The ‘Clown in a Gown’ Talks Death-Drop Disdain and Why She’s Done with ‘Drag Race’

BIANCA DEL RIO FLOATS TOO, B*TCHES

Drag Syndrome Barred From Tanglefoot: Discrimination or Protection?

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At this point in his life, Charles Alexander is a venerable institution in Detroit’s LGBTQ community. A look at the 83-year-old artist and activist’s achievements and the significance of his contributions to the community are clear: He has earned a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pride Awards, the Jan Stevenson Award for service to the Affirmations LGBTQ community center, several Spirit of Detroit Awards and various other recognitions thrown in for good measure. Beyond those achievements, he’s made his mark on Between The Lines, having written for the paper since day one and in total penned some 700 “Parting Glances” opinion pieces. A prolific artist as well as a renowned one – at times producing at least one fully formed artwork a day – Alexander has also given charitably, donating regularly to HIV/AIDS and LGBT causes.

So, as the news began to spread that Alexander had suffered a stroke and heart attack on Memorial Day of this year, many were shocked and saddened. Left weakened and somewhat visually impaired, Alexander spent three weeks recovering in the Detroit Receiving Hospital before doing another six in rehab at Henry Ford Village in Dearborn. Following rehab, Alexander, a fixture in the small Wayne State campus area in which he had lived for more than 30 years, moved into a small independent living unit in Henry Ford Village.

Now, as Alexander struggles to recover, a new show featuring pieces of his art prepares to open at the Pittmann-Puckett Gallery inside Affirmations. Proceeds from “A Life Well Lived: A Celebration of the Art and Work of Charles Alexander” will benefit The Charles Alexander Care Trust. In advance of the show, Alexander sat down with Between The Lines to talk about his art, his recovery and his life.

What’s the last thing you remember prior to having your heart attack and stroke?
I was simply sitting on my porch and I decided I wanted to get something to eat. I wanted to get a banana and a cookie, and a block away is a gas station. So I went there and I got those things, but I also got something called Vanilla Coffee Mix. And I drank that and had this scary reaction to it, so scary that I got Dustin Blitchok, who lived above me, to take me to the hospital. That’s when they said that I had had a stroke and a heart attack.

And after?
I don’t remember anything from Receiving Hospital. After that, I went through rehab here at Henry Ford Village and I will say this: the care that I received here was excellent. The therapy that I was given here was very good. There are two kinds of therapy. There is physical therapy, which is using weights, and occupational therapy, which is doing things like standing and folding linen — things that you would be doing at home. And what was interesting was to see those adults who were in their 70s and 80s, maybe late 60s, doing their assigned exercises and it was a rather moving experience to watch how these older people tried to do everything they were assigned to do. They really worked at it. And it eventually brought me to the final realization that the last coming out process is coming out to old age. Many of us think of ourselves as mentally 35 or 40, much younger, and I’m coming to the realization that old age happens. And that some of it’s a real, real challenge because of what you have to go through following a stroke or difficulties with health and so on.

How has your life changed since your stroke and heart attack?
Prior to my stroke, about a year, I was bicycling on weekends, usually — sometimes 10 miles or 20 miles. I also bicycled in the Tour Detroit, which is 30 miles, and I did that twice. And as a teenager, into my 20s, I was a roller skating enthusiast. So, I have a lot of things I’ve done using my feet and so forth. So, not being able to do that is kind of frustrating. I have some difficulty walking, even with a walker. I went through the rehab center and I was making good progress, being able to do some walking with a walker and without a walker. But for some reason, recently, I slipped and kind of banged my side and so it’s been difficult for me.

For those who don’t know, you didn’t drive. You were always walking and were well-known in your Wayne State neighborhood, a regular at Cass Café and Shangri-La and other spots. What has it been like to lose so much of your mobility?
It’s a change not to be able to come and go as you once did. Not to have the freedom
that you once had. You’ve become essentially a different person. You’ve left somebody behind that you could come and go with ease. It’s difficult. It’s difficult.

Let’s talk about your art. It all started at Cass Tech, right?

I got good training at Cass Technical High School where I was a commercial arts major. One of the interesting things about Cass Tech is that art students and music students, we all shared the same floor. That’s where I first made my early gay contacts, because there were other gay students there and we began to bond with each other.

Following high school you would go to work various jobs – as a stringer for the Free Press, a PR man for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and even as an operating room technician at Harper Hospital – before finishing college and going on to work for 28 years with the Detroit Public Schools. But you lost touch with your art and it wasn’t until you got sober that you reconnected with it. Is this right?

It was 1981. I reconnected with my art at Cottage Hospital, where I went for rehab. Sometimes in the rehab programs, you’re given assignments to make you think, to keep you occupied, to make you feel good about yourself. The assignment we were given was to go through magazines and cut out pictures indicative of our mood. In my haze, I misunderstood and instead of cutting out pictures I turned them into collages. And I did several collages, cutting and pasting. One of the nurses even offered me money for one. Then, when I got out of rehab, I took and concentrated on my sobriety, cut down on my coffee consumption, started taking good vitamins and other things to help my rehab. And then, I had the collages that I did mounted and framed. I had a friend who was teaching art at one of the community colleges. He said, “These are good, take them down to the Detroit Artists Market for jurying.” And so, I took three pieces down and all three pieces got into the exhibit.

Then the next thing that came along was, of course, the AIDS crisis, so I began making art and donating art for AIDS fundraising. Overall, I raised with my art several thousand dollars for AIDS. And I’ve been going ever since then.

Your upcoming show features many pieces of your art —

Yes, and six of those pieces of art were done after the stroke. Jon Strand, a friend and well-known artist, gave me art supplies and encouraged me, saying, “It would be good therapy for you to do some art.” It was difficult because I’ve had problems with my vision due to the stroke. But, nonetheless, I was able to create six or seven pieces of art, and they are in the exhibit and they’re called “Stroke Rehab 1,” “Stroke Rehab 2,” etc., etc.

You haven’t done anything since those initial pieces, though. Is there a reason you haven’t done more?

Well, those pieces were challenging. And somewhat amazing for me is that in spite of the vision difficulties, that they actually came out with a freshness, an automatic-ness. If you read my column, “How I create My Art (see page 8),” it will give you an idea of how I do my art. It just really flows through me.

What was it like to see such a large collection of your work altogether?

There is a very special experience. The experience being: you’ve done a piece of art and you’ve forgotten about it and time passes by and somehow, by chance, you get to see that piece of art, and it’s as though you’re seeing it for the first time. And you think, “Wow, did I do that?” It’s the same thing with writing.

What purpose has your art served over the years? What has it given you?

Well, I’ve been sober 38 years and what has happened is I’ve substituted one addiction for another, the addiction being my art. I don’t think about it. I just do it. It unfolds. And what I try to do with my art is make it such that the person who views it gives their own interpretation to it. Brings their own feelings, brings their own insights, brings themselves into the picture. And I think if I’ve succeeded in doing that then it’s successful. In other words: it’s sharing your gift with someone else. I believe if you’re given a gift, if you’re born with a gift, [if] that gift is watched over and cared for over the years and shared, brought into fruition, then you’ve done your good.
DRAG SYNDROME BARRED FROM TANGLEFOOT: DISCRIMINATION OR PROTECTION?

BY ELLEN SHANNA KNOPPOW

The Decision

What began in Grand Rapids as an effort to promote advocacy of, and conversation about, artists with disabilities has turned into a controversy that’s gained national attention. At the center of the dispute are Republican congressional candidate Peter Meijer, who is also the grandson of the supermarket founder, and DisArt, a local group that planned to bring a troupe of professional drag performers who have Down syndrome to a performance space owned by Meijer. The American Civil Liberties Union became involved when Meijer banned the group from his venue.

“I knew that DisArt would be hosting performances,” said Meijer, of what was planned as part of ArtPrize Project 1, and for which SiTE:LAB had built an installation in space donated by Meijer. “That I had known about for months. I had seen some of the work that they had done around advocacy for individuals with disabilities and I was excited to be part of that.”

He was not aware that the disabled performers might have intellectual disabilities.

However, Meijer said that when, on Aug. 18, he learned of the nature of the performance — individuals with Down syndrome performing drag — he grew leery. After speaking to “over three dozen folks who I felt could know the issue better than I could,” Meijer informed DisArt that Drag Syndrome could not perform at Tanglefoot. Stakeholders Meijer consulted included disability advocates, artists, parents of children with Down syndrome and individual members of the LGBTQ community. By and large, he said, “they shared my deep concerns around the perception of exploitation around this event.”

In an Aug. 19 letter Meijer informed ArtPrize that he could not approve Tanglefoot's facilities for Drag Syndrome. He has said repeatedly that he didn’t want this to be a political issue and attempted to handle the matter privately.

At the core of Meijer’s concern, as he states in the Aug. 19 letter which DisArt leaked to the media, was that, “The differently abled are among the most special souls in our community, and I believe they, like children and other vulnerable populations, should be protected.”

A response on DisArt’s website reads in part, “Exclusion is discrimination, it is self-preservation, it is exploitation for political gain. It is not protection.”

The Fallout

“They wanted the controversy,” said Meijer, regarding DisArt’s reason for leaking the letter. Shortly after their dismissal, and attempting on their own to resolve the issue with Meijer, DisArt contacted the ACLU.

“We spoke with the organizers from DisArt, and looking at the facts and circumstances, certainly, his decision appears to be based on assumptions about people with disabilities, mainly people with Down syndrome,” said Jay Kaplan, staff attorney for the ACLU of Michigan. “There also seemed to be that Mr. Meijer had concerns about the nature of the performance.”

Further, Kaplan stated that DisArt spoke with Meijer and provided him with specific information about the drag performers on two occasions, making it clear that these individuals do understand what they’re doing and have the capacity to consent. The Drag Syndrome performers have agents, have performed around the world, are paid for their work and so on.

Drag Syndrome is a project of a London-based experimental performance and dance company that works with individuals who have Down syndrome. As Artistic Director Daniel Vais explains in a Mashable article, “People with intellectual disabilities aren’t supposed to be performers or artists or anything but ‘cute.’” He says the performers have told him that people see them as childish, but they have the same desires, dreams and aspirations as anybody else.

Of their numerous and popular performances, this is Drag Syndrome’s first in the U.S. and the first time they’ve experienced backlash.

DisArt’s complaint filed with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights by the ACLU reads in part, “Mr. Meijer’s actions in blocking Drag Syndrome’s performance at Tanglefoot constitute discrimination in a public accommodation on the basis of disability (Down syndrome) and on the basis of sex (gender stereotyping) in public accommodations in violation of the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act.”

“It’s not to punish Mr. Meijer, but it’s really to call attention to this, that there are some protections under our state civil rights law and when you have a performing space that you make available to the public that’s considered to be a public accommodation, then you are subject to civil rights laws,” Kaplan said.

Is Drag an Issue Here?

Meijer especially pushed back on the notion the alleged discrimination has to do with it being a drag performance. Further, he wasn’t clear on the connection between “sex discrimination” and prohibiting a drag performance from Tanglefoot. When an explanation of the May 2018 Michigan Civil Rights Commission’s interpretive statement was provided, he commented, “It just really seems like a five-step removed argument that I don’t— I think it would be a different scenario if I said, well, ‘No women can come in or nobody who’s trans or non-binary, right?’”

“I don’t view drag as the issue,” he said. “I view any type of what I would describe as charged cultural or political performance. I insert anything else. Take drag out, I insert anything else that would fall into that ... framework.”

Asked to provide examples, Meijer said it could be political speech or a hot-button issue. “When you have the messenger, when you have the performers come from a group that’s been a) historically subject to abuse, marginalization and exploitation and b) whose agency cannot be guaranteed,” Meijer said.

However, asked to clarify whether he meant the “charged cultural or political performance” referred to any performance by people with intellectual disabilities, he replied, “No, that drag itself, in that case, is culturally charged. Drag in general I would consider culturally charged.”

Meijer went on to explain that “charged” performance or expression to him means, “Anything that ... may be sufficiently controversial to incite a protest probably ... gets into a problematic territory, especially when you’re dealing with individuals with Down syndrome.”

As to the possibility of a protest, Meijer said that it was the ethical quandary that was first and foremost in his mind. Yet his responsibility as the owner of a private property with a commercial liability policy was not lost on him and when he became aware of the risks that exposed him to, those were “the nails in the coffin.” (In fact, a peaceful protest was held outside Grand Rapids’ Wealthy Theatre, where Drag Syndrome relocated their sold-out performances.)

Meijer sounded unsure whether he approves of any performance by individuals with Down syndrome at his, or any space, and how much of that has to do with drag.

See next page
"Let's face it. The Drag Syndrome group was not really a thing when they were just a theater troupe," Meijer said. "The reason why they've achieved fame, or infamy, depending on ... who's describing them, is because of that combination. And it's a shame. Because I'm sure that they're talented individuals."

Asked if the members of Drag Syndrome could be performers in some other context, Meijer replied that "where that line is drawn, is, frankly, an open question."

Kaplan is skeptical.

"Let's face it, if this were a group of people doing a violin concerto concert on stage he certainly wouldn't be questioning whether they have the capacity to understand what they're doing, whether they're being exploited," Kaplan said. "He wouldn't even enter into that inquiry."

When the question was posed a different way, Meijer seemed to confirm his position that it was indeed the performers, not the content at issue: If DisArt had brought drag performers who had disabilities that were not intellectual — for example, hearing impaired — would Meijer have permitted that at Tanglefoot? Although he did not respond with a resounding affirmative, Meijer didn't seem to take issue with that. Though he was quick to add,

"It's not really the type of performance I would have attended or sought out."

Playing Politics

It seems that politics is part of the equation in multiple ways. Meijer's Republican primary opponent savaged him on social media for even pausing to reflect once he learned of the nature of the performance, which the rival mischaracterized as "sex acts."

Meijer believes he's being targeted from the other side because he's a conservative.

"I don't doubt that there was a political factor in DisArt leaking the letter to the media," Meijer said. "I don't doubt that there's a political factor in the Michigan ACLU filing a complaint. I think if I was coming from the left, with the same sincere concerns, it would be a very different response. The headline of so many of these articles reads, 'Republican Cancels,' 'Republican Bans' ... and it plays into that stereotype, right?"

About that homophobic stereotype, on Meijer's Facebook page, a post that appears on Aug. 28 is shared from the anti-LGBTQ group, Christian Constitutional Conservatives Who Stand for Life and Liberty. It is a mashup of images praising Meijer's decision to ban Drag Syndrome under the banner: "Thank God That Such Men Live." It also links to an article from Life Site News, an anti-LGBTQ online outlet, which refers to the performance pushing "an LGBT agenda."

Meijer confirmed that he manages his own social media feed and did share that post from that group. He said he has received support for a range of reasons, and shared it because at the time it was the first affirming post of which he was aware.
Artist’s Statement

There is little conscious planning as I create my art. I work intuitively and rather quickly. I start with a geometric shape, a humorous or serious doodle, a fluid symbol fished from my subconscious, a newly minted hieroglyph or alphabet, sometimes a line expressive of energy and movement, and I proceed from there.

The process is closely akin to automatic writing or, to use a label in vogue, channeling. I become both a witness of and a conduit to creativity.

My work unfolds with its own inner logic (or lack of same), of which I am only dimly aware. The end product is an image or images that suggest rather than tell, probe rather than define rather than state outright.

My work is whimsical, satiric, metaphysical, convoluted and highly detailed. As much as possible I try not to censor my work but to let it flow from my psyche. Sometimes my work seems of a piece to me; at other times it seems disparate. Created by a multiple artistic self (or selves). My art can be rigid or fluid, masculine or feminine, insightful or trivial. Importantly, my art is energetic, bursting with color, line and movement.

I use my art as a kind of satori (illumination: spontaneous grasping) for each viewer. To this end I title my pieces with names that are koans (riddles with non-logic “answers”) of sorts: “Waiting for the Light to Change,” “Watching for Three-Minute Eggs,” “Remembrance of Things Past Tense,” “Two Steps Ahead,” “Still Life in Motion,” etc.

The result is art of a truly inner dimension, with its own dynamics and tensions, its own resolutions. I seek to bridge my intuitive world to that of those who experience visual creations.

My art is both familiar and alien. It keeps me alive and aware. It gives me much pleasure to share it.

Editor’s note:

Our beloved Charles Alexander suffered a stroke this Memorial Day that has left him physically weaker and with some sight deficits. Alexander has been a prolific writer, artist, muse and devoted supporter of the LGBTQ community for many decades. An exhibition of his art is currently on display at the Pittmann-Puckett Art Gallery at the Affirmations LGBTQ community center in Ferndale, and on Sept. 29 from 4 to 7 p.m. we will celebrate him, his art and his remarkable life and contributions to the fabric of the LGBTQ and artistic communities.

Alexander will be at this opening Sept. 29 to meet and speak with his many friends and fans. All the artwork on display will be available for sale, to benefit the Charles Alexander Care Trust established to support him as he recovers from the stroke.

Since Between The Lines was founded in 1993, Alexander has written nearly 1,000 of his weekly “Parting Glances” columns. Each one has brought his unique perspective on Detroit’s history.
Positive Thoughts

Continued from p. 8

The simple, catchy and game-changing U=U campaign launched in July 2016. Within record time, the campaign has become a global movement lead by people living with HIV. Today, 500 organizations from 65 countries have signed the U=U Consensus Statement, which has been translated into 15 different languages and is endorsed by the principal investigators of the leading studies that proved the statement true.

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The biggest breakthroughs for U=U came when the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed that the consensus was “backed by science.”

At CROI, Foote also shared some quotes from HIV-positive people from around the world, illustrating the impact of U=U. In the words of Mark from Baltimore: “When I finally internalized this message ... something suddenly lifted off of me that is hard to describe. It was almost as if someone wiped me clean.”

Desirée Guerrero is the associate editor of Plus magazine. This column is a project of Plus, Positively Aware, POZ, TheBody.com and Q Syndicate, the LGBT wire service. Visit their websites – hivplusmag.com, positivelyaware.com, poz.com and thebody.com – for the latest updates on HIV/AIDS.

Parting Glances

Continued from p. 8

The evolution of the LGBTQ community and the ever-changing political/social landscape we all share.

All are invited to attend the opening reception Sept. 29 at Affirmations from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. For more information visit http://gaybe.am/Yk.

Creep Of The Week

Milo Yiannopoulos

First Twitter came for Milo Yiannopoulos, and I did not speak out because I was not a racist.

Then Facebook came for Milo Yiannopoulos, and I did not speak out because I was not a misogynist.

Then Yiannopoulos was broke, and I did not speak out because GOOD. Seriously, fuck that guy.

In case you didn’t hear, right-wing gay-provocateur Yiannopoulos is having a sad because he’s been booted off of the biggest social media platforms because of his hateful, terrible self. It only took years, but Twitter and then Facebook slowly began to realize, “Hey, we’re for-profit companies and we don’t have to let people use our platform to incite hatred and violence against marginalized groups of people.”

Honestly, it’s too little too late (Twitter is Trump’s hate speech podium, after all), but I can’t say I’m sad that folks like Yiannopoulos are finding it harder to spread their disgusting message far and wide online.

But, like I said, Yiannopoulos is sad, and that’s good.

According to Vice, Yiannopoulos has taken to Telegram, an app that has apparently become a dumping ground for right-wing hater mongers rejected by bigger platforms, to complain that he just can’t make a living these days and it’s so unfair.

According to Vice, Yiannopoulos had 400,000 followers on Twitter, but has just 19,000 on Telegram, which Yiannopoulos called “a wasteland.”

“I spent years growing and developing and investing in my fan base and they just took it away in a flash,” he bemoaned on Telegram.

It’s true. He did spend years growing his “fan base,” and I mean base in the, well, basest sense. And I suppose, technically, THEY did take it away, in that they (Twitter, Facebook) told him he couldn’t use their stage for his one-man hate show anymore. But, really, he begged them to do it, violating their terms over and over again.

You’ll remember that Twitter said, “Boy, bye,” after his racist hatefest against actress Leslie Jones.

But if you listen to him it’s like he got deplatformed because he dared to wear a MAGA hat. In reality, Yiannopoulos has worked very hard to alienate as many people as possible. He was just the grand marshal in the so-called Straight Pride parade, giving the event a hint of legitimacy since he, a gay man, was associated with it. Though one wonders if the people in charge of the parade were familiar with his public argument in favor of pedophilia (shrug emoji).

In short, he’s not very popular right now. But he’s still got a following.

“It’s nice to have a little private chat with my gold star homies,” he wrote on Telegram. See? Yiannopoulos still appreciates the people who are still listening.

Or not. “But I can’t make a career out of a handful of people like that,” he continued. “I can’t put food on the table this way.”

Aww, he can’t make a “career” as a troll anymore. Sad. Also, like anyone believes he eats at a table. He takes all of his meals in his crypt.

But wait, what about these people being his “gold star homies”?

“Holy fucking hell the base in America SUCKS,” Yiannopoulos said according to VICE.

Huh. I guess the gold standard really is bullshit.

“Frankly they deserve to lose their country,” he continued, “and if by some miracle we manage to save it, it’ll be no thanks whatsoever to voters, readers, subscribers and ENTIRELY thanks to the few brave souls battling on the front lines, beyond all reason and hope.”

In other words, it’s all up to Milo to save us all from ourselves. You know, I remember when somebody else said, “I alone can fix it,” and that dude is currently fucking up this country but good. No wonder Milo is such a fan.

Yiannopoulos complained about various other social media platforms while on Telegram, including Gab and Parler, basically saying that nothing comes close to Twitter or Facebook.

“Unless something monumental changes,” he warns, “we are just going to be driven off the internet forever.”

Lord knows the Trump presidency has felt like an eternity to the majority of us who didn’t vote for him, so honestly forever can’t come soon enough.

The bottom line is, Yiannopoulos has worked very hard to be one of the best-known trolls out there. But, in the end, he shouldn’t be surprised to find himself where trolls belong: all alone and under a bridge badgering passersby for spare change.

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

BY D’ANNE WITKOWSKI

www.PrideSource.com
The Rev. Deb Cox to Retire From Ministry, Teaching

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

Before Deb Cox found the Metropolitan Community Church movement she, admittedly, wasn't very religious.

“I was a Christmas and Easter Christian,” she said. “I was part of the Presbyterian church, [and] it has turned out that what I needed was something that allowed me to open up my faith a little more than their rituals allowed.”

Cox, a native Ohioan, was born in Cleveland and first attended MCC in Columbus.

“My partner at the time was Presbyterian as well, and she kept [asking] me why would I want to be in a place if when I signed the welcome book and said I was a lesbian I was pretty sure I wouldn’t be received well,” Cox recalled. “That really resonated with me a lot.”

So, Cox attended a spaghetti dinner at the church and soon realized she had found her spiritual home. She went on to serve the congregation in all lay positions except treasurer. She also served on the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches Governing Board for the Five State Region as well as the district committee.

“I was really super involved in the Columbus church,” Cox said. “That's kind of where I got my footing. I just found so much energy from doing things in the church, whether I would organize carnivals or we would just have opportunities to interact with each other. We did dinners and I participated in a lot of the social stuff. Then, I got involved in Bible study stuff and worship stuff. Everything I approached and took on I found joy and peace and energy, and I think that’s one of the things that tells us when we’ve found our niche because it doesn’t drain us of our energy, but it gives us energy.”

Cox said that soon after, she started feeling the stirrings of a spiritual calling, but she was hesitant to answer.

“In the Presbyterian church that I grew up in, which was wonderful, I learned many things, but I didn’t learn to interact with God on a personal level. I didn’t understand having that personal relationship with God. Yet, here I was in this church and I was experiencing a personal relationship with God and I didn’t know what to do with it or how to grow it,” she said. “And periodically people would say to me, ‘When are you going into the ministry?’ Those kinds of things kept happening. People saw in me leadership when I didn’t really see it in myself.”

Eventually, after some prodding from a MCC traveling evangelist Dolores Perry, who was known in church circles as something of a prophetess, Cox answered the call. She was ordained as an MCC minister in Cincinnati in 1997.

The following year, Cox and her partner Ann Cox relocated to Detroit when Deb Cox was asked to pastor Divine Peace MCC in Waterford.

“I totally loved pastoring as a solo pastor at Divine Peace and having so much opportunity to do that,” she said. “I truly have a pastor’s heart and being able to be pastor for people was such an honor and privilege and it totally filled my heart. And we experienced some nice growth and that felt really good. It helped me to see myself in a more complete kind of way than I was seeing as a school teacher. I saw more dimension in myself.”

Cox left Divine Peace after eight years and eventually began attending MCC Detroit, which at the time was pastored by the Rev. Mark Bidwell. Bidwell quickly began asking Cox to preach and assist with service. Soon, she was asked to join the staff as an associate pastor.

“Now then to settle into being an associate pastor, which to be honest I struggled with because it was less than being a solo pastor or senior pastor,” Cox said. “But what I discovered is that it really gave me an opportunity to embrace the pastoral role without having to worry about am I giving the right leadership financially and structurally and all of those things. I got to help people embrace their own ministries.”

The Rev. Dr. Roland Stringfellow took over as senior pastor and teacher at MCC Detroit in 2014.

“The qualities I appreciate most about Rev. Deb is her courage to be ‘out’ on her job with the Pontiac School District,” he said. “I was also a teacher and administrator in the public schools and was timid about letting anyone know that I am gay. She and I boldly married couples on the lawn of the Oakland County Courthouse during the window of opportunity for same-gender couples to wed. Over the next few weeks, our images were seen across the nation as we supported marriage equality. It’s one thing to be quiet about your sexual orientation or gender identity while all of your co-workers know your truth. It is another to be an activist and Deb courageously let those in her school know which side she was on.”

“Later, when she and her now spouse Ann Cox got married, she was a witness again to marriage equality and invited many of her co-workers to the ceremony,” Stringfellow continued. “We at MCCD have benefited greatly from her bold preaching and ministry in our community.”

The decision to retire from both ministry and teaching – she will deliver her last sermon as associate pastor on Sunday, Sept. 15 – was a somewhat difficult one.

“I’m honestly not sure,” she said. “Between the things that have come up with Ann’s health and some of my own, it’s a struggle. I guess what summed it up for me is from the time Ann and I have been together ministry has been a big part of my life from the second year on. Right now, as we experience the effects of aging, I don’t want to always be serving other people and not be there for my own spouse. I have been terrible at doing self-care and establishing boundaries and now I feel like I’m embracing that myself.”

“She is the love my life,” Cox continued. “I’ve never, ever been as whole as I am with her. I don’t want her to be the second or third thing in my life. We both deserve this time now. And if I can do other types of ministry, or if I can continue to substitute teach my students, that will be a big bonus. But when her health journey or mine requires it, I will be ready and able to take time for us.”

To find out more about Affirmations visit goaffirmations.org.

Crain’s Detroit Business selected business leaders across the state of Michigan to highlight in their “40 Under 40” program. Among the leaders selected was Southeast Michigan’s own Mike Flores, who is currently running for Ferndale City Council and serves as the board president of the city’s Affirmations LGBTQ community center.

Among his other successes, Crain’s highlighted Flores for his work in helping the center stay open last during a period of financial uncertainty and extend its services beyond its 30th birthday.

According to the report, Flores’ goals for Affirmations reach further than keeping it operational, he is working to increase the center’s projected annual revenue from $500,000 to $1 million. That kind of success, he said, starts from partnerships. Regarding the work required to keep Affirmations afloat, he said, it wouldn’t have been possible without community support and guidance.

“Even though ... a lot of advancements and movements have happened in the LGBT community in the last 30 years, a lot more still needs to happen to achieve full equality within our community,” he said. “To me it was very rewarding ... to be part of a community that really stepped up and said, ‘Affirmations continues to be important and we want to keep Affirmations open.’”

Crain’s Detroit Business
Highlights Affirmations Board President Mike Flores in ’40 Under 40’

BY BTL STAFF

President Mike Flores in ’40
Highlights Affirmations Board
Crain’s Detroit Business
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A Guide to the Upcoming Democratic Presidential LGBTQ Debates

BY LISA KEEN

LGBTQ voters: Mark your calendars. Over the next month, there will be four Democratic presidential candidate forums — two of them devoted exclusively to LGBTQ issues. And one of those LGBTQ forums will be the first-ever to be broadcast by a major network.

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation is partnering with CNN to host a nationally televised LGBTQ presidential “town hall,” Oct. 10, similar to the climate change town hall CNN hosted Sept. 3. As with the climate change event, the LGBTQ forum will have each candidate on stage with a CNN moderator for a set period of time to answer questions from the moderator and members of the audience.

Lucas Acosta, HRC’s national press secretary, said some details are still being worked out, but any candidate who meets the Democratic Party’s threshold criteria for participating in the party’s debates will be invited to participate in the LGBTQ forum.

Acosta said HRC has already received indications from many of the top-polling candidates that they will participate: former Vice President Joe Biden; U.S. Sens. Elizabeth Warren, Kamala Harris and Amy Klobuchar; former U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julian Castro; and South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg.

This will not be the first HRC presidential candidate forum. The group staged similar forums during the 2004 and 2008 presidential campaigns.

The 2008 HRC presidential forum (held in August 2007) was broadcast live on MTV’s newly launched LGBTQ cable channel Logo. Six of the eight major Democratic candidates at the time participated, but then-U.S. Sen. Biden declined, citing a scheduling conflict. Republicans were invited in 2007, but none agreed to participate.

Acosta said HRC has decided not to invite Republicans this year.

“We’re dedicated to defeating Donald Trump,” Acosta said.

There are only two Republican candidates challenging President Trump for the 2020 Republican nomination, and polling shows the president garnering between 66 and 85 percent of support among Republican primary votes. The Republican challengers include former Massachusetts Gov. Bill Weld and former U.S. Rep. Joe Walsh of Illinois. Adding to the challengers’ obstacles, the Republican Party in South Carolina, Arizona, Kansas and Nevada is reportedly considering canceling Republican primaries in those states, according to Politico.com.

Acosta said the HRC-CNN forum in Los Angeles will have a different audience from the Sept. 20 LGBTQ presidential forum being organized by LGBTQ media organizations and a local newspaper in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The Iowa-based forum is expected to be livestreamed over the internet and being organized by the national LGBTQ media group GLAAD, the Iowa statewide LGBTQ group One Iowa, The Advocate magazine and a local Cedar Rapids newspaper called The Gazette. That forum will take place Sept. 20.

The two other national Democratic presidential candidate events during the four weeks are both Democratic Party national debates on an as-yet-unspecified range of topics.

So far, LGBTQ issues have not gotten much air play in the Democratic Party debates, even though one of the top-tier candidates is openly gay South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg.

Here’s a quick guide on where to watch the upcoming forums:

Thursday, Sept. 12, 8 p.m. EST on ABC: The Democratic Party will host its third national debate. This time, only 10 candidates, including openly gay hopeful Pete Buttigieg, have met the party’s ever-increasing hurdle to participate: at least 2 percent of support in four national polls and at least 130,000 donors giving to their campaigns. In addition to Buttigieg, the 10 include U.S. Sens. Cory Booker of New Jersey, Kamala Harris of California, Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts. It also includes former Vice President Joe Biden, former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julian Castro, former U.S. Rep. Beto O’Rourke and technology businessman Andrew Yang. The debate will be nationally broadcast by ABC and Univision from the Texas Southern University in Houston from 8 to 11 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Viewers can also watch a livestream at one of several sites, including ABCNews.com and Facebook Watch. Four journalists will be moderating: George Stephanopoulos, David Muir, Linsey Davis and Jorge Ramos.

Friday, Sept. 20, 8 p.m. EST: The national LGBTQ media group GLAAD, the LGBTQ statewide group One Iowa, the national LGBTQ magazine The Advocate, and the local Cedar Rapids newspaper The Gazette are hosting the event. It will take place in Cedar Rapids in Iowa, the first state that will register its preference for a Democratic candidate during its caucuses Feb. 3. As of deadline this week, the confirmed participants include Biden, Booker, Castro, U.S. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii, U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, former U.S. Rep Joe Sestak of Pennsylvania and author Marianne Williamson. A GLAAD press release says the organization believes LGBTQ issues have been “largely absent” from the 2020 presidential campaign so far. According to The Gazette, each candidate will be asked to present a statement regarding LGBTQ issues and take questions from three moderators: Advocate Editor-in-chief Zach Stafford, Gazette columnist Lyz Lenz and One Iowa policy director Kennan Crow.

Tuesday, Oct. 15, Time TBA: The fourth nationally televised Democratic candidates’ debate will be held in Ohio. Campaigns have until Oct. 1 to qualify, using the same criteria used for the Sept. 12 debate. The 10 candidates from the Sept. 12 debate will be on stage, along with at least one new qualifier, businessman Tom Steyer. There is a possibility the candidates will be staged over two nights.

So far, LGBTQ issues have not gotten much air play in the Democratic Party debates, even though one of the top-tier candidates is openly gay South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg.
Bianca Del Rio floats too, B*tches

By Chris Azzopardi

Bianca Del Rio paints in Stockholm on her “It’s Jester Joke” comedy tour, still subject to the fraught human realities of traveling despite her top-tier queen status. And packing – don’t remind her. “As a drag queen, you travel with so much shit,” says Del Rio (aka Roy Haylock). Famous for her tart candor, the Louisiana-born stand-up comedian’s success is a result of saying what she thinks and not caring what you think. And you, of course, already know this if you witnessed the self-proclaimed “Clown in a Gown” reign over the other crown-pining contestants during season six of “RuPaul’s Drag Race” in 2014.

Five years later, Del Rio, who has written a book, “Blame It on Bianca Del Rio,” and starred in her own film, “Hurricane Bianca,” is still coming out on top. In June, New York magazine named Del Rio one of the top 100 “Most Powerful Drag Queens in America.” Just before bringing her worldwide comedy tour stateside, Del Rio called to defend bachelorettes who celebrate at gay clubs, predict an inevitable Lizzo backlash and roast “Drag Race” queens who use emotional manipulation to get ahead in the competition.

What is the one thing you absolutely cannot leave home without?

I’m a drag queen – there are so many elements. I definitely need makeup. But a razor, I would assume. The problem is, with drag you have to travel with so much stuff. You have to bring size 12 shoes, extra eyelashes you can’t really find that stuff just anywhere. Definitely not in Stockholm. So I have to pack a lot of stuff. A lot more than I usually would like to admit.

How many suitcases do you travel with?

Four suitcases. Three of those are drag, one of them is what I call my “boy bag.” It’s just to have options. The airport struggle – the security, the baggage, all that shit – really does start to wear on you.

And imagine if you went through airport security as – well, maybe you do go through as Bianca. I’ve never had to fly in drag – thankfully!

As a self-proclaimed expert on nothing who has an opinion on everything, I need your take on John Travolta nearly giving Taylor Swift impersonator Jade Jolie a VMA because he mistook her for the actual Taylor Swift.

(Laughs) I mean, it’s hysterical. Obviously he’s got delusion problems. He’s not dealing with a full deck right now. He also is a Scientologist, which goes to show it. And he had that Adele Nazeeem moment. Either he’s a drunk or he takes a pill or he just doesn’t fucking care. I was just glad to see he was not wearing a wig. There’s a rarity! So, you know, he’s embracing his non-wig self. Next he’ll admit that he’s gay.

That he confused them – was it a compliment to Taylor or to Jade?

The ‘Clown in a Gown’ Talks Death-Drop Disdain and Why She’s Done with ‘Drag Race’
I laugh at myself, and I laugh at everything. First of all, it's important to laugh at ourselves. As Bianca, do you ever confuse people? I do meet-and-greets, and when you have meet-and-greets, people are always like, "Oh, I just saw you in Stockhom?" or "I saw you in London!" and I have to really think. You do 150 people a night as part of the meet-and-greets, so it's very hard to remember. There's usually some characteristic that gets me there, but on occasion I've been like, "Have we met before?!" And they'll say, "No." I'm like, "Oh… OK. Thought we did." So it can fuck with you, with that many people a night. But I really haven't mistaken anybody for anybody of importance, no.

If John Travolta met you, who knows who you might be mistaken for.

Who cares! I'm not interested! He's not high on my list.

Who is high on your list?

I think every gay man would say Dolly Parton. She's that rare one that is almost like some mythical creature. She's just one of those who I love not only because she's Dolly Parton and I've grown up with her, but also she's just so freaking funny.

Some people might describe you as a "mythical creature" too. Emphasis on the word "creature," yes. But mythical? No. (Laughs)

This is very controversial in gay bars, so I wonder if this translates to your shows. But do you let bachelorette parties come to Bianca shows?

Oh, I don't care. Whoever buys a fucking ticket, I don't give a shit. Gurl, listen: I think people have lost their minds. The gays don't even wanna be in the gay bars anymore! They're all on a fucking app anyway. Nobody is even paying attention. And look, at least somebody's in the bar. Somebody has to buy a drink to keep gay bars open. You can't rely on gay men to do that. So look, let the girls come in, let them have a good time. Not like I've never told a bitch to shut up. You can do that, but you can't be offended. Who cares! As long as they're there having fun, fuck it.

Isn't the point of coming to a Bianca Del Rio show to be offended?

First of all, it's important to laugh at ourselves. I laugh at myself, and I laugh at everything that I could possibly laugh at. But I think we've lost that because there's so much with social media warriors constantly saying, "You can't say this" and "I'm offended." Well, then, fuck off! If you're offended by me, then don't come and see me. It's very simple. I don't like Kim Kardashian, but I don't spend my life watching her on fucking TV or writing all over her Facebook or Instagram or Twitter saying, "I hate you, you're a piece of shit." I just don't care. You can live a successful life with someone not liking you.

Have you always been the kind of person who says what some people really want to say but are too scared to say? Has that always been your style?

Always. Yeah, yeah.

As a kid?

Yeah, as a child everything was always funny to me, and I would always try to find humor in all of it. It was just what you have to do. It was just my survival skills. Imagine being different, being artsy, being gay. All that definitely can either turn on you or you can find a way through it, and that was just my way through it, which is being blunt and upfront. And the people who got it – usually the smart ones – understood it.

When did you know you could get away with more if you put on a costume?

When I got paid. I always said it, but it wasn't until the packaging came with it. And it's not so much that I can get away with more – it's just what's easier for people to accept. For instance, with drag in particular, the average person would think, "I have nothing of interest with a drag queen." But when they see it, they're kind of fascinated by it. So, for me, it was just this evolution into it. I mean, I could totally live my life without being in drag and I probably will. I'm not doing this forever.

What do you think your post-drag life will look like?

That's the stupidest question! I have no idea! I know I don't want to be schlepping around the world in a wig and heels at 60, I can tell you that. It's one of those things where I'm like, look, it's been 24 years so far. I'm all right, but I know it's not forever. And I have no idea. I didn't plan this far. So I don't know what the fuck I'll be doing. But it'll be something fun, that's for sure.

You once said it's important to know your limits. What new limits have you set for yourself at 44?

I said I didn't want to do drag at 40 because at the time I think I was 37 and it was right before "Drag Race," and so I was working a regular job in New York City during the day making costumes for Broadway and then at night working in a club. So at that point, 18 years of working in the clubs and trying to stay afloat – and the bars were fading, not
I think that’s absolutely ridiculous. There’s a fucking be entertaining! I’m so sick of all doing a death-drop. It’s been done! Just and gimmicks. It’s no worse than somebody proof that you can get through the show and pull on heartstrings, that’s what I was serious topics. So my joke was about people part of a reality show. And I’m entitled to an being left at a bus stop, somebody being sick. First and foremost, I have a problem with, when you’re watching a drag show and everybody has an ailment or an issue or loves to tug at your heartstrings to try to get people to like you. That’s what I was discussing (during her set, Del Rio said, “You got the one going ‘Ugh, I’m fat.’ Then you got the other one going ‘Ugh, I’m a black queen,’” referencing season 10 contestants Eureka O’Hara and The Vixen. She then mentioned Blair St. Clair opening up about being sexually assaulted: “Then you got that other bitch, ‘I was raped!’ No, fuck you...”). I was discussing someone being left at a bus stop, somebody being sick. All of that is part of the nonsense of being part of a reality show. And I’m entitled to an opinion when someone’s about to lip sync for their life and they start pulling out all this fuckery. There’s a time and place to discuss serious topics. So my joke was about people that find any way to bring up their heartache and pull on heartstrings, that’s what I was discussing.

And so no, I refuse to change anything that I say and do because, like I said, the people who like it, like it, the people who don’t, don’t. But as they have an opinion about me, I can have an opinion about the ridiculousness of a drag show. It’s my take on it. And I’m living proof that you can get through the show without fucking crying in every episode, for cripes’ sake! I laugh at the fuckery. I laugh at the stunts and gimmicks. It’s no worse than somebody doing a death-drop. It’s been done! Just fucking be entertaining! I’m so sick of all these sob stories! That’s what that’s about.

I’m guessing that even though you were named one of America’s most powerful drag queens, it’s not true that with great power comes great responsibility.

I think that’s absolutely ridiculous. There’s a list that says I’m No. 1; there’s another list that says I’m the worst drag queen. That’s just how it works! None of that means anything. And what’s this responsibility? I’m a fucking man in a wig making a living. I’m not a fucking superhero. And don’t put me on a pedestal because I shouldn’t be on a pedestal, because they love to put you on a pedestal and then tear you the fuck down. You cannot fool me. They love to say you’re amazing. Like, look, this girl Lizzo is the one everybody loves right now. Just give her a year and there’s gonna be something someone is gonna bitch about and pull out and say “she did this” and say “she did that” and CANCEL her. That’s how they are. That’s just the world. So look: I’m not looking for that type of acceptance. And you shouldn’t be putting faith in fucking people that are on reality shows, for cripes’ sake. That’s ridiculous. People that idolize me or Snooki have problems.

Referring to the way the queens are depicted on “Drag Race” versus their actual persona, you said recently, “I’ve been behind the curtain. And when you’re behind the curtain, it’s kind of weird to watch.” Do people get a better understanding of who you are from your shows than they did from “Drag Race”?

Yes and no. The thing is you can only be yourself when you’re on television, and of course if you say something they’re going to use it. So the people that say, “Oh, it’s the editing”? Well, if you didn’t say it, they wouldn’t have the footage. I’ve accepted responsibility for everything I said and everything I did, and sadly a lot of people don’t do that when they leave the show. They have to blame someone, and it won’t be themselves.

If you could have been on a different season of “Drag Race,” which season of girls would you have wanted to compete against?

I don’t care. I don’t have an opinion. (Laughs) I can’t even remember who was on what season when! It’s that much of a blur. It was six years ago, and I never watched the show when it was airing. I would watch marathons, but I would never watch it weekly, night after night after night. I never followed. The only seasons I’m familiar with are four and five; the rest of them have become a blur. And, I mean, a lot of them are my friends, but I can’t remember which season they were on. I’m also a firm believer that it happened, it was great, I had a great experience and a great moment, but I wouldn’t change any of it.

So if an “All Stars: Winners” season ever happens, would you be interested in competing?

Nope. Why? Would you go back to high school?

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 The New York Times, Vanity Fair, QQ and Billboard. Reach him via Twitter @chrisazzopardi.
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8 Proactive Ways Couples Can Face Down Their Debt Demons Together

BY MIKEY ROX

Relationships are hard enough as it is, but throw money into the mix and it becomes a recipe for certain disaster. It doesn’t have to go down like that though. Your relationship can survive a financial crisis – yes, even a menacing mound of debt – if you can both get on the same page and work together to solve the problem.

1. Avoid the Blame Game
   Remember, it takes two to tango, and in most cases you didn’t get into debt all alone. Before tempers flare and you both say and do things you regret, take a breather, regroup, and recognize that your current situation isn’t the fault of one person. Even if a recent debt is the sole work of your partner – say, from a gambling addiction – getting angry and blowing your top won’t help. Go through your emotions responsibly and concentrate on nipping the immediate issue in the bud – counseling may be necessary for this – before coming up with a plan of attack to get back in the black.

2. Pay Off Your Worst First
   Once you have a handle on your debt and resolve yourself to proactively eliminate it, go hard. Debt won’t dwindle away if you’re passive about it. Attack the problem head on to keep it contained.

   “Pay off your worst first,” says Steve Anzuni, financial expert at Fairway Financial. “Sit with each other and gather your statements and pay down the higher-interest cards first.” Financial expert Harrine Freeman suggests a similar approach. “Set up payments plan with creditors,” she says. “Pay off old accounts first, then focus on paying down current debt. Keep credit card balances at 20% or less of the credit limit.”

3. Steer Clear of Financially Stressful Situations in the Future
   Hindsight is 20/20 as they say, and this adage should absolutely apply to your finances. If you’ve gotten yourself in a hole, start digging yourself out and don’t look back. Also be wary of new situations that can affect the hard work you’ve done to get back on track. Your relationship can only handle so much stress, and it’s not fair to either of you to go into situations – even ones that seem like good moves financially – that will put the whole arrangement in jeopardy.

   “I coach couples that financial stress can bring out or aggravate problems in a marriage that would not have otherwise have arisen,” says Elliott Katz, author of Being the Strong Man a Woman Wants: Timeless Wisdom on Being a Man. “They should avoid getting into financially stressful situations even if it will be profitable in the long term but will cause stress to them in the short term.”

4. Reduce Your Spending – Stat!
   It may seem like an obvious tip to cut back your spending considerably when you’re in debt, but you’d be surprised at how many people keep swiping those cards even when there’s a problem. Freeman suggests reducing the overall household spending by 30% to increase your monthly cash flow to pay off debt. It’ll be a sacrifice for a while, but desperate times call for desperate measures if you want that debt burden off your back.

5. Accept That You’re Not the Joneses, and That’s OK
   A lot of the time, couples go into debt trying to keep up with friends, family and neighbors – perhaps even more so for queer couples. You may be able to keep up for a while, but if you’re spending money on things you can’t afford just to look like you can, it’ll come back to bite you eventually. Try to be happy with what you have or else work harder to improve your financial situation (picking up side gigs, furthering your education, asking for a promotion at work, getting a better-paying job, etc.) so that you can actually afford the things you want to buy as status symbols. Or, ya know, finally convince yourself that money doesn’t buy happiness.

6. Set Up Payment Alerts to Stay on Track
   If you have trouble remembering to pay bills, use technology to help you. Set reminders when bills are due and to be notified when account balances are low. Also set up overdraft protection if you’re prone to overdrawing your account so you can at least cut back the fees you’re charged.

   Nobody wants to accept the responsibility of handling the relationship’s finances – especially with all that can go wrong – but somebody has to do it. Make it clear which one of you that will be and create a budget and bill-paying schedule together so you can hold one another accountable and stay on track.

   “Discuss who will manage the finances, who pays what bill, what finances will be joint, where finances will be managed, when finances will be managed, how finances will be managed currently and in the future, and how expenses and bills will be paid,” Freeman advises.

8. Enlist the Help of a Financial Planner If You’re In Too Deep
   If you’re already in debt, the last thing you need is another expense. However, if the expense is to help you get out of the red, you get a pass. Sometimes you need help, especially if you have zero idea what you’re doing with your money or how to manage it. Just make sure you’re hiring a reputable financial planner. You don’t need some hack all up in your bills charging you an arm and a leg for advice and planning that has no merit.

Mikey Rox is an award-winning journalist and LGBT lifestyle expert whose work has been published in more than 100 outlets across the world. He spends his time writing from the beach with his dog Jaxon. Connect with Mikey on Instagram @mikeyrox.
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11th Annual Harvest Festival

BY BTL STAFF

The annual Pittsfield Township Harvest Festival is a way for attendees to enjoy live music, learn lost arts like spinning and woodcarving, experience guided history at the Sutherland-Wilson Farmhouse, eat local food and more. Held on Sunday, Sept. 22 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Sutherland-Wilson Farm, guests can enjoy family friendly fun like a petting farm, lawn games and a hay ride.

Located at 797 W. Textile Road, Ann Arbor. Free parking and shuttle is available from Harvest Elementary (1155 Campus Pkwy). Handicapped parking and bike parking available on-site at the Sutherland-Wilson Farm. Visit pittsfield-mi.gov/harvestfestival for more information.

Art and Brew Oct. 10

Art and Brew is the Art Center's annual fall fundraiser – a one-night beer and bite tasting tour across downtown Ann Arbor. Local favorite bars, restaurants and breweries compete against each other to create the best food and beer pairing of the night. Attendees will be able to enjoy food and drinks from Arbor Brewing Company, Avalon Cafe and Kitchen, The Grotto, Sava's and more. This event is presented by Old National Bank in partnership with O & W, Inc.

“Each participating venue will have two delicious craft beer and food pairings for you to try. Your Art & Brew ticket gets you 10 tasting tickets ... one ticket gets you a 3-ounce pour and a bite-sized taste,” write event organizers. “Besides the tasting, you can vote for your favorite pairing and join in fun art-making activities along the route. Afterward, join us at Alley Bar for the official Art & Brew after-party – a special PBR edition of Straight Up featuring a DJ set and PBR specials.”

Attendees must be 21 or older by Oct. 10, 2019, to enjoy the fun. Find out more online at annarborartcenter.org.

DJ Grind, Storm Area 51 Space Circuit Party at Necto

On Friday, Sept. 20, Pride Night at Necto Nightclub welcomes DJ Grind to a space-themed circuit party, even if you don't intend on storming Area 51. Necto Pride brings gay circuit DJs from around the world each month to Ann Arbor.

“DJ Grind (Stephen Massey) is one of the most sought-after DJs and producers on the gay circuit,” write event organizers. “With a sound firmly anchored in uplifting house, DJ Grind's sets blend circuit, tech-house and tribal beats with strong melodies, progressive synths and euphoric vocals. This year, DJ Grind was the featured performer at the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras Main Party, the world's largest LGBT dance music event.”

Cover all night is $5 for those 21 and up and $10 for those 18 through 20. Find out more online at necto.com.

‘Fleabag’ at The Michigan Theater

“Fleabag,” the award-winning show called “witty, filthy and supreme” by the Guardian, is coming to the Michigan Theater on Thursday, Sept. 26, at 7:30 p.m.

“Fleabag” is the hilarious, award-winning, original one-woman play that inspired the BBC’s hit TV series, written and performed on-stage by Phoebe Waller-Bridge,” write event organizers. “In just 67-minutes, audiences can expect a rip-roaring look at some sort of woman living her sort of life.”

Lauded by many reviewers, perhaps The Atlantic summarized it best: “Never has being a modern woman seemed so painfully funny, brutal and hopeless all at once.”

Find out more about “Fleabag” online at michtheater.org. Tickets start at $18.
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An Evening with Ozone House. Cocktails
Saturday, September 14
equalitymi.org/missionequality.
Dana Nessel. Purchase tickets at www.
with keynote speaker Attorney General
Cocktail Hour 6 p.m., Plated dinner 7 p.m.
Roostertail, 100 Marquette Drive, Detroit.
Mission Equality Fall Reception. Held at
Friday, September 13

BTL  |   Sept. 12, 2019 www.PrideSource.com22
Parent Support Group information,
of Trans Individuals
Group for Trans Youth and Parents
Stand with Trans Wyandotte Support
Sunday, September 15
ozonehouse.org
Lloyd Wright Drive, Ann Arbor. Tickets at
Resource Center, Lobby F, 30 Frank
Activities. Hazel Park Community Center,
osen 45 and older. Various
discussion topics, social outings, and
2 p.m. A discussion and networking
Affirmations Senior Koffee Clatch!
Wednesday, September 18

BTL’s Ultimate Wedding & Anniversary
Sunday, October 13
BTI’s Ultimate Wedding & Anniversary
Expo 10 p.m. Between The Lines once
again presents the Ultimate Wedding &
Anniversary Expo. This year, the annual
event moves to The Henry in Dearborn.
The Henry, Fairlane Plaza, 300 Town
Center Dr., Dearborn, 313-441-2000.
donelle@pridesource.com. behenry.com.
MLGWRITEdd.com.

Stand with Trans Support Groups –
Livonia – Wayne County 7:30 p.m. Free
to all. Parent Support Group Facilitators
Karen Sessler, ksessler@yahoo.com or
734-673-3590. Emmanuel Lutheran
Church, 34567 7 Mile Road, Livonia.
standwithtrans.org.

Thursday, September 26
Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups
– Farmington Hills – Oakland County 8
p.m. All youth are welcome to attend this
FREE group. This group meets the 2nd
and 4th Thursday of the month @ Orchard
United Methodist Church.

Tuesday, October 1
Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups
– Lake Orion / Oakland County 7 p.m.
Free and open to the community. For
parents of transgender kids. St. Mary’s
In The Hills Episcopal Church, 2517
Joslyn Court, Lake Orion. 248-391-0663.
smarysinthehills.org. standwithtrans.org.

Thursday, October 3
Pride Night at Thunderbowl! 8 p.m. Meet &
Greet First Thursday of every month,
unlimited bowling, shoe rental, private
room, private bar area, drink specials,
billiard room, 250-foot video wall.
Thunderbowl Aves., 4200 Allen Road,
Allen Park. 313-928-4688. thunderbowl.
org.

Saturday, October 5
Grupo Corpo 8 p.m. The phenomenal
Brazilian dance company Grupo Corpo
makes its third UMS appearance with a
double bill of Bach and Gira, two wildly
different works that showcase the
21-member group’s extraordinary range.
One event on October 6 at 4 p.m. Power
Center, 121 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. 734-
647-3327. smtd.umich.edu.

Wednesday, September 18
Affirmations Senior Coffee Clatch!
2 p.m. A discussion and networking
group for people 45 and older. Various
discussion topics, social outings, and
potlucks are held throughout the year.
With age comes wisdom but, for LGBTQ
seniors, loneliness can often come along.
All are welcomed. Affirmations, 290 W.
Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105.
redbellysenegal90@gmail.com.

LGBT Game Night
Monday, September 16
LGBT Game Night 6 p.m. LGBT Game
Night is an opportunity for all LGBT people
and allies to come play a board game,
drink coffee, bring your own drinks and
socialize with other LGBT individuals.
All are welcome. Affirmations, 290 W.
Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105.

Monday, September 16

PATTI SMITH AT THE
ROYAL OAK MUSIC
THEATRE

On Monday, Sept. 16, and Tuesday, Sept. 17,
Patti Smith will perform at the Royal Oak Music
Theatre. The internationally known and Grammy
Award-winning artist has been inducted into the
Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and is scheduled to
tour through the end of this year around the world. Find out more about the show and
her history online at royoakmusictheatre.com.

Saturday, September 14
An Evening with Ozone House. Cocktails
6 p.m., program 7:15 p.m. Celebrate
the 18th Annual Fall fundraiser and 5oth
Anniversary. Seated family style dinner, live
and silent auction, youth speakers and
entertaining MC, at Domino’s World
Resource Center, Lobby F, 30 Frank
Lloyd Wright Drive, Ann Arbor. Tickets at oazehouse.org

Sunday, September 15
Stand with Trans Wyandotte Support
Group for Trans Youth and Parents
of Trans Individuals 5 p.m. Free. For
Parent Support Group information,
contact facilitator Kim Tooley, 734-747-
4363. St. Stephens Episcopal Church,
2803 1st St., Wyandotte. 734-747-4363.
standwithtrans.org

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
lighthearted discussions and social
activities. Hazel Park Community Center,
620 West Woodward Heights, Hazel Park.
248/632-8274. redbellysenegal90@gmail.com.

Editor’s Pick

Happenings

070 SHAKE AT EL CLUB
Danielle Balbuena is a singer and rapper who is
best-known by fans as 070 Shake. A part of
the musical collective 070, Balbuena contributed
to the mixtape “The 070 Project: Chapter 1” and has
since released her debut EP “Glitter.” She’s also
worked with artists like Kanye West, DJ Khaled
and Kid Cudi. On Friday, Oct. 4, she’ll make her way
to El Club in Detroit. Find out more about the show
online at elclubdetroit.com.

OUTINGS

Friday, September 13
Mission Equality Fall Reception. Held at
Rooftopbar, 100 Marquette Drive, Detroit.
Cocktail Hour 6 p.m., Plated dinner 7 p.m.
with keynote speaker General Dana Nessel. Purchase tickets at www.
equalitymi.org/missionequality.

Saturday, September 14
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her history online at royoakmusictheatre.com.
Monday, October 14
Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups – Macomb County 7:30 p.m. 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.
chippewavalleyschools.org

Wednesday, October 16
Isango Ensemble – The Magic Flute 7:30 p.m. Isango Ensemble is a South African theater company that draws its artists from the townships surrounding Cape Town. The company reimagines classics from the Western theater canon while finding new context for the stories within. Power Center, 121 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. 734-647-3327. smtd.umich.edu.

Friday, October 18
Isango Ensemble – A Man of Good Hope 8 p.m. Experience the riveting true story of a Somali refugee with a painful past, miraculous good luck, and a brilliant head for business, told through roof-lifting songs and dance accompanied on marimbas. Power Center, 121 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor. 734-647-3327. smtd.umich.edu.

Saturday, October 19
50 Years After Stonewall Symposium 9:30 a.m. Join AARP and SAGE Metro Detroit in celebration and reflection of the 50th anniversary of Stonewall at the 50 Years After Stonewall Symposium. For free lunch reception, registration is required. WSU Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, 259 Mack Ave., Detroit. info@sagemetrodetroit.org.
smtd.umich.edu.

MUSIC & MORE
CATS 1 p.m. CATS, the record-breaking musical spectacular by Andrew Lloyd Webber that has captivated audiences in over 30 countries and 15 languages, is now on tour across North America and is coming to Detroit! Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. 313-872-1000. broadwayindetroit.com.

Amadeus – Film with Live Orchestra 7:30 p.m. Winner of eight Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Actor, the 1984 motion picture Amadeus makes its UMS debut projected on a large screen, with Mozart’s celebrated works performed live by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. 734-764-3464. ums.org.

K. Flay September 20, 7 p.m. Singer, songwriter, rapper and musician K. Flay was nominated for two awards at the 60th annual Grammy Awards. The Crofoot. 13 Saginaw, Pontiac. 248-850-9333. thecrofoot.com http://thecrofoot.com.

All About Eve – National Theatre Live in HD September 22, 7 p.m. Gillian Anderson (K-Files) and Lily James (Mama Mia! Here We Go Again!) star in All About Eve, the story of Margot Channing. A legend and true star of the theater, the spotlight is hers and Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397. ums.org.

Come From Away October 1, 8 p.m. Broadway’s COME FROM AWAY is a Best Musical winner all across North America. Written by Tony® nominees Irene Sankoff and David Hein, and helmed by this year’s Tony-winning Best Director, Christopher Ashley. Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. 313-872-1000. broadwayindetroit.com.

Sara Bareilles October 5, 8 p.m. Sara Bareilles is a Grammy, Tony and Emmy Award-nominated singer, songwriter, actress and author. On Saturday, Oct. 5, she’ll be visiting Detroit’s Fox Theatre with Emily King. gaybe.am/ls. Fox Theatre, 764-3467. smtd.umich.edu.

Lehman Trilogy October 11, 7 p.m. Winner of eight Academy Awards, the 1984 motion picture Amadeus makes its UMS debut projected on a large screen, with Mozart’s celebrated works performed live by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. 734-764-3464. ums.org.

Dionne Warwick October 6, 7:30 p.m. On Sunday, Oct. 6, Dionne Warwick will come to the Sound Board at MotorCity Casino Hotel. Find out more online at gaybe.am/ls. Motor City Casino Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 313-309-4700. motorcitycasino.com.

Robyn October 8, 6:30 p.m. The Swedish pop singer will perform at Detroit’s Masonic Temple as part of her Honey Tour with special guests ESG. Detroit Masonic Temple, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., #100, Detroit. 800-854-2916. templodedetroit.com. ageworlwide.com.

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center October 11, 8 p.m. This concert celebrates the intrepid American spirit by featuring two pairs of composers that shaped the course of American music. Harry T. Burleigh was Dvořák’s star student at the National Conservatory in New York. A Rackham Auditorium, 915 E. Washington St., Ann Arbor. 734-764-8572. rackham.umich.edu.

Rent 20th Anniversary Tour October 11, 8 p.m. The Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning musical “Rent” will play at the Fox Theatre on Friday, Oct. 11, and Saturday, Oct. 12. Relive the 1996 classic production by Jonathan Larson. Tickets start at $35.

National Theatre Live in HD: The Lehman Trilogy October 13, 7 p.m. The Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning musical “Rent” will play at the Fox Theatre on Friday, Oct. 11, and Saturday, Oct. 12. Relive the 1996 classic production by Jonathan Larson. Tickets start at $35.

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Solution to Q Puzzle p. 25

www.PrideSource.com
Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

This is not a drill: There’s a new ‘Matrix’ movie on the way

Neo and Trinity! The red pills that those unpleasant internet dudes keep going on and on about (incorrectly)! Very cool outfits of the cyberfuture! It’s all coming back around again with a fourth “Matrix” installment, officially a go at Warner Bros. Lana Wachowski will direct and is co-writing the film alongside Aleksandar Hemon (“Sense8”) and David Mitchell (“Cloud Atlas”). Keanu Reeves and Carrie-Anne Moss are also back on board. Now, we have no idea what it will be about because the Wachowskis are legendarily quiet about content until it’s ready to be seen. And really, who needs spoilers? We’ve watched the growth and flowering of Wachowski World from the time of “Bound,” through “Speed Racer,” and up to the unfairly maligned – and also quite extravagantly weird and wild – “Jupiter Ascending” and the fact is that we are here for every new twist and turn in the spaced out journey. At the moment, Lilly Wachowski seems to have no involvement in this, but we assume she’s going to be hovering around doing… something? Cameras roll in 2020, so you’ll probably get to re-enter the Matrix sometime in 2021.

Julianne Moore is a ‘Mothertrucker’

If you saw Julianne Moore’s appearance with Billy Eichner on his show “Billy on The Street,” you’ll recall him saying, “For a dollar she’ll do something understated!” And that is how the moviegoing public generally thinks of the Academy Award-winning actress. But we also know she has range, and it’ll probably come in handy when she stars in the upcoming Jill Soloway (“Transparent”) film “Mothertrucker.” Moore will play Instagram-famous personality Joy “Mothertrucker,” America’s lone female ice road big rig trucker. Joy is also the subject of Amy Butcher’s memoir of the same name, about the relationship formed between them when Butcher went to Alaska to ride along on a dangerous drive. The book will be published by Amazon in early 2022, probably around the same time as the film’s release. Meanwhile, the role of Amy is still in the casting process, but expect one of the current crop of young A-listers to attach herself soon.

‘Euphoria’ gets a second season

Is the HBO series “Euphoria” good or bad? Is its dominant narrative revolving around a group of cisgender female and trans femme teenagers progressive? Or does it engage in exploitation when its characters suffer in grand, frightening ways? Does its harrowing depiction of drug use, sexual violence and other trauma make it honest or irresponsible? Sometimes it’s difficult to sort out. But we do know that its cast, led by the impressive Zendaya, is giving it their all, and the dreamily hazy music video qualities it possesses make it seem highly attractive even as it depicts a fairly brutal vision of adolescence. And now there’ll be a season two – thank goodness, because all its story lines ended in cliffhangers – so when we gather up our courage to dive back into the relentlessly grim teenage tragedy, it’ll probably already be waiting for us. We’ll be on board in the anticipation of a hopeful, if not necessarily happy, ending for these kids. They deserve it.

Twenty years of ‘Merrily We Roll Along’

The classic Stephen Sondheim musical “Merrily We Roll Along” is the story of friends whose show business careers span 20 years. When the action begins they are middle-aged, successful, estranged and unhappy. And then the story moves back in time, little by little, ending with a powerfully moving final act that sees them all headstrong young comrades full of hope and belief in the power of that friendship. Well, who better to film this sort of years-spanning saga than Richard Linklater, the man who shot his adolescent epic “Boyhood” over the course of 12 years with the same actors, allowing his main character to grow up before the audience’s eyes. This time, though, the shooting schedule – already in progress – will last two decades, and twentiesomething stars Ben Platt (“Dear Evan Hansen”), Beanie Feldstein (“Booksmart”) and Blake Jenner (“Glee”) will shoot the beginning of the film sometime in the late 2030s, when they’ve reached actual middle age, for a theatrical release sometime close to 2040. Now let’s hope that there are still theaters in 2040 and that climate change has been adequately addressed so that there’s still an audience. Happy waiting!

Romeo San Vicente is voting for whoever likes the Green New Deal.

Julianne Moore. Photo: Denis Makarenko
### Across
1. Embarrass with porn, perhaps
6. “Dancing Queen” band
10. WNBA star Rebecca
14. Nephew of Donald Duck
15. Jacques of song
16. Captain of song
17. Young girl of old comics
18. Cotton pod at Tara
19. And others, for Caesar
20. Village People song with the line “Everybody is a star”
23. They work under 5-Down
24. Keanu’s role in “The Matrix”
25. Went down on loudly
26. Big name in hair care
27. Elevator pioneer Elisha
28. With 46-Across, Village People song about invincible songs
31. Butter portion
32. With 46-Across, Village People song with a Horace Greely quote
34. Pockets stuffed with meat
38. Alt-rock genre
39. “The L Word,” and others
42. Rough stuff underground
43. Fliss field
46. See 32-Across
49. Bites the head off of, perhaps
53. Hit in the head
56. Places for Dr. Kerry Weaver
57. D.C. lobby group
58. Village People song about the Big Apple
63. Steamed up
65. Muscle Mary stat
66. Wet spot on a blanket of sand
67. Auction website
68. Sailing the Pacific, e.g.
69. Flaming queen’s quality
70. Ready to be eaten
72. Not as many

### Down
1. Weight loss product
2. Big asset
3. Rita Mae Brown, e.g. (abbr.)
4. Advice to a bottom who wants to be on top?
5. Dr. Kim, and others
6. Name on a column
7. Naps beat them
8. Village People song producer Henri (1936-2019)
9. Closet-emptying cry?
10. Tough cleaner
11. Really queer
12. Burn on the rear of a steer
13. Lubricates
21. Rifles
22. Plumbing problem
26. Greek consonant
27. Reproduced without sex, for short
28. Teacher in “The King and I”
29. Soon, long ago
30. Orton’s bathroom
33. Butter portion
35. Love yourself, with “off”
36. “Ada” solo
37. Religious splinter group
40. Acidity nos.
41. Lora’s say
44. Tin roof animal of Tennessee?
45. Ghostbusters role
47. Set boundaries
48. Like some pricey items at Barneys
50. Britten’s “Billy Budd” and more
51. Village People song with a Horace Greely quote
53. “Queen Christina” star
54. Rehoboth Beach setting
55. Aggressive sort
56. Like a Piper in a fairy tale
59. Anthem starter
60. Voyeur’s confession
61. Kind of jack
62. North Sea feeder
64. Head job

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**Remembering Henri**

QPuzzle

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www.PrideSource.com
A mix of denim, leather goods, swimwear and boldly printed tops, Untied on Woodward is a menswear boutique that encourages shoppers to ditch the formalities and embrace a sleeker take on the laid-back look. It’s even in the name.

“It’s called Untied because you’re taking your tie off to wear casual clothing. I used to work at a lot of department stores where we were forced to wear suits and ties, and I hated all that,” said owner Erik Miller. But being easygoing certainly doesn’t mean sloppy; Miller is adamant that “dressing nice” doesn’t mean forsaking stylish options. In keeping with that theme, shoppers looking to attend a business casual work meeting could comfortably choose from Untied’s array of clothing alongside someone going to a concert. Having opened its doors barely a year ago, Miller said he got the idea for the shop while at work at one of his former retail jobs several years ago.

“I’ve always worked in retail and the department store I worked at went out of business and filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy, and they shut down all of their stores nationwide,” he said. “... I worked in the Ralph Lauren department, and the people from Ralph Lauren were literally coming in and pulling merchandise off of the shelves because they hadn’t been paid in months. I thought, ‘If they’re not getting paid, then I’m not going to get paid. I should just open up my own store.’”

Thus Untied was born. Asked about any changes coming up with the store’s impending anniversary, Miller said he’s looking to expand the style options available, and he’s starting with sizing.

“When I first opened, I didn’t have as much of a size range and I’ve gotten a lot of requests for bigger sizes, because people want to look fashionable even though they have to wear say like an extra, extra, large or something,” Miller said. “So, in fall, we have all bigger sizes coming in a lot of these brands. So, it’s styles and fits for everybody to make everybody feel beautiful and comfortable.”

Being an openly gay business owner himself, Miller pointed to the fact that inclusivity of all kinds is important to him. He said that at first he was nervous about being open about his sexuality, but was able to find a comfortable niche in the Birmingham market. Miller said that his draw to clothing has in part always been about self-presentation.

“I do find it empowering,” he said. “I feel like people can have their own expression with clothing.”

Beyond shifting to provide more accessible sizing, an expansion into womenswear is potentially on Miller’s radar, too. However, he said that he already has many female customers coming in to shop, too.

“I get a lot of different people shopping in here, too, like women come in here to buy shirts and stuff. Everybody wears it. I’d love to get women [coming in more], it’s just a really tight market in Birmingham here; everywhere you look there’s a women’s store, and there’s not too many men’s stores. So, I don’t want to step on anybody’s toes,” Miller said.

But Miller is certain he wants to expand his reach to locally made fashion. He said he especially prides himself on carrying bolder patterns than one would find in traditional department stores and he makes sure to carry local brands that create unique styles.

“There’s this really cool local Detroit brand I just got in touch with. They’re called First Class Committee and everything’s handmade here in Detroit, and they have factories where they make all the shirts and they have these really cool flannels that are dyed. I’d love to work with more Detroit-based companies. I sell Detroit Grooming Co., which is made in Ferndale, and all the Detroit T-shirts I sell here are made locally, and I’m all about supporting the local community,” Miller said.

 Asked why local is his focus and Miller’s answer was simple: “Just to help with the local economy, keep everything local and especially, I try to work with gay-owned businesses as well, which is very important. I’m always looking to change things up, mix it up and keep it interesting. ”

To learn more about Untied on Woodward visit Untied-on-woodward.shoplightspeed.com.
Find over 300 Non-Profit Listings Serving Michigan’s LGBTQ Online @ pridesource.com

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

Metro Care Coordination Network
Free, comprehensive services for those living with HIV/AIDS.
877-931-3248
248-266-5545
Metrocarenetwork.org

UNIFIED - HIV Health & Beyond
9368 Mt. Elliott St.
Detroit MI 48207-1841
313-446-9800
www.miunified.org
Michigan HIV/STED Hotline
800-872-2437

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

Macomb County STD Clinic
27690 Van Dyke
Warren MI 48093
586-465-8440

Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency (OLSHA)
196 Cesar E. Chavez Ave.
Pontiac, MI 48343
313-252-1950
www.olhsa.org

Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Service (ACCESS)
Sterling Heights Center
4301 East 14 Mile Rd.
Sterling Hts., MI 48310
586-722-6036
www.accesscommunity.org

Advocacy
Equality Michigan
19641 W. 7 Mile, Detroit, MI
313-537-7000
equalitymi.org
Facebook.com/equalitymichigan

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

U-M Ann Arbor
Spectrum Center
Spectrumcenter@umich.edu
http://spectrumcenter.umich.edu
734-763-4186

Oakland University Gender & Sexuality Center
gsc@oakland.edu
www.oakland.edu/gsc
248-370-4336

Eastern Michigan University
LGBT Resource Center
emich.edu/lgbtc
734-487-4149

The Lawrence Tech LGBT Resource Center
ltu.edu/student_affairs/lgbt.asp

Wayne State JIGSAW
Facebook.com/groups/WayneStateJIGSAW
wsujigsaw@gmail.com

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

Jim Toy Community Center
Ann Arbor
www.jimtoycenter.org
www.facebook.com/jimtoycenter or follow them on Twitter @ JimToyCenter.
319 Braun Court
Ann Arbor, MI
734-995-9867

LGBT Detroit
Detroit
www.lgbtdetroit.org
www.facebook.com/lgbtdetroit @LGBTDetroit.
2025 Greenfield Road
Detroit, MI
Phone: 313-397-2127

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

Legal
American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan
Jay Kaplan, Staff Attorney, LGBT Project
2966 Woodward Ave., Detroit, MI
www.aclumich.org
313-578-6800

Fair Michigan
PO Box 6126
Plymouth, MI 48170
877-432-4764, 313-556-2300
fairmichigan.org
Facebook.com/fairmichigan2016

Know Your Rights Project
Outlaws U-M student group
outlawslegal@gmail.com
734-995-9867

Older Adults
SAGE Metro Detroit
290 W. Nine Mile Rd. Ferndale, MI
313-578-6812
sagemetrodetroit.org

Political
The LGBT and Allies Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party
Facebook.com/TheLGBTCAucusOfTheMDP
Stonewall for Revolution
www.facebook.com/stonewall4revolution

Professional Groups
Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 32446
Detroit, MI 48232
248-739-9254

Ties Like Me
Professional networking events third Weds. 5:30 - 8 p.m.
TiesLikeMe.org
Suits And The City
1-800-DET-LGBT

Get Listed, Promote Your Events
You can add or update any listing by going to www.PrideSource.com and clicking on Yellow Pages. Once you submit your listing, our staff will contact you to confirm your information.
You can add your event to the Pride Source Calendar online and in print by going to www.PrideSource.com and clicking on Calendar, then “Add Event.” Send any press releases and announcements to editor@pridesource.com

Transgender
FtM A2 Ypsi
ftmnarrboroypsilanti@gmail.com
https://www.facebook.com/ftma2ypsi/

Transgender Michigan
23211 Woodward Ave.
Ferndale, MI
info@transgendermichigan.org
www.transgendermichigan.org
800-842-2954

Trans Sistas of Color Project
19641 W. 7 Mile Rd. in Detroit
313-537-7000 Ext 107
info@tscopdetroit.org
www.facebook.com/TSCOPD/

Youth
Ruth Ellis Center
77 Victor Street, Highland Park, MI
48203
info@ruthelliscenter.org
Facebook: Ruth Ellis Center
313-252-1950

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

Stand With Trans
Farmington, MI
www.standwithtrans.org
248-739-9254

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

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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.


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with an ongoing relationship to refer as necessary.

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:

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Mark Rosen, PA-C
Leon Bullough, NP-F
Keyuna Nance, MSW