Pride & Prejudice

‘Sherlock’ Star Andrew Scott Talks Inspiring New Film
Who Will Fight To Legalize Our Marriage?

LGBT

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If you talk to a disabled person ... they'll say people pre-judge us. ... I have found that to be the case with nearly everything I have done. And I am willing to bet that (the LGBT community) goes through the same thing.

– Richard Bernstein, pg. 4

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– Richard Bernstein, pg. 4
ELECTION 2014: Bernstein: The Face Of Blind Justice

BY AJ TRAGER

Candidate for the open seat on the Michigan Supreme Court, Richard Bernstein, recently sat down with BTL. The pro bono lawyer is known for his work with disability cases. He set up the Public Service Division of his family’s law firm and handles cases that “no one else will take.”

Bernstein runs long marathons and after living in New York for a time, fell in Central Park as a result of a collision involving a cyclist. He has since sued the city of New York, seeking to make Central Park more accessible and safer for the disabled community. Two years later, he is running marathons again, but the effect the hospitalization and trauma has had on his body is still a constant ache.

“It’s best to keep pushing the body forward and not to give in to the pain. The body will freeze up and make it difficult to do other things. It’s a lot of sheer determination. You just have to want it, and you have to find the strength to just push past it. Because otherwise, what is your choice?” Bernstein asked.

He carries a positive attitude and promotes the philosophy of adapting to one’s surroundings.

“I’ve been blind my whole life, never really had usable vision. And this is how I approach life and work through things. When you are born without usable vision, you have a different framework and a different perspective of the world that comes with it,” Bernstein said.

His favorite case involves the University of Michigan, where he represented the Paralyzed Veterans of America in an inclusion case. The fundamentally important part of the case for Bernstein was the isolation of the disabled community in able-bodied spaces.

“Under federal law, if you have any kind of facility that houses dolphins, it is against code to allow for a dolphin to exist by itself. They are social creatures, like humans, and to leave it by itself is seen as a very cruel thing for the animal. And then you look at what we do to people. And I think the worst thing that you can ever do to anybody is say to them, ‘You aren’t welcome and you aren’t going to be included in any event or any activity, because of who you are.’ And candidly, that is what U of M was doing. That is why it was a really hurtful case,” Bernstein said. “Anytime that you exclude people for nothing that they did, but on the basis of exclusion, I think that is the most hurtful thing you can do to people.”

Bernstein has yet to argue for an LGBT rights case; not because he has no interest, but because he has not been approached. Were an inclusion case for LGBT rights to come his way, Bernstein said he would “definitely take the case.”

As an ally, Bernstein sees issues for the blind and LGBT issues as analogous and asks a fundamental question about integrity and acceptance of all walks of life.

“At the end of the day, what is it that people really want? They want independence, they want to be included, they want to live their lives the way they want to live their lives and they don’t want to be judged. At a certain point, we all run into the same kinds of things,” Bernstein said.

“There are self-appointed experts who tend to think that they know what is best for everybody. We all have our own stories, and we all have our own experiences, and it really is what makes us who we are. If you talk to a disabled person, or anyone in the circumstances that our communities are in, they’ll say people pre-judge us. We have to work harder to basically do basic things. I have found that to be the case with nearly everything I have done. And I am willing to bet that your constituency goes through the same thing.”

Blind justice is the process of being blind towards special interests, political ideologies and partisan politics, and Bernstein incorporates that into fighting for issues close to home. Social change does not come easy. Bernstein sees that process as a slow pendulum that eventually starts to swing, and when it gains momentum, remarkable things start to happen.

So why is his position as a candidate for the Michigan Supreme Court so important? Because in a room of only seven people that determine the highest cases in the state, it is critical to have people who do not think the same and have different life experiences.

“In the last 15 years I have seen first hand how the law has tremendous power to enhance and change people’s lives for the better,” Bernstein said. “There are a lot of folks out there that, when they go into the courts, they feel that their case has been pre-determined. People want to know that the judges they elect are fair and do have life experiences.”

Learn more about the campaign at http://www.bernsteinforjustice.com.

Launch Of The 2014 BTL Michigan Voter Guide


BY AJ TRAGER

Between The Lines has created a Voter Guide available both in print and online (you will find one inserted in this edition of BTL) filled with detailed spreadsheets that will show Michigan voters which major endorsements each candidate has received up and down the ticket.

Voters will get a more complete picture of which candidates stand for fairness and equality as well as be able to follow the Michigan NOW and Planned Parenthood endorsements to see which candidates support a woman’s right to choose.

Other endorsement categories include the Michigan Sierra Club and the Michigan League of Conservation Voters, offering a look at candidates’ stances on natural resources. The Michigan UAW’s endorsements gauge candidates’ engagement in supporting the labor movement.

“LGBT voters and their allies need to know which candidates stand for fairness and equality,” Jan Stevenson, BTL’s co-publisher, said. “We evaluated candidates on the basis of their answers to our questionnaires, their voting records and their public statements regarding the rights of LGBT Michiganders. We then endorsed candidates who are committed to full equal rights for LGBT people, including equality in marriage, employment, housing and public accommodations.”

The Voter Guide will include a list of endorsements from two of Michigan’s right-wing groups so voters can see which candidates will be active in fighting against equality and fairness, if elected. Those endorsements are listed from the Michigan Right to Life and the Citizens for Traditional Values.

For two weeks prior to the election, the Voter Guide will be inserted into the paper. It is also available online at www.mivoterguide.com. By typing in their zip code, voters have access to a digital copy of the guide that they may share with friends to spread the word on which candidates stand for equality.

Around 35 percent of U.S. voters who voted in the 2012 presidential election did not vote in the 2010 off-year election. Michigan is less than two weeks away from deciding who will be the next governor and elected officials for the state. Share the Voter Guide and “Get Out The Vote” to change Michigan history.
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Leelanau Sands Casino & Lodge rests on the picturesque M-22 loop in Leelanau County, just miles away from the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. There’s always something to look forward to with over 440 slot machines, all your favorite table games, 88-seat Bingo hall, and hot entertainment in the Sands Showroom. Relax and rewind in our newly renovated 50+ room Lodge, with unforgettable views of West Grand Traverse Bay.

Get in on the action all year long!
ELECTION 2014: Ally vs. Extremist: McKenzie Seeks 11th District Win

BY JAN STEVENSON AND AJ TRAGER

Bobby McKenzie, 39, a new face on Michigan’s political stage, would be the first Democrat in 40 years to represent the 11th Congressional District if he can prevail over Republican David Trott, a conservative attorney best known as the principle in a law firm responsible for the vast majority of home foreclosures in Michigan. Some polls show the two almost tied in the race to replace U.S. Rep. Kerry Bentivolio, the Tea Party reindeer farmer who lost to Trott in the August primary.

McKenzie grew up in Dearborn, graduating from Crestwood High School before earning his bachelor’s degree in economics from Michigan State University. He went on to earn a master’s degree from Georgetown University and has served as a visiting scholar at the University of Oxford. He worked on African refugee issues and taught courses at Wayne State University as an adjunct professor.

McKenzie sat down with BTL’s publisher Jan Stevenson and writer AJ Trager Oct. 3 to discuss his campaign, his views on LGBT rights and why he wants to have a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

BTL: Both you and your opponent are first-time candidates running in a district that has voted for Republicans in recent elections. How is the campaign going, and what are your strengths?

McKenzie: There is a real sense of optimism. Our polls show tremendous results and that we’re within the margin of error. Things are trending our way this year. We just need to get out the vote. This district may lean Republican, but it is not a socially conservative place.

BTL: If elected, would you become a member of the Congressional LGBT Caucus?

McKenzie: Why wouldn’t I? The way I see it, the “gay agenda” doesn’t seem radical. I mean, people want better roads. They want to make sure that seniors’ pensions aren’t getting taxed. They want to make sure that there are good jobs here in the district; they want to make sure that they have the same sort of equal rights that I have. I have not met a single person in the district that’s not pushing hard on these elements. And we have David Trott, taking away people’s homes for the past 25 years, with views so extreme on choice that even folks who are pro-life Republicans do not hold his views. (Trott opposes a woman’s right to choose in all circumstances, even with grave immediate danger to the mother’s life.) I mean, this is medieval. Department of Education – he wants to shut it down. This is one of his top priorities. Environment – Michigan’s largest oil spill in Kalamazoo was one of his companies, Enbridge. (Trott is a former partner at Enbridge Energy Partners. Enbridge is responsible for the July 2010 tar sands oil spill that dumped a million gallons of oil along 35 miles of the Kalamazoo River and its tributaries, the largest inland oil spill in American history.) So you’re talking about every single issue. We deserve better; we have a great opportunity here, but we have to get out the vote from everybody.

And I just hope that the wider community recognizes that not only do they have a friend and advocate, but they also have a friend and advocate who can win.

BTL: Were your travels on behalf of the U.S. government or private sector work?

McKenzie: Both in the government and non-government. I did quite a bit of humanitarian work helping refugees. And having lived and worked in Cairo – where you have refugees living in grinding, physical poverty with no access to food rationing, no access to health care, no access to education, no access to human rights – you think about what we have here. We should be celebrating this.

BTL: Can you contrast and compare your positions on LGBT issues with your opponent and explain why LGBT people should get excited about your candidacy?

McKenzie: Sure. I mean, he has been careful not to talk about too much, but I suspect that if you were to ask him, presumably if he were to answer, you would get extreme views. My guess is: if he were to weigh on LGBT issues, I think you’re going to get all extreme views. But maybe you should reach out to him.

BTL: Well, we have. He doesn’t answer our calls - can you imagine?

McKenzie: This is what I’m saying. You know, I want to give everybody the benefit of the doubt, but he is probably not going to answer your calls.

BTL: What made you want to run for Congress? This is the first public office you’ve run for, correct?

McKenzie: That’s right. But I’ve worked on really complex problems at a very high level. And I also think that if you can, you should. And in my view, I’m trying to fight for everybody’s rights here. But on a fundamental level, I want to help people like my younger brother who got his undergraduate degree here, master’s degree here and couldn’t find work. (For) six to eight months. A kid with a lot of ambition, great work ethic, moves to Chicago and finds work there in a week. He spends a couple years in Chicago and then moves on to New York and then to Washington, D.C.

This is an issue that affects everybody regardless of one’s race, religion, sexual orientation, gender. I spoke to nearly 50 people at the Kiwanis Club meeting in Plymouth. I asked people, “With a show of hands, how many self identify as Republicans?” Maybe 47 hands went up. And then I told the story of my brother. And then I asked for a show of hands of people who know of a similar story and can relate to that. Every single hand went up. After my speech, I had two gentlemen come up to me and say, “I’m pro-life, I’ve always voted Republican, but I may be voting differently this year.”

BTL: We need people who not only support us, but who will also be strong advocates and fight for us. Is that something that you see in your future?

McKenzie: Without question.
Political Hors d’oeuvres

BY TODD HEYWOOD

David Trott Faces Election ‘Foreclosure’

One time king of foreclosures in Michigan, David Trott, may be headed to defeat in Michigan’s 11th Congressional district. Trott is vying to replace Rep. Kerry Bentivolio against Bentivolio, Democrat Bobby McKenzie and Libertarian John Tatar.

Bentivolio lost the Republican nomination to Trott in August, but has decided to run as a write-in candidate.

Trott has dumped another $1 million of his own fortune into the campaign, bringing his total self funding to $3.4 million, our friends at Electablog report. And how did Trott gain all that cash? Well, while the state and the country was being crushed by the 2008 economic crisis, Trott – with his foreclosure empire headed by Trott & Trott – was busy foreclosing on homes all over the state. Not content to make a fortune just booting people out of their homes, Trott bought up businesses that are also necessary for the foreclosure process – from a title agency to a newspaper to advertise foreclosure actions as required by law. Trott turned his agency into a one stop shop for quick foreclosure.

Ingham County Register of Deeds Curtis Hertel Jr. has a different label for it. He called the Trott empire a machine “meant to feed off of human misery,” and Hertel would know. Since taking the reigns in Ingham, he has been a national leader in the fight against foreclosure fraud and foreclosures.

Despite being booted to the curb by Republican voters in August, Bentivolio, the “accidental” congressman from Michigan, has decided to mount a write in campaign against Trott. While that might be a quixotic mission, it certainly fits in Bentivolio’s beyond eccentric personality. He is, afterall, a reindeer farmer who once testified in a deposition that he sometimes is unsure if he really is Santa Claus or not.

But that write-in campaign could upset Trott’s plans to take what should be a comfortable Republican seat. Fox News is reporting Trott could lose the election to McKenzie.

Republican House Candidate Encourages ‘Christians’ To Flee Michigan If Gays Get Civil Rights

Jordan Haskins wants to be the Republican house member representing Michigan’s 95th House District. And he wants everyone to know he is a staunch, Bible believing Christian who has “fought” the homosexual agenda in Saginaw.

In the event, however, the state legislature votes to approve a measure to amend the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act to include sexual orientation and gender identity, Haskins has an answer.

“If the state wants to trample religious freedom, we go somewhere else where our values are welcome,” the candidate wrote on his Facebook page Oct. 8. “Michigan loses tax money, economic performance, jobs, etc. if they choose to be entrenched with the homosexual agenda, it’s time for conservative christians (sic) to vote with their feet and their dollars.”

Haskins has his own issues with sexuality. The 24-year-old has served time in the prison system in two states already for trespassing in order to fulfill his sexual fetish, which he calls “cranking.” What is cranking, you might ask? Well here’s what MLive had to report about Haskins crimes:

Haskins admitted to police that, on both occasions, he broke into the yard where vehicles were parked, incident reports from the Saginaw
Creep of the Week

Gina Loudon

Have you ever read something so stupid that you could feel your brain cells committing suicide as you read it? That’s how I feel after reading Gina Loudon’s Oct. 19 World Net Daily piece titled “8 Reasons Why Democrats Hate Traditional Marriage.” Loudon, who has a PhD in right-wing idiocy, made an appearance last year on “The Daily Show” with Jon Stewart during which correspondent Jason Jones interviewed her about Obamacare, a topic about which she was completely ignorant. “More like Obama Doesn’t Care,” she said. Interestingly, she lists that appearance in her WND bio, demonstrating an astounding lack of self-awareness.

You also might remember her from a short stint last year on the show “Wife Swap” where she went to live with a polyamorous family. Half way through the taping she declared the situation too weird and quit. That one isn’t in her bio. And according to Loudon, Democrats hate marriage because they want people to be sick poorz sucking on the teats of “Big Daddy Government.”

Loudon claims that “traditional” marriage is the cure-all for illness in the body and mind, poverty and “bad decision making,” things Democrats apparently love. Thus they hate marriage and they express that hatred by wanting to give marriage to homos.

Democrats want people to be ill, you see, because “When people are healthy, they don’t need help from the government,” she writes in her infinite wisdom.

And Democrats want people to be mentally ill because, “All it takes is one mentally deranged person to act out violently for Democrats to rush to a TV camera to call for more gun control and government surveillance.”

Yes, Loudon really is arguing that the Democratic Party’s support of marriage equality is all part of a big conspiracy to make people go on shooting sprees so that they can take everybody’s guns.

Loudon really is arguing that the Democratic Party’s support of marriage equality is all part of a big conspiracy to make people go on shooting sprees so that they can take everybody’s guns.

MSHDA Under Investigation, Snyder Fundraiser Raises Questions

You thought YOU had a bad Monday. Republican Gov. Rick Snyder’s day started with revelations that the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) is under federal investigation.

Then the Michigan Democratic Party released documents showing a company that hosted a lavish fundraiser for Snyder received a massive boost in the state contract the next day. Their no-bid state contract, incidentally.

MSHDA Investigation

Back in early August, MSHDA Executive Director Scott Woolsey abruptly quit his position when it was revealed he had racked up over $100,000 in questionable travel expenses — like limo rides and first class travel to Beijing and the Middle East.

But what really triggered the investigation by the Housing and Urban Development Department’s Office of Inspector General was Woolsey’s continued relationship with Troy based Labor-Management Fund Advisors, despite taking home $135,000 from his state post. While Woolsey denied his firm was involved with state business, The Detroit News reported that it had received $15,519 for a $1 million redevelopment project. That award was given five months after Woolsey started at MSHDA.

The governor’s office says there was a firewall to the governor’s fundraising – where J&B Medical Supply owners and employees have donated over $65,000 to Snyder’s candidacy since 2010. Also raising the eyebrows of Democrats is the fact that the day before Snyder and his administration approved the new no-bid contract, J&B Medical Supply owners and employees threw a lavish fundraising party for Snyder.

Why did the Snyder administration increase the J&B contract by over $390,000 one day after the company’s executives hosted a lavish fundraiser for Snyder’s re-election campaign?

Mark Schauer, Snyder’s Democratic opponent in the Nov. election, issued the following statement on the situation:

“These new documents raise very serious questions about who Rick Snyder’s administration is really working for. Why has a contract that was competitively bid in 2008 balloonied by more than $26 million without subsequent competitive bids on Snyder’s watch? And more specifically, why did the Snyder administration increase the J&B contract by over $390,000 one day after the company’s executives hosted a lavish fundraiser for Snyder’s re-election campaign?

“Michigan deserves a governor who is committed to providing honest and open government to taxpayers. Instead, Snyder has repeatedly demonstrated that he puts his family and friends first. Whether he was giving 80 and 90 percent raises to his top administration officials, or doubling his cousin’s furniture contract to $41 million, it’s clear Rick Snyder’s policies work for the wealthy and big corporations, but not the rest of Michigan.”

To see the promo video of the fundraising event, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zjreCT8fZI.

Political Hors d’oeuvres

Continued from p. 7

County Sheriff’s Department show. He said he pulled spark plug wires on sheriff, mosquito control and other vehicles parked there.

“Jordan would remove the spark plug wires and sit in the car and masturbate while the motor was sparking and making noises,” the police report states.

Haskins was charged with additional misdemeanor offenses related to a third incident at the mosquito control property in October 2010.

Family values, am I right, or am I right? I mean come on, everyone has had that desire to break into a lot, remove the spark plugs from public vehicles and masturbate while attempting to start them. Right?
Marriage Equality: ‘It’s Coming’ According To Michigan LGBT Advocates

BY TODD HEYWOOD

EAST LANSING – As Michigan residents continue to wait for the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals to issue its ruling in the appeal of DeBoer v Snyder – Michigan’s same-sex marriage case – LGBT advocates had a message: it’s coming.

When, however, is unclear. Jay Kaplan, who heads the LGBT Project for ACLU of Michigan, told attendees at an East Lansing forum on Oct. 14 that the decision could be issued any day, but he expects it might not be until November. The reason? A former clerk from the 6th Circuit tells ACLU officials it usually takes the judges three months after hearing a case to issue a formal opinion.

The event took place a week after the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear seven marriage case appeals, bringing marriage equality to ten more states. That decision, Kaplan said, sent a message.

“I think the court is also sending a message to the other federal district courts and the other circuit court of appeals that, ‘We feel comfortable,’” Kaplan said. “We feel comfortable with the fact that same-sex couples are getting married, are being allowed to marry, through these lower court decisions. And now is not the time we feel we need to weigh in on the issue.”

Kaplan warned that the 6th Circuit could still buck the legal trend of upholding marriage equality. That would likely result in an appeal by the plaintiffs to the U.S. Supreme Court. The court would likely take up that case.

“If they do take it up, it’s very unlikely they will say, ‘You know what? There’s something wrong here,’ and rule to eliminate marriage equality,” Kaplan said. “That train has left the station.”

If the court upholds the lower court decision, upholding marriage equality in Michigan, Kaplan says he doesn’t see the high court agreeing to hear an appeal from the state.

“I think the message is that we are going to have marriage equality,” Kaplan said.

Emily Dievendorf, executive director of Equality Michigan, said that despite the ongoing litigation, the state movement is ready to move ahead with a ballot measure to repeal Michigan’s marriage ban.

“If the courts take too long, let’s take this to the ballot,” Dievendorf said. Such a move could place the repeal on the 2015 ballot.

Meanwhile, Michigan for Marriage – a project involving Equality Michigan and the ACLU – is collecting stories of people impacted by the marriage equality debate. She noted that telling “our” stories helps inform the elected leadership about how the marriage ban is hurting Michigan and Michigan families.

Dievendorf reminded the audience that polling is often rocky, and despite a recent “bad” poll, the majority of Michigan voters and Michigan residents support marriage equality. She noted that part of the problem is that Michigan is not voting.

“We have been paying the price,” she said. “That is why we are where we are. Why our leaders don’t represent us. Don’t represent our values. We are all ready to see these changes.”

TAKE ACTION

Day of Decision
At 5:30 p.m. on the day the 8th Circuit hands its decision down, find a city near you to celebrate or demonstrate.

>> http://action.mariagemi.org/page/s/join-us-on-decision-day-in-a-city-near-you-
For over 50 years, Life magazine informed Americans about what was happening here and abroad. Photos and content were dramatic. Mostly conservative. Occasionally controversial. Once in awhile downright shocking.

Life folded in 1973; circulation 13 million. Readership, ten times that amount. Its sister publication, Time, continues to this day.

Five years before the Stonewall Riots of 1969, Life tackled a scary taboo: “Homosexualities in America.” An expose focusing on the gay underworld of New York, Chicago and San Francisco. America’s collective Sodom and Gomorras. Middle Americans woke up to the realization that homosexuals were growing in number. Becoming alarmingly visible. A social threat to be somehow remedied.

In 1964, San Francisco was not the dynamic gay center of Castro/Market Street, clone-look militancy. It hadn’t the high-density population complex of the 1970s and pre-AIDS 1980s; but Life’s wide-audience article – unintentionally, to be sure – served as a catalyst for early gay migration there.

Life opened its expose head on: “Homosexuality shears across the spectrum of American life: the professional, the arts, business and labor. It always has. But today, especially in big cities, homosexuals are discarding their furtive ways and openly admitting, even flaunting, their deviation.

“But today, especially in big cities, homosexuals are discarding their furtive ways and openly admitting, even flaunting, their deviation.”

“Homosexuals have their own drinking places, their special assignation streets, even their own organizations. And for every obvious homosexual, there are probably nine nearly impossible to detect. This social disorder, which society tries to suppress, has forced itself into the public eye because it does present a problem – and parents especially are concerned.

“The myth and misconception with which homosexuality has so long been clothed must be cleared away, not to condone it but to cope with it.”

Accompanying the 14-page belly shock are a dozen photos. Nameless gay men clustered in dark bars or milling about on dimly lighted streets. “These brawny young men in their leather caps, shirts, jackets and pants are practicing homosexuals, men who turn to other men for affection and sexual satisfaction.

“They are part of what they call the ‘gay world,’ which is actually a sad and often sordid world.”

Gay bars are exposed: “As each new customer walks into the dimly lit room, he will lock eyes with a half dozen young men before reaching his place at the bar. Throughout the evening there is a constant turnover of customers as contacts are made and two men slip out together, or individuals move on to other bars in search of better luck.

“As closing time – 2 a.m. – approaches, the atmosphere grows perceptibly more tense. It is the ‘frantic hour,’ the now-or-never

DON’T FORGET TO VOTE THE WHOLE BALLOT

OPINION BY JENNIFER LATOSCH

Very doorstep, mailbox and email account across Michigan has undoubtedly been inundated these past few weeks with political fliers and requests for campaign contributions. Hopefully by now everyone acknowledges the importance of exercising their right to vote this upcoming Nov. 4 and will make their way to the ballot boxes. While there, don’t forget the names at the bottom of the ballot. While at your local polling location, do vote for the top spots of Governor, Attorney General, U.S. Senate, Michigan Supreme Court… and then vote the ENTIRE ballot, all the way down to your local school board candidates.

Local school board elections are often overlooked by voters – especially voters without school-aged children; yet they are critically important to creating and maintaining the growing, dynamic communities that we lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people want to live in. No matter how thriving a city, it will never rise to its fullest potential if its local public schools don’t likewise thrive.

I live in Ferndale, Michigan. It’s arguably one of the most vibrant and “hip” towns in the state. Economically, Ferndale is also on the rise; it was just recognized as having the most real estate growth in all of Oakland County since the recession. Unfortunately, the growth and cultural climate of our schools has not matched our city’s vibrancy. There was a time when I did not realize how much impact a local school district could have on the viability of a town, but now I know differently.

When my (now) wife and I bought our first home in Ferndale in 1995, we wanted to live in a community that was open and diverse. When we started our family, we were also determined to live in a community where our kids would be proud to say, “I have two moms.” Ferndale is all we could ever want on these two fronts. At the same time, it was just as important to us for our kids to have access to the best education. Unfortunately, when our kids were infants, we saw families either move out of the Ferndale Public School district or send their kids to out-of-district or private schools. They were leaving because they weren’t satisfied with the public schools – and neither were we. We
Local school board elections are often overlooked by voters - especially voters without school-aged children; yet they are critically important to creating and maintaining the growing, dynamic communities that we lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people want to live in. No matter how thriving a city, it will never rise to its fullest potential if its local public schools don’t likewise thrive.

**Whole Ballot**

Continued from p. 10

had a decision to make: either we could leave Ferndale, or we could stay and do our part to make the schools better. We decided to stay.

Beginning with the 2012 school board election, other voters like us were energized to make a change in the Ferndale school district, and we made our voices heard at the polls. That year, four new board members were voted into office. With only a total of seven serving at any given time, it was an impactful election. Holding true to their platforms, the new board began to make significant changes and to strategically plan for the future of our schools. Holding true to my own promise of involvement, I made a commitment to our schools and applied for an open appointee position on the board of education. I can honestly say that when I came out in my early 20s, I never in a million years thought I’d one day be appointed to the school board. Yet if there was ever the right school district to have an out school board member, it would be Ferndale.

I am now running to retain my school board seat on a ticket with my fellow incumbents, Nan Kerr-Mueller and Karen Twomey. We, along with the four board members who were elected in 2012, are working hard to make sure our schools are dynamic, vibrant and successful—like our town. We are working on issues like raising student achievement across all lines, ensuring that children with special education needs have the resources they need to be successful and providing students with a safe, supportive and encouraging learning environment where they can thrive.

Further, we know that our diversity and our difference are our strengths. Supporting and strengthening that diversity to ensure all students can be successful is key. I am proud to say that we are already making visible change to our schools and our school culture.

There are several wonderful, vibrant towns all across Michigan. Support your local public school system to ensure that your town becomes or maintains its status as a vibrant community. Good schools foster strong communities and developing caring and educated world citizens. If you don’t know who to vote for in your community, ask a neighbor, read the flier on your doorstep, talk to those you respect in your community and find out how your vote for the local school board can change your town.

Laura LaTosch serves on the Board of Education for Ferndale Public Schools and is a family law attorney with Miller Canfield. BTL has strongly endorsed Laura LaTosch in the upcoming election.

**Parting Glances**

Continued from p. 10

I didn’t throw them out, we’d be condoning homosexuality. The services’ position has to be that homosexual practices prejudice morale and discipline.”

Life warns, “For the first time the Supreme Court has agreed to hear the homosexual case, but no legal procedures are likely to change society’s basic repugnace to homosexuality as an immortal and disruptive force that should somehow be removed.” After thoughts, anyone? Please share on Grindr.

Charles@pridesource.com

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YouthAIDS as part of their “Precious Lives, Precious Metals” awarding $300,000 to AIDS organizations in the Midwest, expressed support for the LGBT community. This includes each of its three metro-area locations in Novi, Troy and West Rony Tennenbaum’s Jewelry collection to its bridal cases in and equality. Tapper’s has just announced the addition of engagement jewelry collection created to celebrate marriage btlweddingexpo.com), is expanding its demographic reach a long-standing sponsor of BTL’s Wedding Expo (http:// and Fine Jewelry in honor of its 37th Anniversary. Rony Tennenbaum, is being featured by Tapper’s Diamonds and social worker, will join the team that has been assembled by Affirmations. The training offers twelve continuing education credits and covers topics such as: sexual identity and social development, coming out, legal issues, clinical, professional and ethical considerations.

“Sexual health is an important aspect of mental and physical wellness. People increasingly expect the professionals they consult to be comfortable with this topic,” Lewis-Grinwis explained. “Providing education and asking if and how treatment is impacting a person’s sexuality improves client care and decreases caseload attrition. When working with LGBT community members, there are additional treatment considerations of which to be mindful.”

Educators for the training include ACLU Attorney, Jay Kaplan; therapist and author Joe Kort, PhD, LMSW; psychologist Judith Kovach, PhD, LP; psychologist Amorie Robinson (Kofi Adoma), PhD, LP; psychiatrist Don Spivak, MD; social worker Maxine Thome, PhD, LMSW, AMSW, MPH; and psychotherapist and sex therapist Natasha Lewis-Grinwis, LMSW, CST.

Local and statewide social workers, licensed counselors, school counselors, physicians and psychologists are encouraged to attend.

The November training marks the organization’s third year since embarking on this initiative, which offers the only trainings of this kind in Michigan. In March of 2015, Affirmations is planning its third two-day intensive training on gender identity. That same year Affirmations will also offer trainings to physical health providers, especially nurses and other front-line staff.

For more information, contact Lydia Ahlum Hanson at LHanson@GoAffirmations.org or call 248-677-7223.

LGBT Wedding Jewelry Collection Comes To Tapper’s campaign.

“We live by the Golden Rule,” says Steven Tapper, the firm’s vice president. “Treat others the way you want to be treated. It’s real family values – caring for other people.”

Tennenbaum’s ongoing contribution to the LGBT community (of which he is part) and his commitment within the context of a burgeoning same-sex wedding industry has him positioned as a recognized and sought-after authority on LGBT wedding fashion and protocol. Having worked in the industry for over 25 years, Tennenbaum’s unique wedding and engagement ring styling is built with fashionable, timeless features showcasing high end designs.

“Is it an honor and privilege for me to be displayed at Tapper’s. I am a strong believer in inclusiveness and family values, and I believe Tapper’s encompasses the same feelings towards everyone they cater to,” Tennenbaum says. “I applaud their show of support to include ‘every’ family unit and look forward to a fruitful relationship with them and their customers.”

WMU To Award LGBT Alumna At Homecoming Event

BY AJ TRAGER

KALAMAZOO - In an upcoming Homecoming event, Western Michigan University’s (WMU) Pride Alumni Association will honor the work and dedication of local LGBT advocates. LGBT and allied alumni of WMU are invited to join together for the Oct. 24 event that will include the presentation of the first ever Community Impact Alumni Award to Kalamazoo resident, River Artz-Iffland.

Artz-Iffland has demonstrated a commitment to LGBT inclusion and advocacy and has created a long-term impact on both the LGBT and Kalamazoo community.

“Her personal information really spoke to being someone who hasn’t fought for the spotlight but has done the hard work towards creating safe spaces and building community. It’s incredible to see and hear the work that River has done,” Jen Hsu, coordinator for the WMU Office of LGBT Student Services, said.

As one of the first coordinators for what is now the WMU Office of LGBT Student Services, Artz-Iffland organized the first Breaking of the Silence event and was integral in fostering a safe space for LGBT students on campus. In addition to her professional contributions, Artz-Iffland has volunteered as an advocate for domestic partnership benefits for city employees and for non-discrimination protections through the One Kalamazoo campaign.

Over the last 30 years, Artz-Iffland has served Kalamazoo in many ways. She was the co-owner of Pandora Books for Women, a woman-centered bookstore, with her partner Diana. She was also an active organizer of Lavender Morning, a lesbian social and support group that started in 1979.

“No single person can change the whole world, but, if we each are brave and take responsibility for what we can do, we’ll eventually get where we want to go,” Artz-Iffland said upon hearing that she had been selected as the 2014 recipient of the Community Impact Alumni Award.

Hsu and the selection committee received numerous nominations but ultimately decided on Artz-Iffland because of her amazing ability to make an impact in individuals lives as well as the community.

The award is chosen on three criteria, beyond being an LGBTA alum of WMU: individual must have made a contribution to the greater community they live and work in as well as WMU, demonstrated commitment to inclusion or the LGBT movement and had a far reaching impact on LGBT issues and social justice initiatives.

“We really wanted to distinguish somebody who identified with the idea of having a commitment to WMU as an institution and to see that ripple out in their communities and with LGBT and social justice initiatives,” Hsu said. “The Homecoming Planning Committee has been hard at work organizing a fun and welcoming alumni event. We’re excited to celebrate our community and acknowledge the tremendous impact River has made on creating an inclusive environment at WMU and in greater Kalamazoo.”

The reception will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 24 at the Lee Honors College on WMU campus and will serve specialty crafted drinks and hors d’oeuvres. The event is free and reservations are requested at mywmu.com/pridealumni.

To preregister for the Homecoming event, visit mywmu.com/pridealumni or call the WMU Office of LGBT Student Affairs at 269-387-2133.

Ann Arbor Adopts Updated Non-Discrimination Ordinance

BY BTL STAFF

ANN ARBOR – The Ann Arbor non-discrimination ordinance was one of the first of its kind in Michigan to add sexual orientation to the list of protections in 1978 and added gender identity a few years later. This week the city adopted a revamped ordinance adding in protections against discrimination for housing, employment and public accommodations for victims of domestic violence and stalking.

The City Council added the updated protections on the basis of gender expression, veteran status, political beliefs, genetic information, arrest record and familial status.

City Council members voted unanimously to pass the update and were saluted by representatives from the Jim Toy Community Center, ACLU of Michigan, Huron Valley Central Labor Council and other members of the LGBT community.

MLive reports that the revised ordinance aligns more closely with state and federal non-discrimination legislation and guidelines, modifies the requirements placed on public contractors in order to comply with state law and revises the local complaint and enforcement process, according to the city attorney’s office. The revision also reflects changes required to affirmative action, city reorganization and changes to the city’s Human Rights Commission.

Michigan legislature has yet to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of statewide protected classes.
Bishops Scrap Welcome To Gays In Sign Of Split

BY NICOLE WINFIELD AND DANIELA PETROFF

VATICAN CITY (AP) – Catholic bishops scrapped their landmark welcome to gays Saturday, showing deep divisions at the end of a two-week meeting sought by Pope Francis to chart a more merciful approach to ministering to Catholic families.

The bishops approved a final report covering a host of issues related to Catholic family life, acknowledging there were “positive elements” in civil heterosexual unions outside the church and even in cases when men and women were living together outside marriage.

They also said the church must respect Catholics in their moral evaluation of “methods used to regulate births,” a seemingly significant deviation from church teaching barring any form of artificial contraception.

But the bishops failed to reach consensus on a watered-down section on ministering to homosexuals. The new section had stripped away the welcoming tone of acceptance contained in a draft document earlier in the week.

Rather than considering gays as individuals who had gifts to offer the church, the revised paragraph referred to homosexuality as one of the problems Catholic families face. It said “people with homosexual tendencies must be welcomed with respect and sensitivity,” but repeated church teaching that marriage is only between a man and a woman.

The revised paragraph failed to reach the two-thirds majority needed to pass.

Two other paragraphs concerning other hot-button issues at the synod – whether divorced and civilly remarried Catholics can receive Communion – also failed to pass.

The Vatican spokesman, the Rev. Federico Lombardi, said the failure of the paragraphs to pass meant that they have to be discussed further to arrive at a consensus at a meeting of bishops next October.

Cardinal Wilfrid Fox Napier of South Africa, who helped draft the revised final report, told Vatican Radio the final document showed a “common vision” that was lacking in the draft.

He said the key areas for concern were “presenting homosexual unions as if they were a very positive thing” and the suggestion that divorced and remarried Catholics should be able to receive Communion without an annulment.

He complained that the draft was presented as the opinion of the whole synod, when it was “one or two people.”

“And that made people very angry,” he said.

Federal Judge Strikes Down Arizona Marriage Ban

PHOENIX (AP) – A federal judge has cleared the way for legally recognized gay marriages in Arizona by ruling that the state’s ban on same-sex unions is unconstitutional.

The ruling Friday (Oct. 17) by U.S. District Judge John Sedwick bars state officials from enforcing a 1996 state law and a 2008 voter-approved constitutional amendment that outlawed gay marriage.

Sedwick said in his ruling that because the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals had already ruled against gay marriage bans in Nevada and Idaho, he did not need to give a lengthy reason for his ruling and was bound by the appeals’ court decision.

“A stay of this decision to allow defendants to appeal is not warranted. It is clear that an appeal to the 9th Circuit would not succeed. It is also clear ... that the High Court will turn a deaf ear on any request for relief from the 9th Circuit’s decision,” Sedwick said.

Sedwick, who was nominated to the federal bench in 1992 by President George H.W. Bush, ordered the state to “permanently cease” its ban on gay marriage and declined to stay his order.

Jennifer Pizer, one of the attorneys for the plaintiffs, said she was thrilled with the ruling.

Some of our couples have been waiting decades. Their happy day has come, and we hope that Arizona embraces this decision and allows same sex couples to enjoy their constitutional rights here in Arizona,” said Jennifer Pizer, an attorney for the Lambda Legal law firm.

Attorney General Tom Horne has scheduled a midmorning news conference to discuss the decision. His office said in a statement that Horne must decide whether to appeal the ruling or advise the state’s clerks of court to issue same-sex marriage licenses.

The county court clerk’s office in metro Phoenix won’t issue license to same-sex couples until the state Attorney General’s Office advises the clerk on the ruling, said Aaron Nash, a spokesman for the clerk.

The Arizona decision came after the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled on Oct. 7 that gay marriage prohibitions in Nevada and Idaho violated the equal-protection rights of same-sex couples.

Last week, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear appeals from several states seeking to retain their bans on same-sex marriage. The move effectively legalized gay marriage in about 30 states and triggered a flurry of rulings and confusion in lower courts across the nation.

Sedwick’s ruling came in one of two lawsuits that challenged Arizona’s gay marriage ban. In that case, seven couples who live in Arizona challenged the law, including some who married in other states but were unable to have their union legally recognized in Arizona.

Lawyers who pushed both lawsuits argued the state law violated equal-protection and due-process rights and wrongfully denied their clients the benefits of marriage, such as spousal pension benefits, spousal survivorship rights and the ability to make medical decisions for each other.

Attorneys representing the state urged Sedwick to uphold the state’s definition of marriage as a union between a man and woman. They argued the ban furthers the state’s interest in connecting a child to his or her biological mother and father and that voters and lawmakers enacted the ban to protect their right to define marriage for their community.

Arizona lawmakers approved a state law barring same-sex marriages in 1996. Seven years later, an Arizona appeals court upheld the constitutionality of the law. Voters in 2008 amended the Arizona Constitution to include a ban.

>> www.PrideSource.com
Co-Founder Bequeaths Substantial Gift To Equality Michigan

BY BTL STAFF

DETROIT – Equality Michigan, the only statewide anti-violence and political advocacy organization that serves Michigan’s LGBT and HIV-affected communities, has been named the beneficiary of two gifts from the estate of Dr. Henry Messer.

A grand total of three million dollars was awarded to Equality Michigan in two parts. The first million is to be added to the gifts of other donors and applied directly and immediately toward LGBT policy and victim services work and will be distributed over the next four years. The remaining two million will be donated to the endowment at the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan.

“Henry was one of the most amazing people I have ever met, and one of my dearest friends. He dedicated his life to helping those most in need and did not just dream of a future where all LGBT people could live safely and openly, but committed his time, talent and resources to making that dream a reality,” said Joy Geng, vice chair of the Equality Michigan board of trustees. “Out of the tragedy that he did not live to see his dream fulfilled comes a historic opportunity for Equality Michigan to finish the work he started and make that dream come true for future generations. I am confident that our team will not let him down, and that his legacy will live on through the organization he loved so much for decades to come.”

As the cofounder of Triangle Foundation in 1991, Dr. Messer served on the organization’s board of trustees for over a decade and continued to volunteer weekly until his death in February of this year. The Triangle Foundation merged with Michigan Equality to form Equality Michigan in 2010 and has since worked to continue the work of both groups.

Messer was a lifelong LGBT activist who became involved in the movement after being discharged from the military during WWII, where he met his lifelong partner, Carl House. Messer and House then found themselves in the thick of the Stonewall Riots and LGBT history. They continued their activism when they moved to Michigan in the early ’70s and were involved with organizations like the Michigan Organization for Human Rights which later became Triangle Foundation. It was important for Messer that the organization he helped create not only survive but also thrive in his absence.

“Henry was a visionary, but he was also a mentor and guardian to everyone who has worked for Equality Michigan. Our work today would not have been possible without Henry’s compassion, generosity and passion for our mission and communities which we serve,” said Emily Dievendorf, executive director of Equality Michigan. She added, “I made a personal commitment to Henry that Equality Michigan would build on his legacy. This gift will enable us to do that. We are tremendously grateful for his trust in our work and love for his community. We miss Henry and he will always be a part of every step forward.”

Learn more about Henry Messer at http://www.pridesource.com/article.html?article=64693

U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow and President Obama at the White House with Dr. Henry Messer.

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www.PrideSource.com
‘Sherlock’ Actor Andrew Scott Gets Candid About Coming Out, (Almost) Kissing Benedict Cumberbatch

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

I t’s hard to ignore the fact that Andrew Scott came out publicly just last year while watching him in “Pride.” A British dramedy based on the alliance between striking miners and gay activists in the mid-’80s, the inspiring romp finds the 38-year-old Irishman putting those puppy eyes on full display. Playing Gethin, a fella dealing with the aftermath of coming out, the actor’s sincerity makes you forget the shade he throws Benedict Cumberbatch as Moriarty on the BBC’s “Sherlock.”

Scott recently opened up about avoiding questions regarding his sexuality after he’s finished promoting “Pride,” why he’d want a straight actor to play him in a movie and feeling “uncomfortable” when asked about his almost-kiss with Benedict.

For you, how does it feel being part of a movie that’s moved so many people in the gay community?

It’s extraordinary, really. We’re all completely blown over by it. The response we’re hearing from cinemas across the country, where people are standing up at the end and they’re clapping – it’s just very unusual for me. I’ve certainly never been in a film before where that happens.

People just feel very inspired by it, and they have very passionate feelings toward it. So yeah, I’m thrilled about that – thrilled (it’s being embraced) not just by the gay community, but by a lot of different audiences. We kind of really hoped that the gay community would embrace it, but we keep saying that it’s not just a gay movie. The message – the idea of solidarity – isn’t just for a gay audience. All of us are more similar to each other than we think we are.

“Pride” demonstrates strength in numbers, which seems especially relevant now that the gay rights movement is in full swing and more straight allies are standing up with us. As the fight for equality marches on, what do you see as the relevancy of this story right now?

Being gay isn’t something in and of itself that’s a virtue any more than being straight is, but the attributes that gay people develop as a result of being gay – mainly empathy toward other people, and compassion and tolerance – those are things to be proud of. It’s a real message that I find really heartwarming. To segregate people is very dangerous in the struggle for gay rights for people across the way. Inclusivity rather than exclusivity. We must celebrate our differences, and we must celebrate our humanity as well as our sexuality.

You recently spoke out against the notion of “playing gay,” which is obviously something you feel strongly about.

You can’t. It’s absolutely impossible to play that as an actor. If someone were to play me in a film about my life, I would hate for just gay actors to audition for the role, because I think I could potentially have attributes as much in common with a straight actor as I could with a gay actor.

You can really make a general wash of people’s sexuality (and say) that people are exactly the same. But the attributes I possess as a human being could be represented by anybody with human sexuality, really, if they have the chief attributes that an actor needs, which are empathy and imagination. So, I do think it’s very important that those things are mentioned, that a human being is made up of a whole range of things and sexuality is, of
Sometimes, people understand sexuality maybe prevents them from admitting that – there’s just a stigma attached to it that find it easy to understand homosexual love straight people actually fundamentally can understand heterosexual love. I think of a man and a woman, and a gay person imagination. We all come from a union a gay person, it doesn’t require too much what it means to be a straight person or I mean by that is that in order to understand word “mainstream” is a bit reductive. What mainstream audience – and sometimes the and it

Movies about gay people weren’t always as celebratory as “Pride” and others that have been released recently. With that said, do you think “Pride” would get the same reaction it is now if it came out 20 years ago? It’s difficult for me to answer that. I just know that it feels very timely. I think it’s incredibly progressive, and the idea of just different attributes of gay people being explored is extremely important. But the idea of this story 20 years ago, talking about these people as heroes – I’m not sure. It’s very hard for me to answer that. I just know the fact that it’s been embraced by both gay audiences and straight audiences is very important.

We set out to make a mainstream film, and it is a mainstream film – it’s finding a mainstream audience – and sometimes the word “mainstream” is a bit reductive. What I mean by that is that in order to understand what it means to be a straight person or a gay person, it doesn’t require too much imagination. We all come from a union of a man and a woman, and a gay person can understand heterosexual love. I think straight people actually fundamentally find it easy to understand homosexual love – there’s just a stigma attached to it that maybe prevents them from admitting that sometimes. People understand sexuality at a very basic level, and so I never have thought that people are intrinsically homophobic. I think that’s something that’s learned.

Would you say that sexuality is much more fluid than we think? I think it is a very fluid thing. I think all sexuality is about communications. (Say) you were to label the kind of conversations you’d like to have at dinner and you said, “I’m a sarcastic person who likes to talk about politics and, you know, juggling.” We don’t label the way (we) communicate verbally, so why do we need to label the way we communicate sexually? I think it’s sometimes questionable. It’s a physical thing, so it’s very difficult to articulate verbally.

One year ago this November you came out publicly. So, to mark your one-year anniversary, tell me what changed for you after coming out to the world. (Laughs) It’s funny, I don’t see it at all like that. I can understand why people could perceive it as my “one-year anniversary,” but for me it was something that happened a long time ago. You know, I keep myself to myself. I don’t do a huge amount of interviews. I am delighted to say, though, that absolutely nothing has changed, really. I’ve been in the business coming up on 20 years now. I started very young, and so I’ve always wanted to play all sorts of different parts.

With something like “Pride,” obviously, I have to speak a little more about personal issues – that’s something I realize with this project – but, in the future, I feel that in order to be progressive it’s not necessary for me to speak about (my sexuality) in every interview I do. If I were to meet my family and friends every day for the past 15 years and say, “I came out,” every single time they asked about how it was being gay – what kind of question is that? (Laughs) Let somebody live their life. There are certain times when it’s right to talk about it, and there are absolutely times I feel that it’s not relevant.

Do you think society puts too much emphasis on talking about sexuality? I don’t. Yeah, I think sometimes there can be prurient interest in any type of sexuality and people’s sex lives, but I think that’s just the way human beings are. I would love it if there were a sense of just letting people be, just letting people be who they are, and not getting too hysterical about these things.
BY MIKEY ROX

As holidays go, Halloween is undoubtedly the gayest. It’s the one time of year where homos can pretend they’re hetero, straight boys step out in short skirts, and grown women turn every respectable profession they can think of into slutty versions of their former selves.

Of course you can head to your local costume shop and pick up a played-out, plastic-wrapped outfit, but we know you better than that. That’s why we’ve compiled this comprehensive list of the most topical, haute and hilariously gay-friendly Halloween costumes of 2014. From hairy howlers that roam the night to John Travolta’s most memorable characters, this year’s hottest TV shows, news stories and pop-culture juggernauts are now the must-wear, one-night disguises of the season.

1. Early 20th Century Underbutler
You don’t have to blackmail your blue-blooded undercover lover to play the part of Thomas Barrow – the conniving gay underbutler on the sharp and soapy PBS period drama “Downton Abbey” – this Halloween. Dress to impress both nobles and peasants without dropping too much dough by assembling your post-Victorian-era attire from thrift shops and consignment finds. Pleated black trousers and a crisp band-collar button-down lay the foundation for this outfit that’s completed with a white bowtie, U-shaped satin vest and tuxedo tailcoat. Part your full head of hair on the side (or don a bowler hat) and puff on a fag (the British term for cigarette; not whatever you’re thinking) to fully embody the baddest bitch in Grantham House.

2. “Dancing with the Stars” Contestant
Aaron Samuels (Cady Heron’s crush in the insta-gay-classic “Mean Girls”) played it straight at North Shore High School, but his real-life alter ego – sometimes actor Jonathan Bennett – has had the Internet abuzz about his sexuality since the film’s release in 2004. Now that JB and his twinkle toes are back in the spotlight on the couldn’t-be-gayer “Dancing With the Stars,” there’s no better time to pay homage to the guy who may or may not have already broken a million girls’ (or boys’) hearts. To pull off this light-on-your-feet look, tango your way into a brightly colored button-down, an equally-loud-but-contrasting satin skinny tie, black slacks, black suspenders, and the snazziest tap shoes you can find. Because you never know when the rhythm is gonna get you.

3. ‘Teen Wolf’
It’s hard to put your finger on the queerest thing about MTV’s “Teen Wolf” – the quiver-inducing howls, the rampant homoeroticism, Colton Hayne’s Instagram profile – but that just makes pulling together pieces for this costume all the easier. You can go as protagonist Scott McCall (played by self-professed Gindr user Tyler Posey), or you might prefer sticking to your own kind as Danny Mahealani (Keahu Kahuanui), Beacon Hills High’s out-and-proud lacrosse player/computer whiz. Suit up in authentic lacrosse gear that you can find at a second-hand sports store (or by pilfering through your cousin’s super bro-y wardrobe) and work your makeup magic on a canine bite for the ages – which we know you wouldn’t mind getting legit if you lived in their world.

4. The Cast of ‘Looking’
However you feel about HBO’s “Looking” (viewer reviews were staunch and varied when it premiered at the top of this year), showing up at a party as the show’s cast is not only tres chic this Halloween, it’s also perfect for a coordinated group costume. You’ll have to pull up past episodes (which you can watch on demand) to get a better idea of each character’s personal style, but you’ll likely discover that you can recreate their looks from your own wardrobe. Tack on a commitment issue or two and throw in a penchant for threesomes for posterity’s sake, and you’ve got the looks down pat. Do us all a favor though, won’t you? Post photos of your group’s Russell Tovey; the world needs more of that going around.

5. Dallas Cowboys Fan
Given the staggering amount of negative publicity that the NFL has received this season (thanks to woman beaters, child abusers and drunken drivers), it should consider itself lucky that the gays are finally getting in on the game. And it seems that no team is embracing its friendly neighborhood homosexual makeover more than the Dallas Cowboys. First there’s the addition of defensive end Michael Sam to the roster, but there’s also a new DirecTV Sunday Football
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commercial depicting a gay couple – one of whom is a Cowboys fan – that has largely flown under the radar. Give the latter the relevance it deserves this All Hallow’s Eve by pulling together whatever Dallas gear you can find (and convincing your boo to sport a Giants jersey) while trying your best to avoid a brush with the law. A night in the slammer only sounds good in theory.

6. Hedwig

The East German transgender singer with an “angry inch” between her legs experienced somewhat of a renaissance this year as actors Neil Patrick Harris, Andrew Rannells, and Michael C. Hall all stepped into the punk-rock role on Broadway. And now you too can milk John Cameron Mitchell’s cash cow for your own benefit by raiding your wacky Aunt Barb’s closet for late ’70s/early ’80s-inspired fashion, BeDazzling a pair of cutoff Daisy-Duke-style denim, and rockin’ a sick ‘Hed’-wig that you can score on Etsy.

7. Lovechild of Jared Leto and Justin Theroux

There’s been a sizeable amount of buzz about what’s beneath Jared Leto and Justin Theroux’s respective boxers lately – and nobody’s complaining. Justin gave us full-frontal floppage in a few jogging scenes on his very violent and ultra-strange HBO drama “The Leftovers,” while the ghost of Jordan Catalano will not be satisfied until he’s officially crowned Biggest Cock in Hollywood. And for this, they both should be celebrated. To imitate these forces of nature yourself, mash-up the pair’s signature styles (Justin’s into leather; Jared is a little more “la boheme”) and stuff a swingin’ Richard down your crotch. Even better if you’ve got the natural goods so you don’t disappoint the evening’s potential paramour(s).

8. Any John Travolta Character

Oprah’s dear John will deny that he’s a “Golden Girls”-watching, Folsom Street-walking, magic-hair-growing, happy-ending-loving friend of Kevin Spacey’s until the day he dies, but he has given us nearly 30 years’ worth of iconic characters that we can pilfer for Halloween getups – and that’s gotta count for something. Which Travolta character will strike your fancy this year? Vinny Barbarino? Tony Manero? Danny Zuko? His cringe-worthy Edna Turnblad? Whatever poison you pick, kindly keep it in your pants. Unless, of course, you’ve got enough paper to pay that boy off.

9. Delusional Reality Star Brother of Mediocre Pop Star

This summer’s season of “Big Brother” was a breath of fresh air (thanks to gratuitous displays of rock-hard flesh being flaunted around the house for three glorious months), especially when you consider what a homophobic and racist disaster last season was. And in keeping with traditional reality-show formula, there was one over-the-top gay in the latest cast who just had to go and ruin it for the rest of us on a thrice-weekly basis on the most watched network in America. Frankie Grande, the ironically removed-from-reality “media mogul” (yes, that’s actually what he calls himself), spent the entirety of his time on the show prancing around the house, pining for every smidge of bromo affection he could get by forcibly invading their personal space, and generally being an all-around despicable human being who wasn’t afraid to take the wheel of the bus that he was about to throw you under before he backed up and finished the job. Oh, and did we mentioned that he’s the half-brother of so-so pop star Ariana Grande? Don’t worry, he won’t let you forget that part. Immortalize this walking, talking caricature this Halloween by frosting your tips hot pink, slipping into a pair of too-short shorts, layering a sequined faux-fur-collared vest over an American Apparel T-shirt, and flashing double sideways peace signs until you’ve effectively hypnotized your straight crush into questioning his sexuality. (Uh huh. Some guys have all the luck.)

Mikey Rox is an award-winning journalist and blogger whose work has been published in more than 100 outlets across the world. He lives in Manhattan with his husband and their cuddle-buddy furbaby. Connect with Mikey on Twitter @mikeyrox.
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All In The Dysfunctional Family

BY JOHN QUINN

’Tis the season for houses of horror to appear all over Metro Detroit, but who would have expected that one of the goriest would be the Detroit Opera House? Given the venue, however, we are once again reminded that horror implied is more visceral than horror depicted.

Michigan Opera Theatre opens its 44th season with Richard Strauss’ “Elektra,” a little monster of an opera so fearsome that it can eat music directors and sopranos alive. The beast has been gloriously tamed by MOT conductor Steven Mercurio at the podium and an opera superstar, Christine Goerke, in the title role.

It is apparent that the ancient Greeks liked a good horror story as much as we do. Strauss loosely based “Elektra” on 5th century BCE plays, particularly those by Sophocles and Euripides, concerning the Curse of the House of Atreus. The gods had cursed Atreus to teach him that, when you invite your brother to dinner, it’s improper to serve nephew as the main course. But that’s another story. It does, though, give a backdrop to a clan with real family value issues.

Agamemnon, son of Atreus and king of Mycenae, was prepared to sail off to avenge the abduction of his sister-in-law, Helen. The fleet was becalmed, so the king sacrificed his eldest daughter, Iphigenia, to the goddess Artemis in exchange for fair sailing. That horrifies his wife, Klytemnestra, who turns to Aegisth, the king’s cousin, for comfort.

Agamemnon returns from the Trojan Wars and is promptly murdered by the lovers. By all the cultural norms, it is the duty of Orest, Agamemnon’s son, to avenge his father’s death, but that means violating a fundamental taboo, matricide. Rather than risk retribution, the assassins exile the boy.

But again, that’s background. “Elektra” is the story of Agamemnon’s remaining daughters, Chrysothemis, who has come to terms with the status quo and lives in the palace, and Elektra, who prowls outdoors, living for the vengeance that only the exiled Orest can mete out.

“Elektra” recounts the fateful day of Orest’s return – in disguise, lest his mother and uncle murder him as well. His return frees Elektra from committing unspeakable crimes, taking revenge in her brother’s place and killing her mother. But only her indomitable drive convinces Orest to undertake the murders.

With “Elektra,” Strauss created a densely woven study in contrasts. Written in 1909 and incorporating a libretto by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, the opera represents the composer’s most advanced experimentation with chromaticism, and yet retains the lush, romantic lyricism that mark his “lieder.” The orchestral score is considered one of the most challenging in the dramatic repertoire due to its wealth of emotional content. The MOT Orchestra has been beefed up to accommodate the complexities,
Hear Me Out  
BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Mary Lambert, You+Me

Mary Lambert, ‘Heart on My Sleeve’

One chorus did wonders for Mary Lambert, the guest vocalist professing romantic interest in a girl on Macklemore’s “Same Love.” The Seattle slam poet was nominated for two Grammys, a performer at the actual ceremony, and now this: her first full-length on a major label. The album addresses her butt (which she loves), how she has bipolar disorder, and her inability to think straight (because “I’m so gay”), so “Heart on My Sleeve” – how apropos. And that’s only the first track. With a pop, Mika-like bounce and an all-around celebratory vibe, “Secrets” rummages through Lambert’s closet in the most bold and beautiful of ways – and then to let you know she doesn’t take herself too seriously, she giggles. It’s a telling gesture, since a lot of Lambert’s debut is, much like “Same Love,” designed to be lyrically heavy – themes of self-image and personal catharsis abound – but radio-friendly. She’s exposed on “Ribcage,” a hypnotic electro slow-burner with a rap cameo from K. Flay, and even if it reads like Live Journal poetry, you can’t help but be charmed by the openheartedness of “Monochromatic.” And then there’s “Jessie’s Girl.” Lamenting atop piano, the original song is ebbed to a crawl as she turns the buoyant ’80s classic into an aching ballad. Throughout the album, Lambert asks for your ears and gives you her heart. As long as she’s this sincere, it’s a fair trade. Grade: B

You+Me, ‘rose ave.’

You asked for it, and the lesbian gods listened. Having already created musical magic with the Indigo Girls on their George W. Bush slam, the lo-fi “Dear Mr. President,” Pink’s first folk release – a joint project with singer-songwriter Dallas Green (collectively known as You+Me) – is the result of the collaborative power of prayer. Not that she’s been slacking pop-wise, but Pink’s sinewy voice – a trove of raw emotions – was always better served by a less-frilly sound (to remind you: listen to “Family Portrait” and “Dear Diary” off of “Missundaztood”). Now, after two decades of telling guys to suck it and proving herself a bona fide circus act, we have “rose ave...” a come-down that lands her right in your living room – a long-overdue outing marked with high expectations that meets very few of them. The problem: the songs. With the writing front and center, pretty harmonies and Pink unplugged can only do so much when sentiments about eternal love and hope – and all those things you feel walking through the greeting card aisle – are as broad as these. Even with the lilting beauty “You and Me” and “Open Door,” where the lyrics cut deeper, “rose ave.” is a personal project that doesn’t feel very personal. An album better in theory. Grade: C+

Also Out

Betty Who, ‘Take Me When You Go’

Cue your happy dance. Betty Who is taking you to the floor and giving you all the good feels with her debut, a disc full of sweet-but-surface pop confections – think aural Cotton Candy – as charming as the same-sex Home Depot flash mob proposal she soundtracked. But “Somebody Loves You” isn’t Betty’s only infectiousness. The synth-tastic ’80s-influenced “Glory Days” sounds like it should accompany the credits of a Molly Ringwald film, and the funky “Just Like Me” is a lotta fun. If only there were more to savor.

Annie Lennox, ‘Nostalgia’

Oh, she’ll put a spell on you, all right. Annie Lennox likely already has, but now she’s literal about it with “I Put a Spell On You,” one of 10 classic recreations off the icon’s second covers album (her first, “Medusa,” was released in 1995). The other selections from the Great American Songbook thrive because two words: Annie Lennox. Her voice is a godsend, and if you don’t get goose bumps hearing her give life to “Georgia On My Mind” and “God Bless the Child,” check your pulse.
Outings

Thursday, Oct. 23
Relationship Skills Class 6 p.m. a series for LGBTQ people and their friends and loved ones. Topics include: exploring personal and social values, attitudes, values, arguments and making agreements, accountability and building community connections. Tickets: $5-30. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-389-7105. Affirmations.org

Lez Read Ann Arbor 4 p.m. We read fascinating books on all lesbian topics, including books of local authors. And our discussions are always lively and provocative. Jim Toy Community Center, 319 Braun Court, Ann Arbor. 734-995-9867. Jimtoycenter.org

Cider Mill and Haunted House Visit 6:30 p.m. Ann Arbor LGBTQA Young Professionals Social Meetup, 5565 Merritt Road, Ypsilanti Township. meetup.com/Ann-Arbor-LGBTQA-Young-Professionals-Social-Meetup/events/2119682672/a=eat-

Monthly Dinner Outing - Pronton! 7 p.m. Black and White Men Together-Detroit, 608 S. Washington Ave., Royal Oak. bwmindetroit@bogusglobal.org

Friday, Oct. 24
Sixth Annual Detroit Fall Beer Festival 5 p.m. Tickets: $5-40. Michigan Brewers Guild. Detroit. Mibeer.com

Evolution @ The AVE Café, Store & More 6:30 p.m. With featured artist singer/songbird MIRANDA HOPKINS. Open mic night. Bring your A game - sing, recite poetry, tell some jokes, dance. We are looking for a co-host and will be holding open auditions. Suggested donation $3-85 benefiting the artists and the AVE Stores food donations. Organization Name, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-389-7105. jwcevents.com Affirmations.org

Womyn’s Film Night 7 p.m. Film: Molly’s Girl - When emotionally volatile Molly meets Meredith, a gay rights activist, a one-night stand leads them down an unspoken path. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-389-7105. Affirmations.org

Zombie Love 7 p.m. Queer women of color zombie short shorts Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-389-7105. Affirmations.org

Second Annual Costumes & Cocktails Party 9 p.m. Ladies only. 25+ - Costumes are fun but not necessary. Bring your own cocktail to enjoy. Set up and food solid. Tickets: $12-15. Hustle & Flow, 8599 N. Lilley Road, Canton. 734-678-9963. meetup.com/Hustle-Flow-host-fun-monthly-social-events-for-Lesbians

Sunday, Oct. 26
David Sedaris’ 7 p.m. Tickets: $15-29. Wharton Center, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 600-WHARTON. Whartoncenter.com

Music & More

An Arbor Symphony Orchestra “ October 2014 Chamber’ Tickets: $9-10. Jewish Community Center, 2505 Birch Hollow Dr, Ann Arbor. 1:30 p.m. Oct. 24. 734-769-1700. mittguide.com


Hard Rock Cafe Detroit “Does your child look like a rock star?” For one day, kids in costume or not, will eat free if each is with an adult purchasing an entree. Hard Rock Cafe, 40 Monroe St., Detroit. 11 a.m. Oct. 30. 313-964-7625. Hardrock.com

Church of the Good Shepherd “Bryan Sicilio” Church of the Good Shepherd, 2145 Independence Blvd., Ann Arbor. 7 p.m. Oct. 27. 734-971-6133. Pastorpetepondores.wordpress.com


Dia “Opening of offended exhibit” Featuring Colombian soprano Catalina Cuervo. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave. Detroit. 2 p.m. Oct. 23. 313-833-7900. Dia.org

Lansing Concert Band “Autumn Winds” Free. East Lansing High School, 509 W. Okemos Rd., Okemos. 7 p.m. Oct. 23. 517-348-5066. lansingeastband.com

All productions are presented at Matrix Theatre, located at 2730 Bagley in the heart of Detroit’s West Side. Tickets are $8 for students, $15 for seniors and students. Call 313 967-0599 for tickets.


Cameo! $5-54. 55-59. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. Nov. 1 - 2. 586-286-2222. macombcenter.com

ComedySportz Michigan Actors Studio, 648 E. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 877-636-3320. comedysportzdetroit.com

Dinosaur! 8s adult, $5 child. Henry Ford Community College’s Virtual TheatreLably At Adray Auditorium, Henry Ford Community College, 5101 Evergreen Road, Dearborn. Sun. - Mon. 3. 313-845-6478. theatre.hfc.cc


Dracula The Musical $35-41. The Dio - Dining and Entertainment, 135 E. Main St., Pinckney. Through Nov. 1 517-872-6099. diothetre.com


Enter Laughing $41-48. The Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company at Aaron Debby Theatre, 5101 Evergreen Road, the campus of the Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. Through Nov. 16. 248-749-3000. jetttheatre.com


Editor’s Pick

Matrix Teen Company presents its popular annual Haunted Theatre production Thursday, Oct. 30 and Friday, Oct. 31 at 9 p.m. This year they’ve created an original show of terror and suspense as they share the secrets and scary stories that comprise the history of the theater’s building at 2730 Bagley. They investigated what happened and explore what may have happened in that building’s long history, and they have created some tales of horror that are sure to scare even the bravest of souls.

Members of Chicago’s Goodman Theatre Studios program collaborated with the Matrix teens in the development of some of the scenes for this year’s production when they visited the theater in September of this year.

All productions are presented at Matrix Theatre, located at 2730 Bagley in the heart of Detroit’s Mexicantown. Tickets are $8 for adults, $5 for students and seniors. Call 313 967-0599 for tickets.
and Steven Mercurio elicits a textured, layered wall of sound. There is a rolling sea of emotion underlying the melodies, with harmony and dissonance complementing the main themes.

Vocally, “Elektra” is dazzling. Christine Goerke, in what constitutes a breath-taking effort, handles the wide range and violent passions of this most difficult of roles. Her voice, frequently turns the male cast as pale as the walking dead. To enhance the creepiness of the production, it is very effective, but I’m still working through how it advances the story.

Sets and costumes, designed by Dany Lynne, are suitably somber and reserved, reflecting German, rather than Grecian, inspiration. The fortress-like building that dominates center stage becomes part of the drama, alternately revealing and concealing the horrors inside.

The Greeks knew that a good drama, like good house of horrors, can have a positive psychological effect. Experiencing the emotions evoked by either allows the audience to work through and purge the negative and emerge refreshed. Aristotle called it “catharsis.” This close to Halloween, we’d call it “scaring your pants off.” “Elektra” lets you have it both ways.
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Royal Oak’s South Oakland Art Association will host Valerie Allen of Golden Artist Colors at their Nov. 3 meeting. Allen will demonstrate the various acrylic paints, mediums and techniques possible with Golden Artist Colors’ Products.

Valerie Allen is a professional artist residing in Michigan. She and her husband, artist Armin Mersmann, live and work in their studio/home near Midland Center for the Arts and Dow Gardens. Allen is on the faculty of the Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art and has taught art at several Midwest colleges, including Delta College in University Center and Northwood University in Midland.

Golden Artist Colors is a manufacturing company that focuses almost entirely on paints, used in the fine arts, decoration and crafts. Golden also prides itself on its sense of social responsibility, including water conservation. As water is a necessary component in their craft, the business has implemented a Reverse Osmosis filtering system that allows them to reuse over two-thirds of their cleaning water each day, reducing the need for transporting wastewater and resulting in a minimized carbon footprint. The overall green element of the art supply producer carries over into their “Seconds Program.” The program helps support artists by providing materials that typically fall short of Golden’s standards to non-profit groups, employees and other creative minds in need of art materials. As a result, items that veer just slightly from being ready for full retail are not wasted. For more information on the company, visit www.goldenpaints.com.

This demo and presentation will begin at 7 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 3 at South Oakland Art Association’s November 2014 meeting at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 814 N. Campbell in Royal Oak. The church is located between 11 and 12 Mile. A short business meeting will precede the main event.

The presentation is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served. For more information, visit www.sooaklandart.com.
Q Puzzle

Jimmy Kimmel On Gay Sports

Across
1 Scuttlebutt 16 Dancer Shawn and others
5 Dean character without a cause 17 Sheltered on the sea
10 Midvoyage 18 Man with a steel rod
14 “There ___ there there” (Stein) 19 David Hyde Pierce and peers
20 “___ is a sport in which ...” 22 Creme de la creme
22 Creme de la creme 23 Some escorts want it up front
24 “... men in ___ pants ...” 27 Peter or Paul, but not Mary
28 _ _ _ 29 “Xanadu” band, for short
30 Land of Sinead O’Connor 31 Caesar’s lang.
32 Unlike phone sex 33 Setting for “The Lion King”
33 Setting for “The Lion King” 34 “You want the light ___ off?”
37 “… run around piling ___ of each other” 35 Randy Shilts’ area
39 Hydrocarbon suffix 36 Bruin Bobby
43 Queued up 38 Straight, at the bar
47 Drag queen’s shoe feature 42 Historic Stonewall event
48 Like a plum job 54 See 48-Across
52 Hosp. worker 55 “Lady Sings the Blues” star
53 One that lies on the bottom 56 Type of crime
54 See 48-Across 57 Amsterdam transport
55 “Lady Sings the Blues” star 59 AAA handout
60 Cont. of one of the Disney sites

Down
1 Cabaret singer Edith 6 Become men, perhaps
2 Capital of Norway 7 Book full of books
3 Willa Cather novel 8 “Xanadu” band, for short
4 Emily Dickinson, in her day 9 Caesar’s lang.
5 ___ avis 10 Designer’s studio
6 North Sea feeder 11 “Terminal Bar” playwright
13 Nice buns, for example 12 Head of costume designing
14 “There ___ there there” (Stein) 13 Nice buns, for example
15 St. Teresa’s town 14 “there there there” (Stein)
16 Dancer Shawn and others 18 Man with a steel rod
17 Sheltered on the sea 19 David Hyde Pierce and peers
18 Man with a steel rod 20 “___ is a sport in which ...
19 David Hyde Pierce and peers 22 Creme de la creme
20 “___ is a sport in which ...” 23 Some escorts want it up front
21 Belle’s companion 24 “… men in ___ pants ...”
22 Creme de la creme 25 Janet or niece Hunter
23 Some escorts want it up front 26 ‘60s radical
24 “… men in ___ pants ...” 27 Peter or Paul, but not Mary
25 Janet or niece Hunter 28 Strip a fruit
26 ‘60s radical 29 Chinese philosopher
30 Land of Sinead O’Connor 31 Caesar’s lang.
31 Caesar’s lang. 32 Unlike phone sex
32 Unlike phone sex 33 Setting for “The Lion King”
33 Setting for “The Lion King” 34 “You want the light ___ off?”
34 “You want the light ___ off?” 35 Randy Shilts’ area
35 Randy Shilts’ area 36 Bruin Bobby
36 Bruin Bobby 37 “… run around piling ___ of each other”
37 “… run around piling ___ of each other” 38 Straight, at the bar
38 Straight, at the bar 39 Hydrocarbon suffix
39 Hydrocarbon suffix 40 Turned tail
40 Turned tail 41 She loved Franklin and Lorena
41 She loved Franklin and Lorena 42 Historic Stonewall event
42 Historic Stonewall event 43 Queued up
43 Queued up 44 Simba’s love, on Broadway
44 Simba’s love, on Broadway 45 Aimed for, with “to”
45 Aimed for, with “to” 46 Sally portrayer of “Cabaret”
46 Sally portrayer of “Cabaret” 47 Prick stimulators
47 Prick stimulators 48 Like a plum job
48 Like a plum job 49 Blow them in the orchestra pit
49 Blow them in the orchestra pit 50 Julianne of “Far from Heaven”
50 Julianne of “Far from Heaven” 51 Elroy Jetson stroked him
51 Elroy Jetson stroked him 52 Hosp. worker
52 Hosp. worker 53 One that lies on the bottom
53 One that lies on the bottom 54 See 48-Across
54 See 48-Across 55 “Lady Sings the Blues” star
55 “Lady Sings the Blues” star 56 Type of crime
56 Type of crime 57 Amsterdam transport
57 Amsterdam transport 58 Any minute now
58 Any minute now 59 Prefix with sexual
59 Prefix with sexual 60 Cont. of one of the Disney sites
60 Cont. of one of the Disney sites

Solution on pg. 23

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