisfied with keeping same-sex couples from getting married, but that they would move on to banning birth control and imposing Puritanical laws on all things sex, no matter who is doing it.

It wasn’t a stretch then, and it sure as hell isn’t a stretch now.

If you identify as heterosexual but you think the LGBTQ equality fight isn’t yours, you are wrong. If you identify as LGBTQ and think the reproductive freedom fight isn’t yours, you are wrong, too.

Rep. Becker also supported the “Ohio Pastor Protection Act,” a so-called “religious freedom” bill that sought to “protect” pastors from being forced to marry same-sex couples. On his website he writes, “Marriage can only be between one man and one woman. (It really is that simple.)” He is also very concerned about transgender people being allowed to use public restrooms.

If you identify as heterosexual but you think the LGBTQ equality fight isn’t yours, you are wrong. If you identify as LGBTQ and think the reproductive freedom fight isn’t yours, you are wrong, too. The bigots want to divide us and gain power when we ignore our collective humanity. So don’t let them. (It really is that simple.)
Free Hugs, Fundraisers and Festival Organizers: How Volunteers Make Pride What It Is

BY ELLEN SHANNA KNOPOW

Alexandra Beninda: Have Hugs, Will Travel

Free hugs.

“Free hugs to the LGBT community to be out there and be who you are,” Beninda said with a laugh. She called it “an ideal activity” for her. Beninda said she originally signed up for three shifts of hugging, from noon to 6 p.m., but decided to cut that short. Depending on the weather, she said by 4 o’clock she “might be not-so-huggable.”

Attendees interested should look for “free hugs” volunteers in their team T-shirts. It’s a program sponsored by Jim Shaffer and Associates.

Having volunteered at Ferndale Pride in years past at various booths, including Transgender Michigan, Beninda has lived in Ferndale since 2015. She said she’s assisted with fundraisers that support the event as well. Beninda explained that volunteering for Pride is one of the ways she supports not only the LGBTQ community but also the local community.

“For one thing, I love the Pride activities,” she said, “but I also love Ferndale, particularly all the businesses in Ferndale. So, when the fundraisers are at different localities that are supported by the different businesses that support pride, I feel doubly obligated to be active and part of those activities.”

Before returning to Metro Detroit in 2015, Beninda said she lived in the Washington, D.C. area for 23 years, where she was very active with D.C. Pride.

“I’ve always wanted to be involved in pride activities wherever I was at,” she said, “but I’ve been excited all the time that they have a pride event right here in Ferndale.”

Volunteering in general, and hugs in particular, seems to suit Beninda’s nature. She described living in Ferndale’s autumn House Apartments, where she said she takes particular concern in her neighbors there who are disabled or who are elderly and have medical issues.

Though Beninda may be modest and unassuming, her own experience with Pride throughout the years may serve to inspire to others in the LGBTQ community who haven’t considered volunteering before.

“The whole Pride event is always important to me ... It’s changed a lot because it sometimes is a lot more commercial and business-oriented ... but it still is the event, where people can get out and enjoy themselves and express themselves however they want. Nobody gets real crazy in Ferndale,” she said with a laugh. “That’s what I’ve always enjoyed about the Pride activities ... is that it’s a good event for people that are in the LGBT community to be out there and...”

Ferndale Pride event chair Julia Music, who put her in charge of a fundraising event. It was a perfect fit. In the end, Kelley — with the help of her friends — amassed enough donations to put together the most successful fundraiser in Ferndale Pride’s history. All told, over $3,000 was raised for Pride at First Wednesday Queerest Tin Can Raffle hosted by Rose Garcia of “The Real L

Rolanda Kelley: First-Time Volunteer, Big-Time Fundraiser

For Rolanda Kelley, attending Ferndale Pride each year is something she’s always enjoyed. But this time around, it’s extra special.

“I love it,” Kelley said. “I live in Ferndale and I love the city and I love the community and Pride is always on my birthday weekend ... all my friends come out — my straight friends, my work friends.”

“It’s where I first started going and feeling that I could be myself,” she continued. “[It’s] one of the only places that I could be myself, at pride, and hold my partner’s hand and not worry about who was watching or who was judging. And it was just something I always knew I wanted to be more involved in.”

To that end, this year Kelley talked to Word” at Rosie O’Grady’s on May 1.

When asked how she managed to amass that amount, she said that first and foremost she had friends — and her partner especially — who assisted in soliciting items from area businesses. “Gift cards and gift baskets. Basically, every single business we went to said, ‘Absolutely,’” Kelley recalled. “We had a lot of amazing gifts, and so much support from the community — not just the LGBTQ community, but everyone. It was just awesome. Overwhelming. Such an amazing experience.”

Kelley said the event was also a great opportunity to showcase new or little-known businesses in Ferndale, like Midnight Obsessions, whose owner Sandiego attended the fundraiser along with owners of other shops. One-of-a-kind donations were part of the unique-to-Ferndale event, too. A Rainbow cornhole set named “Love Wins” was made especially for the raffle by Pammy Bali and Melissa Heath and was donated to Affirmations by the individual who won it.

From attending Ferndale Pride over the years to becoming a major force behind the scenes, Kelley reflected on the significance of volunteering for something that in 2019...
ANN ARBOR SUMMER FESTIVAL
SUMMER HAPPENS HERE
175+ CONCERTS & EVENTS, JUNE 14 – JULY 7, 2019
TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE IN PERSON, BY PHONE AT 734.764.2538, OR ONLINE AT A2SF.ORG

CHEEKY. BRAZEN. STRANGE. EDGE-OF-YOUR-SEAT ENTERTAINMENT
BARBU ELECTRO TRAD CABARET
CIRQUE ALFONSE
THU & FRI JUNE 20 & 21
8PM POWER CENTER

ANNOUNCING
GianClan MEDICAL SPA
AT PARTRIDGE CREEK OB/GYN

FemTouch™
Now offering Vaginal rejuvenation treatments. Fast, efficient and safe vaginal laser procedure for women’s health. Call today and schedule your treatment. 586-247-8609

Center: Rhonda L. Kobold, DO, FACOG
Left: Teresa C. Ku, MSN, WHNP-BC
Marcie S. Molfeta, MSN, CNM
Angela V. Yurczak, MSN, FNP-BC
Right: Cherry M. Vaughn, DNP, CRNM, FNP-BC
Beth K. Musch, MSN, FNP-BC
Cara J. Falk, MSN, CNM, WHNP-BC
(Not pictured: Nima Javad, MD)

19991 Hall Road, Suite 105
Macomb, MI 48044

PRESENTED BY:

Bell's Inspired Brewing

2019 kalamazoo PRIDE
LOVE WHO YOU ARE

Friday, June 7th
6pm-12:30am
Arcadia Creek Festival Place, Downtown Kalamazoo

Saturday, June 8th
2pm-12:30am

ENTERTAINMENT INCLUDES:
DJ DISOBEDIENCE  ALISE KING “MISS(TER)
KALAMAZOO PRIDE 2019” DRAG COMPETITION
FARMER’S ALLEY THEATRE  DACIA BRIDGES
PROJECT TIA SIMONE  SOLOMON GEORGIO
DAVID HERNANDEZ  SUTTON LEE SEYMOUR
& CACOPHONY

GET YOUR $15 TWO-DAY PASS – AVAILABLE IN ADVANCE ONLY.
Includes entrance to Kalamazoo Pride and entry in raffles on both days. Passes are available until June 6th at OutFront Kalamazoo. Cost at the gate is $10 per day.

Kalamazoo Pride is a fundraising event for OutFront Kalamazoo. Visit our website for program information, news, events and resources. www.outfrontkzoo.org
U-M Expands Trans Health Coverage After Graduate Union Campaign

BY BTL STAFF

After a years-long campaign by the Graduate Employees’ Organization to expand health care coverage for transgender members, University of Michigan health plans will expand to cover new procedures to treat gender dysphoria. All U-M health plans cover genital surgery, mastectomy in female-to-male transition, hormone therapy and counseling when medically necessary to treat gender dysphoria. As of July 1, the plans will also cover certain facial feminization surgeries, Adam’s apple reduction and facial hair removal. New coverage will apply not only to graduate students but will be available to anyone with a U-M health plan.

“We could not be happier to hear that U-M and Blue Cross Blue Shield have finally come around to see the trans community’s perspective. Transition coverage is medically necessary, and it’s incredibly rewarding to see people’s minds change so much on this matter,” said Monica Lewis, chair of GEO’s Trans Health Caucus.

This expansion in transgender health care is historic. Based on conversations with the university, to the best of GEO’s knowledge, it is GEO’s understanding that this is the first time a public institution has extended coverage for these procedures.

However, speech-language therapy and transfeminine top surgery (augmentation mammoplasty) are not covered for transgender employees on any U-M health plan, even after this extension. Moreover, the requirements for accessing covered procedures remain a source of inequity in health coverage that GEO organizers seek to address.

In order to access this coverage, transgender patients are required to submit themselves to mandatory psychiatric evaluation, with either one or two therapists, depending on the procedure, and to an extended, unnecessary waiting period.

“These barriers obstruct medically necessary health care in a way that many trans people, myself included, find invasive, dehumanizing and profoundly condescending,” Lewis said. “We are excited to continue our advocacy work. Other medically necessary procedures remain excluded, but we hope to come to a similar point of understanding about how the current coverage still fails to meet the needs of trans people in many ways.”

GEO laid out recommendations for new coverage to the university in an April 2018 conference. A review of coverage was initiated by the university’s Medical Benefits Advisory Committee, with its first meeting held in June 2018. The MBAC meetings were closed to the public, information about the proceedings was withheld and GEO was not permitted to attend. GEO’s requests to interface with the panel were denied.

The inclusion of trans voices in the review process was a central goal for GEO organizers, though requests for open MBAC forums were denied twice. After organizing efforts by GEO, the university responded by allowing trans people to discuss their concerns with the MBAC chair and the associate vice president of human resources.

GEO has a long history of advocating for improvements to transgender health care. In 2005, GEO proposed coverage for many procedures, including facial feminization surgery and permanent hair removal and the university denied both at the time. The conversation that led to this most recent extension of trans benefits started in GEO’s 2016-17 contract campaign. The union brought forward a number of proposals related to trans health equity during bargaining, with little progress. After the GEO membership authorized a walkout, the university responded with significant movement on many of their demands, including an agreement to hold a series of “special conferences” to discuss the coverage and accessibility of treatment services related to gender dysphoria. The walkout was called off and the GEO membership ratified the new contract, signed in May 2017. The first meeting of the special conference series on transgender health care was in December 2017, and there have been three more to date (the most recent of which was in January 2019).

Why He Does It

Although Wait began volunteering 17 years ago, he said he really started devoting most of his free time to the organization a few years back, after Equality Michigan assisted Motor City Pride in becoming its own 501(c)(3) nonprofit. One reason Wait said he enjoys giving of himself to the degree that he does for the festival is that he like bringing people together: the event is an opportunity for people to connect with the many nonprofits, health providers and various organizations and companies that support Motor City Pride.

But when it comes to his continued commitment to Motor City Pride, Wait said creating a space that enables LGBTQ people to feel comfortable being who they are is what he finds most gratifying.

“I think the biggest moving thing for me is when I see people who aren’t out in their everyday life or aren’t able to be their authentic self that can come to the festival and have a safe space that they can really be who they are for that day or for that weekend,” Wait said. “And I meet people like that every year, who aren’t comfortable or able to be out on a day-to-day basis. This is a place that they can do that to be able to begin that journey.

“And in a way, it’s too bad that it’s still a challenge for people in today’s time,” he said. “But it really makes it show how relevant festivals like this truly still are.”
Glynese D. Graham, DVM
Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
3800 Grand River, Detroit, MI 48208-2866
tel: 313.832.7282 fax: 313.832.4990
www.pattersondogandcat.com

Alexander Zachary
Realtor
313-502-2284 cell
248-626-2100 office
azachary@kw.com
https://alexander.kwrealty.com
Keller Williams West Bloomfield
30500 Northwestern Hwy., Suite 300
Farmington Hills, MI 48334

2019 Jeep Wrangler
$299 PER MONTH LEASE/ 24 MONTH/10,000 MILES PER YEAR
Plus tax with employee price includes all applicable rebates. $999 due at signing based on April 1 Fair market.

2019 Ram 1500
$299 PER MONTH LEASE/ 24 MONTH/10,000 MILES PER YEAR
Plus tax with employee price includes all applicable rebates. $999 due at signing based on April 1 Fair market.

At Snethkamp
We Share Your Pride. CALL 313-868-3300
15600 Woodward Ave, Highland Park, MI 48203

Michigan's first medical home focused on the needs of the LGBTQ Community.

Primary Care - Behavioral Health Services – HIV Care
Breast/Cervical Cancer Screening
Hormone Therapy – Insurance Navigation
Fully integrated PrEP Services and more!

(313) 832-3300
www.corktownhealth.org
Blossoming Artists Gallery Relaunches in Midtown

BY BTL STAFF

One of Detroit’s most prized neighborhoods has gained a new addition to its gallery district with the relaunch of Blossoming Artists Gallery in Midtown. Located on Third Street and Willis, the space previously featured high-end pieces by major artists. In its new form, Blossoming Artists features the work of up-and-coming artists from Detroit, New York and abroad.

The gallery showcases and sells the work of a different artist each month, at prices hipsters can afford, according to Timothy Price, managing partner and curator. Blossoming Artists partners Norman Silk and Dale Morgan are excited about the Midtown gallery and its focus on local artists.

“Blossoming Artists is an art space that will feature the best and most creative of local ‘eMERGING’ artists, including student work,” Silk said. “Our goal is to offer exposure to creative art at affordable prices.”

Organizing the mixed-media gallery space is Price, who served as operations manager in the early years of Movement Music Festival, and he lived in Germany for 10 years while managing electronic music artist Richie Hawtin. Price is currently working with Corktown Experience to launch an exhibit at the Detroit Historical Museum called The Journey to Now about the 19th-century Workers’ Row House in Corktown, which the team plans to repurpose as a community hub and cultural center.

Price said he is “excited” about Detroit’s renaissance and wants to draw on his background in the music industry to help promote fine arts and culture in the city.

“We really cherish our reputation for being inclusive,” said Katherine Lesse, co-owner at Abracadabra, a jewelry and gem gallery in Ann Arbor. “One of the most important aspects of being an inclusive vendor is helping our customers feel comfortable and supported as we help them translate both beauty and love into a piece that represents their union.”

When asked if she has any advice for LGBTQ couples shopping for jewelry, Lesse said, “If you don’t feel like you’re being listened to, taken seriously or respected, do not work with that vendor, for any aspect of your celebration.”

For more information and to sign up as a vendor go to MiLGBTWedding.com

Expo Cuts Through Cake Politics

BTL announces new venue, new season for the 9th Annual LGBTQ Wedding and Anniversary Expo

Same-sex marriage may be safe for now, but the LGBTQ community is not safe from business owners who are allowed to refuse patrons service because of their religious beliefs. Anti-LGBTQ sentiment has been on the rise since President Donald Trump took office and he recently strengthened the right to discriminate against LGBTQ people in the false name of “Religious Freedom.”

It’s with this in mind, Between The Lines is proud to present close to 100 LGBTQ-friendly vendors and venues at the 9th Annual Ultimate LGBT Wedding & Anniversary Expo from noon to 4 p.m. at The Henry in Dearborn Oct. 13. This is a new venue and a new season for the Expo, which in past years has been in the spring.

The event will include bakers, photographers, banquet halls, hotels, cruise lines, real estate agents, travel agencies, caterers, wedding planners, officiants, churches and adoption agencies. These are the companies and business people who value us not just as potential customers but as full celebrants of marriage equality. It is important for us to recognize our friends, thank them and support their businesses as they support us.

“We really cherish our reputation for...
Say Yes!

at

B. Ella

B. Ella Bridal

570 S. Main St., Plymouth Mi 48170
734-459-0000
www.instagram.com/b_ella_bridal

VISIT US AT

Miner's Den JEWELERS
"FOREVER STARTS HERE"

WWW.MINERSDEN.COM
(248)-585-6950
3417 ROCHESTER RD.
ROYAL OAK, MI
Diane Keaton doesn't have all the answers to all the questions and she's sorry about that. She's sorry a lot. So sorry I kindly urge her not to be, like she's not Diane Keaton but a familiar friend, her fizzy, giddy, no-pretense charm making it easy to be honest with her.

In conversation, Keaton reads less Oscar winner, more fun, drunk aunt who loves a kiki, her on-brand self-deprecation and bewilderment amusingly intact. For all her Hollywood clout, Keaton is not exactly keen on her own Keatonness, despite a rich awards-speckled history of acclaimed roles (“The Godfather”), box-office smashes (“Father of the Bride,” “Something’s Gotta Give”) and “The First Wives Club,” her sassy-sisters-unite comedy.

We are talking Annie Hall herself.

But Keaton is especially floored to hear the LGBTQ community still pays any mind at all to “The First Wives Club.” Yes, it came out in 1996; no, Diane Keaton didn’t know you can’t put a date on a timeless gay cult classic. The 73-year-old actress’ androgynous style – suits and top hats – may make her appear lesbian-bar-ready, but her life is not that iconic gay club scene in the film, shared with co-stars Bette Midler and Goldie Hawn. Keaton doesn’t go to bars of any kind anymore, she tells me. She is “boring.” She is sorry.

“You don’t have to apologize for being yourself. We don’t do that,” I tell Diane Keaton, who laughs and responds affirmatively. Opposite her apologetic state is the older-girl-power message of her new film, “Poms”: being who you are, no apologies. Imagine the Golden Girls in “Bring It On” and you have “Poms,” with Keaton as Martha, a woman who joins a retirement community with spunky old ladies (Jackie Weaver, Pam Grier and Rhea Perlman co-star) and against all odds – bad hips, bad husbands – end up forming a cheer team. “Poms” is the story of how Martha gets her groove back. And of women staying in it; of refusing to be bullied; of something the gay community knows well: perseverance.

Gay men love to celebrate our ladies. Ladies with staying power. Keaton, of course, is one – even if she doesn’t know it. She should know and so I tell her that she is “a masterclass in authenticity.” She is flattered, but can’t put her finger on why, despite ageism and sexism, there’s always been a place for older women in the gay community. “Huh? What’s the question?” She laughs. “I’m too stupid. I really am.”

I repeat the question; she gives it her best shot: “Maybe because they love their mother. I don’t know! But I appreciate it!” (At least on Twitter, Keaton must have some sense gay men follow her considering this gay-inclusive tweet she once sent about “Magic Mike XXL”: “OK, girls and guys, we’re one week away from HEAVEN.”)

Later, unable to name any actors who could possibly pull off drag like Chris Pine did in

Hollywood Icon Talks Gay Following She Never Knew She Had & Lesbian Roles (‘I’m Available’)

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Diane Keaton doesn’t have all the answers to all the questions and she’s sorry about that. She’s sorry a lot. So sorry I kindly urge her not to be, like she’s not Diane Keaton but a familiar friend, her fizzy, giddy, no-pretense charm making it easy to be honest with her.

In conversation, Keaton reads less Oscar winner, more fun, drunk aunt who loves a kiki, her on-brand self-deprecation and bewilderment amusingly intact. For all her Hollywood clout, Keaton is not exactly keen on her own Keatonness, despite a rich awards-speckled history of acclaimed roles (“The Godfather”), box-office smashes (“Father of the Bride,” “Something’s Gotta Give”) and “The First Wives Club,” her sassy-sisters-unite comedy.

We are talking Annie Hall herself.

But Keaton is especially floored to hear the LGBTQ community still pays any mind at all to “The First Wives Club.” Yes, it came out in 1996; no, Diane Keaton didn’t know you can’t put a date on a timeless gay cult classic. The 73-year-old actress’ androgynous style – suits and top hats – may make her appear lesbian-bar-ready, but her life is not that iconic gay club scene in the film, shared with co-stars Bette Midler and Goldie Hawn. Keaton doesn’t go to bars of any kind anymore, she tells me. She is “boring.” She is sorry.

“You don’t have to apologize for being yourself. We don’t do that,” I tell Diane Keaton, who laughs and responds affirmatively. Opposite her apologetic state is the older-girl-power message of her new film, “Poms”: being who you are, no apologies. Imagine the Golden Girls in “Bring It On” and you have “Poms,” with Keaton as Martha, a woman who joins a retirement community with spunky old ladies (Jackie Weaver, Pam Grier and Rhea Perlman co-star) and against all odds – bad hips, bad husbands – end up forming a cheer team. “Poms” is the story of how Martha gets her groove back. And of women staying in it; of refusing to be bullied; of something the gay community knows well: perseverance.

Gay men love to celebrate our ladies. Ladies with staying power. Keaton, of course, is one – even if she doesn’t know it. She should know and so I tell her that she is “a masterclass in authenticity.” She is flattered, but can’t put her finger on why, despite ageism and sexism, there’s always been a place for older women in the gay community. “Huh? What’s the question?” She laughs. “I’m too stupid. I really am.”

I repeat the question; she gives it her best shot: “Maybe because they love their mother. I don’t know! But I appreciate it!” (At least on Twitter, Keaton must have some sense gay men follow her considering this gay-inclusive tweet she once sent about “Magic Mike XXL”: “OK, girls and guys, we’re one week away from HEAVEN.”)

Later, unable to name any actors who could possibly pull off drag like Chris Pine did in

Hollywood Icon Talks Gay Following She Never Knew She Had & Lesbian Roles (‘I’m Available’)

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Diane Keaton doesn’t have all the answers to all the questions and she’s sorry about that. She’s sorry a lot. So sorry I kindly urge her not to be, like she’s not Diane Keaton but a familiar friend, her fizzy, giddy, no-pretense charm making it easy to be honest with her.

In conversation, Keaton reads less Oscar winner, more fun, drunk aunt who loves a kiki, her on-brand self-deprecation and bewilderment amusingly intact. For all her Hollywood clout, Keaton is not exactly keen on her own Keatonness, despite a rich awards-speckled history of acclaimed roles (“The Godfather”), box-office smashes (“Father of the Bride,” “Something’s Gotta Give”) and “The First Wives Club,” her sassy-sisters-unite comedy.

We are talking Annie Hall herself.

But Keaton is especially floored to hear the LGBTQ community still pays any mind at all to “The First Wives Club.” Yes, it came out in 1996; no, Diane Keaton didn’t know you can’t put a date on a timeless gay cult classic. The 73-year-old actress’ androgynous style – suits and top hats – may make her appear lesbian-bar-ready, but her life is not that iconic gay club scene in the film, shared with co-stars Bette Midler and Goldie Hawn. Keaton doesn’t go to bars of any kind anymore, she tells me. She is “boring.” She is sorry.

“You don’t have to apologize for being yourself. We don’t do that,” I tell Diane Keaton, who laughs and responds affirmatively. Opposite her apologetic state is the older-girl-power message of her new film, “Poms”: being who you are, no apologies. Imagine the Golden Girls in “Bring It On” and you have “Poms,” with Keaton as Martha, a woman who joins a retirement community with spunky old ladies (Jackie Weaver, Pam Grier and Rhea Perlman co-star) and against all odds – bad hips, bad husbands – end up forming a cheer team. “Poms” is the story of how Martha gets her groove back. And of women staying in it; of refusing to be bullied; of something the gay community knows well: perseverance.

Gay men love to celebrate our ladies. Ladies with staying power. Keaton, of course, is one – even if she doesn’t know it. She should know and so I tell her that she is “a masterclass in authenticity.” She is flattered, but can’t put her finger on why, despite ageism and sexism, there’s always been a place for older women in the gay community. “Huh? What’s the question?” She laughs. “I’m too stupid. I really am.”

I repeat the question; she gives it her best shot: “Maybe because they love their mother. I don’t know! But I appreciate it!” (At least on Twitter, Keaton must have some sense gay men follow her considering this gay-inclusive tweet she once sent about “Magic Mike XXL”: “OK, girls and guys, we’re one week away from HEAVEN.”)

Later, unable to name any actors who could possibly pull off drag like Chris Pine did in

Until then, Keaton talks about the lack of a “First Wives Club” sequel even though she’s game, not taking fashion tips from anyone (no offense, queers), and not recalling the night she thought Lena Dunham was a lesbian.

You are aware you have an LGBTQ following, right?

Me? No. I wasn’t really aware.

But you did “The First Wives Club.”

Oh yeah! I know I was in it. But I’m not aware. I don’t think I follow things. Maybe I’m missing out. (Laughs) This is good news!

It is good news.

You better believe it!

Your tomboy fashion has been celebrated by the lesbian community. Do you get tips from lesbian friends or do you give them tips?

I don’t give tips to anybody and I don’t take tips, either. Because for me, it’s just something I’m interested in, do you know what I mean? I pick out what I like; I don’t have a stylist or anything like that. And also I just go with – look, I’m a person who collects magazines. I’m addicted. And I always check out the newspapers – the New York Times, you know. T Magazine is interesting with what they do with fashion. So that’s what I do. I sit there and I cut them out, and I have all of these scrapbooks filled with all these fashion ideas, so that’s where I go for clothes.

T Magazine is a good choice. They publish issues entirely dedicated to fashion.

T Magazine is really an amazing magazine on so many levels – graphically, and just their articles. And when they do have their fashion issues, when they have one for women and one for men twice a year or something, when they dedicate the magazine to fashion for both sexes, it’s great.

A few years ago, Lena Dunham said that you misread her as a lesbian at a Jennifer Aniston party. Has that been your only gaydar fail?

I’m sorry, say that again.

You once misread Lena Dunham as a lesbian at a Jennifer Aniston party.

Oh, did I? Stupid.

Hey, it happens to the best of us.

I hope she will forgive me.

I wonder if that was your only gaydar fail.

Well, I guess, since I never heard about it! And since I have no memory of saying it! But I’m sure I must’ve. Perhaps I was drinking too heavily.

Is that a thing?

It’s a MAJOR thing, can’t you tell? (Laughs) No! It’s not much of a thing. But maybe, you know, I was anxious. You never know.

In “The First Wives Club,” your lesbian daughter is instrumental in getting you what you want. How have gay men and women been instrumental in your own life?

Well, all along, you know, I’ve had a lot of gay friends, both sexes, and it’s just been part of my life. I was probably living in New York when I first kind of formed friendships that were gay, but I was aware even in junior college – I went to junior college – and I remember going on a U.S.O. tour (in 1964) of “Bye Bye Birdie.” Can you believe that? And I remember one of the guys there I really liked, and he was kind of playing the lead opposite me and he was gay. He was a friend and he was really talented too. And I remember some girl coming up to me and saying, “Don’t you try to be his girlfriend! You’re just trying to be his girlfriend!” (Laughs) It’s just like one of those stupid things, you know. And I wanted to tell her that I knew he was gay, but then I just let it pass.

She actually thought you were gonna try to convert a gay man?

Yeah, right. Wrong!

During the gay bar scene in “First Wives Club,” openly lesbian actress Lea DeLaria plays a lesbian who makes some moves on Goldie Hawn’s character. Has a lesbian ever made moves on you?

Um, I don’t think so. I’m trying to think back…

That’s disappointing.

Am I disappointed?

I said, “That’s disappointing,” but are you disappointed?

Well, maybe!

I’m very surprised to hear this. You’ve been to a gay bar, I assume, right?

Yeah.

What’s the most fun night you’ve had at one? And was it anything like the one in “First Wives Club”?

No, I don’t really – I’m not somebody who really goes out a lot to bars at all anyway. I’m boring, you gotta understand. I’m somebody who’s friggin’ boring. I am! But yeah, I’m sorry.

You don’t have to apologize for being yourself. We don’t do that.

(Laughs) OK!

There have been few moments in cinematic history that have shook gay men as much as your “You Don’t Own Me” number with Bette and Goldie. When did you know that you’d started a gay frenzy with that musical number?

I never knew! This is the first I’m hearing of it.
I did not know that.

Hearing that, how does that make you feel?

Well, I’m sure that it’s over. You know, no one’s coming up to me going, “Oh god, that was fantastic!” I mean, it’s so far gone. It’s far in the past. Who cares! But it’s nice to hear (laughs) and I hope somebody enjoyed it. It’s like, maybe Goldie enjoyed it. Or Bette! They’ve had more interesting lives.

There was talk of a reunion project called “Divanation” for Netflix that was supposed to happen. Do you know about this project?

About what? Which project? What?

It’s called “Divanation” and it was gonna reunite you with Goldie and Bette.

WHAT?! Where am I? I never heard that! I’d love to do something with Goldie and Bette again. They were fantastic. That was a fun movie.

Would you like to revisit that film with them?

Of course I’m interested, but it never happened. And we tried, in a way, the girls, but we never got a good script and I don’t know why and now it’s sort of like, it’s over, right? No one’s gonna have us get in a movie together, the three of us. But I love that movie, and I love them.

In the 2005 dramedy “The Family Stone,” you memorably sign your love to your gay deaf son in that film. How do you reflect on that scene and how that may have influenced parents with LGBTQ kids?

It’s a very touching scene, and he (Tyrone Giordano) was a very extraordinary person and I’ve never seen him again. He was in that one movie, and sometimes I think back on him. He had that opportunity and he was really very touching and wonderful in the movie, but it’s kind of sad to me that there was no future for him, you know? It’s too bad.

Did you understand at the time how that scene could be influential for parents of LGBTQ kids?

You know, I’m not that bright, let’s get real. I was thinking about, “Oh, gee, how’d the scene go?” And, “How was that?” And, “Did the movie do OK?” I was thinking about the most superficial things, so it’s like, I shouldn’t’ve thought about it, but I never did because, “Oh, how’d it go? OK, we did good.” And I liked Tom (Bezucha, who is openly gay). Tom is brilliant, our director. And he’s a friend. I’m sorry. I’m a failure.

Stop it.

No, I’m gonna go on and on and on. Wanna hear my sad story? (Laughs)

In the TV movie “Surrender, Dorothy” you seemed to enjoy dancing with Chris Pine, who was in drag. Do you remember this?

Yeah, a little. I mean, it’s not one of my better projects: “Surrender, Dorothy”? Give me a break, you know. I’ve had some hard times.

But that scene: Can you understand why gay men might love that scene? You, Chris Pine as a gay man, Chris Pine in drag...

Yeah. He went on to do well.

Looking back at your roles, have you ever questioned the sexuality of any of your characters?

Questioned the sexuality: Well, sure. I mean, “Looking for Mr. Goodbar” (in 1977), I questioned that. She was killed! (Laughs) Yeah, I think sexuality is a double-edged sword sometimes. You have to be careful. I mean, she put herself into a situation where she became a victim in that movie. I remember my dad seeing it and he was not happy.

Why?

Because I died and he didn’t want me going to bars meeting guys who were inappropriate for me (laughs). He was a dad!

You questioned the sexuality of that character, but have you ever played an actual lesbian character?

I don’t think so, uh-uh.

Has there been a lesbian character someone else has played that you wish you had?

No, not that I know of. But you know, if it came up, I’m here. I’m available.

If you were to play one, who might you cast as your love interest?

Oh, I don’t know. I don’t think about it. I don’t really have anybody in my mind. I’d have to think about it, right? But it also probably wouldn’t even be my choice. I’m the actress. I’m not the director. Unless you’re asking me to be the director, now that’s a different matter.

I’m telling you you’re Diane Keaton and you should have some say in it.

OH MY GOD! (Laughs) It doesn’t work exactly like that!

Well, say you did have a say. Who might you pick? Hypothetically, Diane.

I don’t know. I really don’t know.

Meryl Streep would be my pick.

That’s a good choice.

There are a lot of women who’ve played lesbians who I think would be good for you.

I’m sure that’s true. Probably many we don’t know yet, so let’s not leave them out.

No, we should not, you’re right.

Get them in the mix.

As editor of Q Syndicate, the international 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 GQ, Vanity Fair and Billboard. Reach him via Twitter @chrisazzopardi.
Progress Michigan Has Two New Hires

To expand both coverage of the Great Lakes Beacon, and Progress Michigan’s presence on the west side of the state, Progress Michigan announced today two new hires: Cayley Winters, a West Michigan Communications Organizer; and Evan Kutz, a Multimedia Reporter for Great Lakes Beacon.

The hires are examples of how Progress Michigan has grown over the last several years. The progressive advocacy and communications hub already has offices in Lansing and Detroit and the expansion to West Michigan represents a commitment to reaching the entire state.

Cayley Winters is a Michigan State Alumnae with a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies in Social Science, who has six years of experience in political organizing. She started her political career as a volunteer with Planned Parenthood of Michigan. Her biggest passions lie in reproductive justice and health care reform. Originally from Battle Creek, she now resides in Kalamazoo.

“I can’t wait to take the lessons I gained while organizing in Lansing the last few years and bring it home to my old stomping grounds on the westside,” Winters said. “Progress Michigan’s goal of lifting up progressive voices and empowering grassroots organizations is needed in West Michigan and I’m excited to get to work in the community.”

The hiring of a multimedia reporter for the Great Lakes Beacon, an independent news outlet, which is a project of Progress Michigan, will take the publication in a new direction focused more on video storytelling.

Evan Kutz recently graduated from Michigan State University's School of Journalism, where he studied environmental reporting and documentary filmmaking. Kutz's favorite stories to tell feature folks acting as agents for change in their communities.

“At the Great Lakes Beacon, I’m excited to share the stories of real, everyday Michiganders who are doing the hard work to change their communities and push for progressive change,” Kutz said. “There are stories across this state that aren’t being told and I look forward to lifting up those voices.”

“Progress Michigan continues to grow in both staff size and influence and I am proud to welcome Cayley and Evan to our team,” said Lonnie Scott, executive director of Progress Michigan. “They bring passion for progressive causes and a skillset that will make our organization that much better.”
Gov. Whitmer Makes Appointments to the Michigan Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration

BY BTL STAFF

LANsing, - Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced last week several appointments to the Michigan Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration, citing a need for meaningful reform in Michigan’s current criminal justice system as the main reason.

“The number of people in local jails has tripled over the last 35 years, but crime rates in Michigan are the lowest they’ve been in 50 years,” Whitmer said. “This task force is an opportunity to see how we can make the system better for the people of our state and make Michigan an example for the country on jail and pretrial reform.”

Those appointed are listed below with each term set until Sept. 30, 2020:

- Amanda Alexander, of Detroit, is the founding executive director of Detroit Justice Center.
- Jerry Clayton, of Ann Arbor, is the Sheriff of Washtenaw County.
- Craig DeRoche, of Novi, is the Senior Vice President for Advocacy and Public Policy at Prison Fellowship and a former Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- William Gutzwiller, Sr., of Essexville, is the Director of Public Safety for the City of Essexville.
- Dale “DJ” Hilson, of Muskegon, is the Muskegon County Prosecutor.
- Monica Jahner, of Lansing, is the Advocacy, Reentry, Resources and Outreach program manager and legislative advocate at Northwest Initiative, a Lansing grassroots organization to eliminate barriers for returning citizens.
- Sheryl Kubik, Ph.D., of Milford, is the Dean of Social Work at Wayne State University.
- Jim Miller, of Allegan, is a Lieutenant and jail administrator for the Allegan County Sheriff’s Department.
- Takura Nyamfukudza, of Lansing, is a criminal defense attorney with Chartier & Nyamfukudza PLC and a veteran of the United States Army National Guard.
- Bill Peterson, of Alpena, is an Alpena County Commissioner.
- James R. Talen, of Grand Rapids, is a Kent County Commissioner.
- Robert VerHeulen, of Walker, is a Kent County Road Commissioner.

In addition to Gov. Whitmer’s appointments, the following representatives of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government will serve on the Task Force:

- Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist II will represent the executive branch of state government.
- Attorney General Dana Nessel will represent the executive branch of state government.
- Chief Justice Bridget McCormack of the Michigan Supreme Court will represent the judicial branch of state government.
- Judge Prentis Edwards, Jr. of the 3rd Circuit Court of Wayne County is designated by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.
- Judge Thomas P. Boyd of the 5th District Court of Ingham County is designated by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.
- Sen. Jim Runestad of the 15th Senate District is designated by the Senate Majority Leader.
- Sen. Sylvia Santana of the 3rd Senate District is designated by the Senate Minority Leader.
- State Rep. Mike Mueller of the 51st House District is designated by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- State Rep. Tenisha Yancey of the 1st House District is designated by the House Minority Leader.
- The Lieutenant Governor and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court are designated as co-chairpersons of the Task Force.

The Michigan Joint Task Force on Jail and Pretrial Incarceration was established by Governor Whitmer’s Executive Order No. 2019-10. The Task Force acts in an advisory capacity with the goal of developing ambitious, innovative and thorough recommendations for changes in state law, policy and appropriations to expand alternatives to jail, safely reduce jail admissions and length of stay, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Michigan’s justice systems.

These appointments are not subject to advice and consent of the Senate.

TRUE LGBTQ Teen Group Weekly at Lansing Salus Center

LGBTQ support group TRUE is a program from Gateway that helps lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth between the ages of 13 and 18 in the Lansing area. The mission of TRUE is to provide a safe space that is free from bullying, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia for LGBTQ youth and allies ages 13 to 18. Presented by Lansing’s Salus Center, which is dedicated to serving LGBTQ youth, the group meets weekly on Tuesday at the center at 4 p.m., with the next meeting Tuesday, May 21.

For more information, contact Morgan at truegbtq@gmail.com or leave a voicemail at 725-222-8783. For the privacy of attendees the guest list for this event has been made private.
**OUTINGS**

**Saturday, May 18**

Cinetopia Film Festival 8:00 a.m. The eighth annual OFF kicks off a month earlier this year starting on Friday, May 10, and concludes on Sunday, May 19. Spanning 10 days, Cinetopia brings films to local theaters and venues. Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397. info@cinetopiafestival.org. cinetopiafestival.org.

LGBT Community Chat 11 a.m. Saturday LGBT Chat is an ongoing social discussion group meets every week to discuss issues LGBT people face. Coming out, dating and much more. Java Hut Ferndale Michigan, 165 W 9 mile,Ferndale. 248-632-8274. redbellysenegal90@gmail.com.

LGBT Social Meet Up 6:30 p.m. LGBT social meet up group is a group for all LGBT people who want to meet have light hearted discussions and social activities some activities all is welcomed. Hazel Park Community Center, 620 West Woodward Heights, Hazel Park. 248-632-8274. redbellysenegal90@gmail.com.

**Sunday, May 19**

Stand with Trans Wyandotte Support Group for Trans Youth and Parents of Trans Individuals 4:00 p.m. Free. For Parent Support Group information, contact facilitator Kim Tosley, 734-747-4363. St. Stephens Episcopal Church, 2803 1st St.,Wyandotte. standwithtrans.org.

**Monday, May 20**

LGBT Game Night 7:00 p.m. LGBT Game Night is an opportunity for all LGBT people and allies to come play a board game, drink coffee and socialize with other LGBT individuals. Java Hut, 165 W Nine Mile,Ferndale. 248-632-8274. redbellysenegal90@gmail.com.

**Wednesday, May 22**

Affirmations Senior Koffee Clatch! 1 p.m. A discussion and networking group for people 45 and older. Various discussion topics, social outings and potlucks are held throughout the year. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7005. goaffirmations.org.

**Thursday, May 23**

Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Farmington Hills – Oakland County 4:00 p.m. Free. Support Group Facilitated by Lisa Goeyette, ally, activist. St. Mary’s In The Hills Episcopal Church, 1900 Manchester Road, Ann Arbor. standwithtrans.org.

**Saturday, June 1**

Ferndale Pride: Since 2011, Ferndale has kicked off summer with its annual pride festival. Ferndale Pride holds a full week of events leading up to Pride’s premiere event — the daylong street fair on June 1 in 2019. Facebook.com/ferndalepride

**Sunday, June 2**

Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Adrian-Lenawee County 6:30 p.m. Free. For parents of transgender kids. Hilltop Counseling, 115 W. Maumee St., Adrian. 313-909-5408. standwithtrans.org. hilltopcounseling.org.

**Tuesday, June 4**

Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Lake Orion / Oakland County 7:00 p.m. Free. Support Group Facilitated by Lisa Goeyette, ally, activist. St. Mary’s In The Hills Episcopal Church, 2012

**Detroit VOICES Film Festival**

Thursday, May 16, Michigan filmmakers will premiere their short films at the Cinetopia Film Festival for a chance to place in one of two new categories: narrative and documentary. One of the featured films is “Femme Queen Chronicles.” Directed by Ahya Simone, it follows four black trans women navigating through love, life, trade, and shade in Detroit. To find out more about the film’s premiere, where to watch and more, visit cinetopiafestival.org.

**Movement Music Festival May 25 - 27**

Located in Hart Plaza, Detroit, this Memorial Day weekend thousands of people across the U.S. and the world will gather for the Movement Music Festival. Attendees will celebrate Detroit’s electronic music and techno heritage and witness new and classic artists. Find out more online at movement.us.
Friday, June 7
Kalamazoo Pride: (Day 1) The 2019 theme is “Love Who You Are.” Now in it's 12th year, the two day event will take place at Arcadia Creek Festival Place. facebook.com/KalamazooPride

Pewabic House and Garden Show 10 a.m. The House & Garden Show features the release of Pewabic’s newest pieces plus work by more than 80 ceramic artists from throughout North America. Pewabic Pottery, 10125 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit. 313-626-2000. pewabic.org

Ypsilanti Pride: It’s the third annual event and organizers are excited. “Reaffirming our visibility and culture one step at a time.” facebook.com/YpsPride

Saturday, June 8
Kalamazoo Pride: (Day 2) The 2019 theme is “Love Who You Are.” Now in it’s 12th year, the two day event will take place at Arcadia Creek Festival Place. facebook.com/KalamazooPride

Motor City Pride Festival and Parade 10 a.m. The Motor City Pride Festival and Parade returns to Hart Plaza for Michigan’s largest pride celebration! Hart Plaza, 1 West Jefferson, Detroit. motorcitypride.org

Sunday, June 9
OM the Max 10 a.m. Practice yoga to live music. Certified yoga instructor and DSO Librarian Ethan Allen leads a group yoga session open to all skill levels — accompanied with live music performed by DSO musicians. Namaste. The Cube, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. dso.org.

Monday, June 10
Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Macomb County 6:30 p.m. Macomb TeenYouth Support Group. All youth are welcome to attend this free group. Come and meet other trans* youth and teens and support each other through your journeys. Dakota High School, 21051 21 Mile Road, Macomb. 586-723-2700. stpewawalkersedge.org

Wednesday, June 12
Stand with Trans Youth Support Group – Flint – Genesee 6:30 p.m. Facilitator Sara Griffin, M.A., LPC is a psychotherapist and a parent of a transgender son, eiregrf@outlook.com. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Flint, 2474 S. Ballenger Hwy, Flint. 810-232-4023. uwflint.org. standwithtrans.org

Thursday, June 13
With Trans 2018 Support Groups – Farmington Hills – Oakland County 7:30 p.m. Oakland United Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road, Farmington. 248-626-3620. oaklandumc.org. standwithtrans.org

Saturday, June 15
Pride Performance by PRISM Gay Men and Allies Chorus On Saturday, June 15, the PRISM Gay Men's and Allies Chorus will perform a series of tunes as part of a double performance, titled Destination Detroit – Music That Put Us on the Map. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. 4th St., Royal Oak. 248-398-2980. royaloakmusictheatre.com

Stand with Trans Support Groups – Livonia – Wayne County June 19, 6:30 p.m. Free. Parent Support Group Facilitators Karen Sessler, kssessler@yahoo.com or 313-673-3590 and Scott Sessler, pastorscott@emmanuel-livonia.org or 313-673-2485 Trans Youth Support Group (12+) Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 34567 7 Mile Road, Livonia. standwithtrans.org

THEATER
Detroit Repertory Theatre Presents “Aubrey” May 18, 3:00 p.m. Aubrey Gagnier, a heroine addict, haunted by her role in her lover’s overdose death, seeks out the grave digger and coffin maker. They become each other’s best hope to live. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13903 Woodrow Wilson,Detroit. 313-868-1347. DelRepTh@aol.com. detroitreptheatre.com

Stagecrafters Baldwin Theatre Presents “Oklahoma!” May 18, 8:00 p.m. “Oklahoma!” is classic Broadway at its best. The story opens in the Oklahoma territory just after the turn of the century, when cowboys and farmers eked out a living on the Western frontier. Baldwin Theatre, 414 South Lafayette, Royal Oak. 248-541-8027. stagecrafters.org

The Grapes of Wrath May 19, 2:30 p.m. This heart-wrenching opera, based on the classic novel by John Steinbeck, tells the story of the Joad family on their quest for survival during the 1930s Dust Bowl. Featuring folkys, jazz-inspired music by Ricky Ian Gordon. This will be the first full staging of this opera in Detroit. Detroit Opera House, 3441 Woodward Ave, Detroit. 313-868-1347. detroirep.com

“Curtains” June 6, 7:30 p.m. 1959. Boston, Colonial Theatre. Opening night of “Rabbin’ Hood,” a new musical starring film star Jessica Cranshaw, turns into closing night for her – forever! Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre, 911 North University, Ann Arbor. 734-763-3333. or detroitrepertorytheatre.com

Barbu Electro Traut Cabaret – Cirque Allfonce June 20, 8:00 p.m. Part of the Ann Arbor Summer Festival entertainment series, Power Center, 121 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. 734-647-3327. info@2astd.org. untd.umich.edu

www.PrideSource.com May 16, 2019 | BTL 27
Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

Britney’s back ‘One More Time’

We are always rooting for Britney Spears. We know that right now, as of this column, her personal life has hit a bit of a rough patch, and the messages coming through to the public are mixed, so it’s tough to know what’s really happening. But we live in hope that all will be well. In the meantime, her professional life keeps looking up. There’s the upcoming stage musical built around her hits, called “Once Upon a One More Time” to be directed by Kristin Hanggi (“Rock of Ages,” which seems appropriate) with a book by Jon Hartmere, coming to Broadway in 2020. And news just broke that Sony just bid up the film rights, a movie that Spears will produce with her manager, Larry Rudolph, as well as John Davis. And the plot is fascinating, too, concerning four fairy-tale princesses who read Betty Friedan’s pioneering second-wave feminist book, “The Feminine Mystique.” And no, we’re not making that up, and yes, it does sound more radical than “Mamma Mia!”’s which-one-of-you-old-guys-is-my-father nonsense. So go Britney! We’re ready for anything and everything.

Lee Daniels is making a superhero movie called ‘Superbitch’

You have to hand it to Lee Daniels, he knows how to keep the conversation going and how to steer it in his own direction. Recently, at the Time 100 Summit, he breezed right past Van Jones’ questions about “Empire” and Jussie Smollett in order to dish about his own past using money from drug sales to take his career to the next level, and then to hype up the project called “Superbitch.” Based on a real-life Instagram personality of the same name, a cape-wearing queen who does backflips (meanwhile every “Drag Race” contestant is thinking, “Oh yeah?”), Daniels will produce the film but not direct. And the star? Will it be Superbitch herself? Or an actor with superbitchy qualities? It’s unknown at this time, and Daniels isn’t ready with more details, but you know it’ll be wild when it hits. Casting tip to drive the media wild: put Jussie in it.

Tessa Thompson and Ruth Negga are ‘Passing’

In 1929, a Harlem Renaissance writer named Nella Larsen published a novel titled “Passing,” about a very provocative topic: the practice of light skinned black people living their lives as white in order to get more opportunities and avoid Jim Crow laws that codified white supremacy. Unlike other more celebrated and well known books by black authors of that era, “Passing” is notable for its contribution to literary history yet still hadn’t made the leap to a film version, at least until now. The book is in production from actor-director Rebecca Hall and will star Tessa Thompson (“Avengers: Endgame”) and Ruth Negga (“Loving”). The women will play school friends who are reunited several years later as adults, their relationship fraught with difficulty as one of the women lives as white for the sake of her husband. The project, currently in pre-production, should go before the cameras soon, so there’s no scheduled release date just yet, but Thompson’s star is on the rise, so expect this to make some noise when it finally makes it to screen.

‘Call Me By Your Name’s Luca Guadanino plans ‘To Be Murdered’

Italian filmmaker Luca Guadagnino leapt from the swooning, romantic “Call Me By Your Name” to the death-obsessed “Suspiria.” And he seems to like it in the dark corners of human experience, because his next project (OK, after the “Call Me” sequel) is called “Born to Be Murdered.” Starring John David Washington (“BlacKkKlansman”) and Alicia Vikander (“The Danish Girl”), “BTBM” is set in Athens, Greece, where a couple on vacation inadvertently becomes involved in a conspiracy plot that leads to violence and tragedy. That’s all the plot we know right now, and no, we cannot be sure that Guadagnino muse Tilda Swinton “won’t” pop up unannounced, playing three different characters in wacky prosthetic make-up, but if she does we won’t be angry about it. Bring on the freaky murders and all the Swinton the project requires, that’s our official position.

Romeo San Vicente only plans for makeouts, never murders.
Ozone House to Open New Front Doors for Youth in Crisis

BY BTL STAFF

Ozone House is set to open a new home for youth in crisis in Ypsilanti by the end of 2019. As of April, Ozone House’s “Front Door” fundraising campaign has raised more than $3.8 million to build a new 19,000-square-foot facility at 1600 N. Huron River Drive.

“When young people walk through our front door, it changes the trajectory of their lives,” says Krista Girty, executive director at the Ozone House.

Susan Allison, campaign co-chair, described the house. It will have 16 private bedrooms that can sleep up to 32 young people, up from five shared rooms that sleep 12 at their two current facilities, 11 dedicated counseling rooms, three kitchens, seven youth bathrooms, a food pantry, multiple laundry and shower facilities, easy access to public transportation and it will be fully ADA compliant. Allison said the new home will be on the Huron River on a wooded lot, ideal for providing young people a space to heal and overcome trauma.

“Young people that are fleeing violence, neglect or rejection need to know there is a safe place they can go in their community. We have been doing this work for 50 years and it’s time for our facilities’ quality to match the quality of our services,” Girty said.

“Ozone House has moved seven times in its 50-year history and is ready for the stability of a forever home in the community.”

Homelessness for youth means more than the absence of a safe place to sleep, enough food to eat or shelter from the cold. It means a lack of safe, stable, reciprocal relationships and vulnerability to dangers such as physical assault, sexual assault or human trafficking. Ozone House helps young people in Washtenaw County, ages 10-24, develop safe and reciprocal relationships, as well as shelter them from the cold and dangers of being homeless.

The community is invited to Ozone House’s 50th-anniversary celebration on Sunday, June 2, at The Farm at St. Joe’s, 5557 McAuley Drive in Ypsilanti, from 2 to 5 p.m. Please RSVP at rsvp@ozonehouse.org. Tours of the new home and presentations from young people will occur throughout the event.

Ozone House reached over 4,000 young people in 2018, providing 24-hour year-round services at no charge to youth and families. The Ozone House invites community members to make a contribution that will ensure Ozone House can support young people and their families for the next 50 years and beyond. To make a donation visit ozonehouse.org, call 734-662-2265 or send checks to Ozone House with “Front Door” in the memo line to 1705 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor, MI, 48104. For more information about the Ozone House, visit ozonehouse.org.

Ozone House is set to open a new home for youth in crisis in Ypsilanti by the end of 2019. As of April, Ozone House’s “Front Door” fundraising campaign has raised more than $3.8 million to build a new 19,000-square-foot facility at 1600 N. Huron River Drive.

“When young people walk through our front door, it changes the trajectory of their lives,” says Krista Girty, executive director at the Ozone House.

Susan Allison, campaign co-chair, described the house. It will have 16 private bedrooms that can sleep up to 32 young people, up from five shared rooms that sleep 12 at their two current facilities, 11 dedicated counseling rooms, three kitchens, seven youth bathrooms, a food pantry, multiple laundry and shower facilities, easy access to public transportation and it will be fully ADA compliant. Allison said the new home will be on the Huron River on a wooded lot, ideal for providing young people a space to heal and overcome trauma.

“Young people that are fleeing violence, neglect or rejection need to know there is a safe place they can go in their community. We have been doing this work for 50 years and it’s time for our facilities’ quality to match the quality of our services,” Girty said.

“Ozone House has moved seven times in its 50-year history and is ready for the stability of a forever home in the community.”

Homelessness for youth means more than the absence of a safe place to sleep, enough food to eat or shelter from the cold. It means a lack of safe, stable, reciprocal relationships and vulnerability to dangers such as physical assault, sexual assault or human trafficking. Ozone House helps young people in Washtenaw County, ages 10-24, develop safe and reciprocal relationships, as well as shelter them from the cold and dangers of being homeless.

The community is invited to Ozone House’s 50th-anniversary celebration on Sunday, June 2, at The Farm at St. Joe’s, 5557 McAuley Drive in Ypsilanti, from 2 to 5 p.m. Please RSVP at rsvp@ozonehouse.org. Tours of the new home and presentations from young people will occur throughout the event.

Ozone House reached over 4,000 young people in 2018, providing 24-hour year-round services at no charge to youth and families. The Ozone House invites community members to make a contribution that will ensure Ozone House can support young people and their families for the next 50 years and beyond. To make a donation visit ozonehouse.org, call 734-662-2265 or send checks to Ozone House with “Front Door” in the memo line to 1705 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor, MI, 48104. For more information about the Ozone House, visit ozonehouse.org.
Motor City Pride

Festival and Parade

June 8-9, 2019

www.motorcitypride.org

Is Now Accepting

Parade Applications
motorcitypride.org

Volunteers
motorcitypride.org
Your Best Choice in Healthcare For All the Right Reasons

Dr. Paul Benson's Be Well Medical Center

1964 Eleven Mile Rd
Berkley, MI 48072
(248) 544-9300
doctorbewell.com

Most Experienced and Knowledgeable
Established in 1980 as the first Primary Care Medical Clinic in the Detroit area specializing in our LGBTQ community.

Board Certified in Family Practice & Designated Patient-Centered Medical Home by Blue Cross Blue Shield as a Center of Excellence.

We're a Recipient of the Peter M. Fox Excellence in HIV Credentialing Award from the American Academy of HIV Medicine. Also, Dr. Benson was one of the first physicians credentialed and has maintained the AAHIV-S specialist designation since.


Extensive Network of Sensitive Specialists with an ongoing relationship to refer as necessary.

There is a difference. We're a patient-friendly Private Practice small enough to individualize care by a staff that knows you and large enough to manage all of your Primary Care Needs.

- HIV Prevention (PrEP), Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), STI testing & treatment
- Hormone Affirming Therapy for HIV positive and negative transgender individuals
- Evening Clinic Hours Monday-Thursday, most Saturdays, and Same Day Appointments
- Full-time Patient Navigator/Advocate Social Worker on site
- Most Insurances accepted
- Ryan White Provider
- Medcart Pharmacy on Premises
- Group Medical Appointments (available soon!)
- Tele-Medical Visits (available soon!)

Dr. Benson is an Associate Professor at Michigan State University providing training to our next generation of physicians.

He leads our team of professional and talented Providers:

Caleb Youngblood, PA-C, AAHIV-S
Mark Rosen, PA-C
Leon Bullough, NP-F
Keyuna Nance, MSW

LIKE US ON facebook