

MICHIGAN'S LGBTQ+ NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1993

Between the Lines™

TRANS POLICY BATTLE
Ann Arbor district faces
federal funding threat

CLOTHED IN COMMUNITY
Naturists build a
welcoming space

LINDA PERRY UNFILTERED
The hitmaker on
finally stepping forward

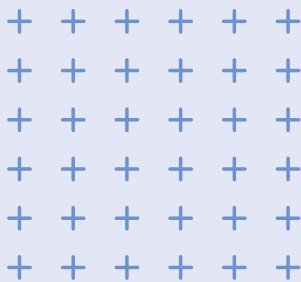
PASSING THE TORCH

The doctor who cared for Michigan's LGBTQ+ community
through the AIDS crisis is preparing to step aside

By Sarah Bricker Hunt

Dr. Paul Benson's

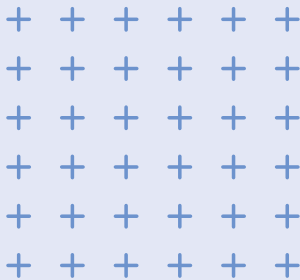
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313-963-3434 x118



- 4 5 Queer Things You Can Do Right Now-ish
- 6 A New Chapter for Be Well Medical Center, Built on Dr. Benson's Vision
- 8 LGBT Detroit's 'Saving Grace': After A. Nzere Kwabena Stepped Back from HTJ, the Leaders He Mentored Stepped Forward
- 10 Finally, Linda Perry: A Tell-All With the Hitmaker Behind Pink and Christina Aguilera's Biggest Songs
- 12 Creep of the Week: Who Will Save Girls From the Ghouls Saving Girls' Sports?
- 13 The Scroll: Michigan Supreme Court Rules in Landmark Police Sting Entrapment Case
- 14 Building Community One Clothing-Optional Gathering at a Time in Detroit
- 16 Trans Lucent: Don't Call Me Trans

Page 16



Dr. Mark Bornstein and Dr. Paul Benson at Be Well Medical Center. Photo: Andrew Potter

Election 2026

Head to pridesource.com for our post-primary election coverage and to get up to speed before the general election on Nov. 3. You'll find candidate profiles, analysis about issues impacting Michigan's LGBTQ+ community and more.



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5 Queer Things You Can Do Right Now-ish

BY KELLI DUNHAM

August is showing off. This current lineup includes a little history, a little art, a little brunch, a little drag and, somehow, a yacht. Whether you're in the mood to celebrate an organization that's spent four decades caring for Detroit, lose yourself in an exhibit about queer connection, make new friends over tacos and mimosas, or spend an evening with glamorous drag vampires (as one does), we promise there's something worth leaving the AC for. Summer won't last forever, but perhaps you'll make some memories that will!



Celebrate Pride Close to Home

Pontiac's first-ever Pride celebration isn't starting small. The full-day, all-ages event — Still Here, Still Proud — includes vendors, community organizations and health resources.

"People here have been driving to Ferndale or Detroit for years to feel celebrated," said co-producer Cody McKenzie. "The whole point of this is that they should not have to leave home to do that."

State Rep. Brenda Carter, D-Pontiac, secured a legislative tribute for the event. "I hope this is the beginning of a tradition that brings people together and reflects the welcoming spirit of Pontiac for years to come," she said.

Aug. 14. 12-7 p.m.; after-party, 7 p.m.-2 a.m., The Crofoot (1 S. Saginaw St., Pontiac). PrideInPontiac.com.



Cruise Into Four Decades of Community Care

Since 1986, Community Health Awareness Group (CHAG) has been on the front lines of HIV prevention, harm reduction, testing, education and community health in Detroit, always centering dignity and equity. Now the organization is celebrating that legacy in style with a cruise along the Detroit River. The evening promises music, skyline views and a chance to celebrate an organization whose work has quietly made life better for countless mittenfolx. But make sure to arrive on time, otherwise you'll (quite literally) miss the boat.

Aug. 22, 5:30 p.m., Ovation Yacht, Detroit Port Authority (130 E. Atwater St., Detroit). chagdetroit.org.



Quinn Faylor. Photo: Steve Koss

Explore What Holds Us Together

What exactly bonds people? Love? Trust? Shared Google calendars and a fervent dedication to being the largest intact polycule in any given neighborhood? Quinn Faylor's exhibit *How We Hold*, on display now at Ann Arbor Art Center, explores that question through vibrant abstract paintings, prints and sculptural works inspired by queer embodiment, care and collective evolution. The pieces encourage viewers to look closely not just at the artwork itself, but at the ways we rely on one another and the environments that also support us.

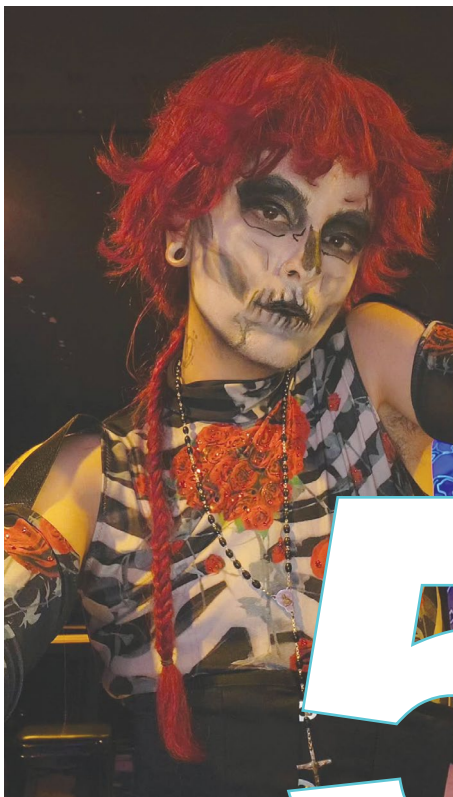
Through Aug. 26, Ann Arbor Art Center (117 W. Liberty St., Ann Arbor). annarborartcenter.org.



Eat, Drink and Be Sapphic

In an era when disconnection seems often the default, here's a reminder that community can still be built the old-fashioned way: around a table with a hands-behind-your back fruit roll-up eating contest. And a finger wrestling competition. And then there's the taco eating competition. The Midwest Sapphic Society is hosting this Sunday gathering designed exclusively for making new friends and catching up with old ones. Also on the menu? A mingle bingo to help facilitate these conversations, more Gaymes (with no pressure to participate) and plenty of mimosas.

Aug. 23, 11 a.m., Whiskey Taco Foxtrot (28 S. Main St., Clawson). tinyurl.com/sapphicbrunch.



Eros Lee du Revenant. Photo: @angel.0fthedamned

Support Your Local Vampire

It's entirely possible the average vampire doesn't actually need support from mere mortals like us. Nevertheless, when Michigan's own "vampire hostess" Eros Lee du Revenant throws an evening where drag meets the undead, the least we can do is buy a ticket. Inspired by Anne Rice's "The Vampire Chronicles" (and the subsequent AMC series), the show stars du Revenant as the deliciously dramatic Lestat de Lioncourt alongside a cast of creatures of the night. Expect dark glamour, theatrical performances and enough dramatic eyeliner to blot out the sun. Which is ideal, because, you know, vampires.

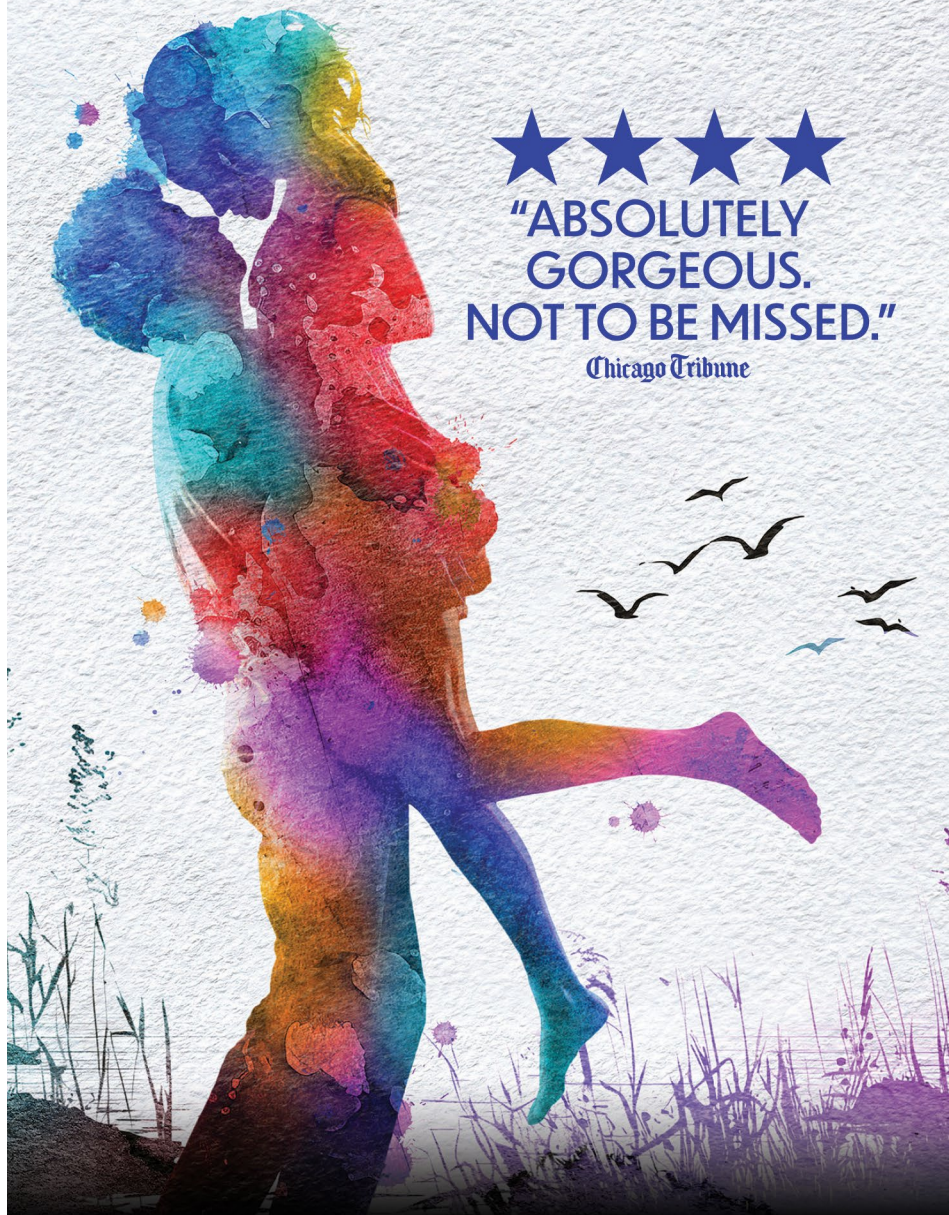
Aug. 7. Doors at 7 p.m., show at 9 p.m., The High Dive (11474 Joseph Campau Ave., Hamtramck). tinyurl.com/vampiredrag.

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Dr. Mark Bornstein (left) and Dr. Paul Benson. Photo: Andrew Potter

A New Chapter for Be Well Medical Center, Built on Dr. Benson’s Vision

The neighborhood doctor who cared for Michigan’s LGBTQ+ community through the AIDS crisis is gradually handing his practice to the resident he once mentored

BY SARAH BRICKER HUNT

When Dr. Paul Benson opened Be Well Medical Center in Berkley on Dec. 1, 1980, modern medical imaging was still in its infancy, and the disease that would shape much of his career didn’t yet have a name. Within a few years, he was petitioning the local hospital where he had admitting privileges to treat

HIV patients and watching families beg doctors to leave AIDS off death certificates out of shame. He earned a nickname in return: “the dirty AIDS doctor.”

“I was one of the first to treat HIV in Michigan, and that was a lot different back then,” Benson says. “People were not living with the disease. They were working to get by from one Christmas or one birthday

to the next.” The stigma, he says, was “horrific,” worse than anything the Covid pandemic later brought. “I’ve had people in the hospital back then that would die of pneumocystis pneumonia and have to call a family member that didn’t even know that they were in the hospital, let alone had AIDS.”

That loneliness has stayed with him. “I can’t tell you the number

of times that I would have to call a family member and say, ‘Your son is in the hospital, he just passed away,’ and they never knew he was gay, they never knew he had AIDS,” Benson told Dr. Joe Kort, a Ferndale therapist, on Kort’s podcast “Smart Sex, Smart Love” earlier this year. “I think that person died experiencing a lot of loneliness. And if they had supportive family, were out and open

at that time, I really believe the results would be different.”

Kort, who’s counseled LGBTQ+ clients since the 1980s and is a Be Well patient himself, told Pride Source that Benson filled a role few other doctors would touch. “My clients would tell me, I have a regular doctor and I have a gay doctor, and the gay doctor was always Dr. Benson,” Kort says. “There are things

I can't share with my regular doctor that I can share with him. He was a safe haven, all the way from back in the day." As HIV treatment evolved through the decades, Kort says he leaned on Benson's expertise for his own clients. "He was like the go-to, and I just always referred [people] to him because he was such a good source and [had] a good reputation."

Not every memory from that era is grim. Benson recalls treating gay men whose relatives had once been hostile toward the LGBTQ+ community, only to soften after watching him care for a brother or son with compassion. "They came and really thanked me for it," he says, "and it probably gave them a reversal about how they feel about LGBTQ+, once somebody in their family had come out as being gay and living with AIDS."

Benson traces his own foundation in LGBTQ+ health to a 1980 rotation at the Haight Ashbury Free Medical Clinic in San Francisco, at the height of the city's gay rights and HIV crisis years, training that shaped how he'd go on to treat STIs and care for LGBTQ+ patients back home. Confronting death up close as a young doctor, he says, is what made him a better one. "It made me a better physician because I immediately had to deal with death," Benson says. "Being a young doctor and being able to deal with patients on death and dying really helped me become a more empathetic physician."

Along the way, Benson built a reputation for being first. Be Well was among the first Michigan practices to offer rapid HIV testing, and when mpox surfaced in Metro Detroit in 2022, Benson again moved quickly. He held one of the area's first mpox vaccine clinics for high-risk patients and treated some of Oakland County's earliest confirmed cases, pushing publicly for wider vaccine access as the state worked through a limited supply. He's served as principal investigator on more than 200 HIV clinical trials since 1980, including a recent study published in the New England Journal of Medicine, work he credits with helping bring many of today's HIV medications to market.

Handing off, but not stepping away

Longtime Between The Lines readers are surely familiar with Dr. Benson and Be Well, one of the publication's first advertisers. Flip through the ads in virtually any issue over the past 30-plus years, and Be

Well is among them. "Being a part of Between The Lines has always been a very effective way to reach the community," he notes.

For the past several months, Benson, 72, has been gradually handing Be Well over to Dr. Mark Bornstein, 35, the resident who rotated through his office as a medical student and never really left. Bornstein has taken over as the doctor most patients see day to day and will become full owner of the practice over time, while Benson keeps seeing his own longtime patients part-time and stays active in the office. "I'm not retiring and going away," Benson says. "I've had a number of patients I've been taking care of for over 40 years, and I'm going to continue taking care of them as long as I can, as long as they want me to. But it's time for me to turn the reins over to a new generation."

Some things at Be Well haven't changed at all. A golden retriever named Bowie, and before him, another golden named Baxter, has spent nearly two decades greeting patients in the waiting room and occasionally ending up on his back for a belly rub mid-appointment. Benson has also watched the practice's welcome extend to families in ways he didn't expect in 1980. "I'll see young adolescents come in with mom and dad, with support," he says. "Back then, I don't think that's something I ever would have seen." He's watched the community's regard for him shift, too. He describes his early practice as a time when he was frequently shunned by fellow physicians and avoided by residents, a sharp contrast to today, when Be Well maintains a waiting list of students who want to train there. He's also become a familiar face around town, recognized in public from his local media appearances, including by a City Hall clerk last year who lit up meeting him in person. "I thought that was kind of neat," he says.

A new generation takes the reins

Bornstein first walked into Be Well as a third-year medical student on a family medicine rotation he didn't choose. "In the end, it was the best rotation I had," he says. "I was

always looking for something that was of advocacy within medicine, and this practice area was something I'd never really been a part of before." A Berkley High School graduate, he left Michigan for New York, training at Mount Sinai to gain specialized experience in HIV care, gender-affirming care and LGBTQ+ health, work he said the state didn't yet have the infrastructure to teach. He and Benson stayed in touch through residency, and when Bornstein finished his training, Benson made him an offer.

"It seemed only natural that him and I talk about bringing him into this practice," Benson says. He'd fielded interest from other buyers over the years, including private equity groups, and turned them all down. "That absolutely was not

"He's really built this from the ground up. I feel like I'm standing on the shoulders of giants."

— Dr. Mark Bornstein

what I wanted to happen," he says. "I wanted it to be the same atmosphere as the one that we currently have. I'm very, very proud that I'm able to keep my legacy up, keep the practice the same and service our community."

Bornstein, a family medicine physician who has built his own expertise in reproductive medicine, women's health and transgender care, doesn't take that trust lightly. "I'm really fortunate to be able to take this practice into the next chapter, while at the same time honoring everything that he's done," he says. "He's really built this from the ground up. I feel like I'm standing on the shoulders of giants." He's candid, too, about what he didn't live through. "I wasn't around when things were probably as bad as it gets with HIV," he says. "There's some things I'll never be able to understand. I want to acknowledge that and thank my patients for sharing what they have with me."

Patients who've watched the handoff up close describe it as seamless. Kort says the warmth that defined Benson's practice hasn't gone

anywhere under Bornstein. "I never have a bad experience, ever," Kort says. "Everybody's warm. Everybody goes out of their way to be nice, and I love Dr. Bornstein."

Both doctors describe Be Well as closer to a neighborhood practice

patients living with HIV, catered and open to guests. The first, on Aug. 4 at Como's in Ferndale, will include a talk from Benson on cancer prevention and screening and one from Bornstein on clinical trial opportunities at Be Well.

A Be Well Medical Center ad set for print in the early years of Between The Lines. Photo: BTL archives

than a specialty clinic, with LGBTQ-affirming care sitting alongside pediatrics, family medicine and an on-site pharmacy. Bornstein estimates that roughly 30% of patients don't identify as LGBTQ+ at all. "We still consider ourselves an LGBTQ+ practice, but it's a wonderful thing to really be both a primary care community practice and an LGBTQ+ center," he says, pointing to the waiting room as proof. "You might have a person who's 70 years old and very wealthy, and you might have somebody who's living on the street, and then you might have somebody who's trans. That type of diversity is really helpful in fostering a welcoming place."

Next up for Be Well is a return to a tradition Benson started decades ago and paused during the pandemic: quarterly in-person gatherings for

What sticks with Benson most, after 45 years, isn't a single case or a single first. It's the follow-through. In 1985, a married man came in as a new patient with his wife and infant daughter, telling Benson he'd contracted HIV from an injury on a basketball court. As the baby slept nearby, the man asked what his goal for him should be. "I said, 'Our goal is that you walk your child down the aisle and you be healthy for it,'" Benson recalls. Two years ago, the man returned with a photo of himself doing exactly that. "We had tears in both of our eyes when he gave that to me," he says.

It is stories like this one that make it impossible for Benson to completely leave the practice. "I'm still going to be here for a while," he says. "I'm still going to be around."



The Hotter Than July team. Photo: Chris Sutton

LGBT Detroit’s ‘Saving Grace’

After a cancer diagnosis forced A. Nzere Kwabena to step back, the leaders he mentored stepped forward

BY EMELL DERRA ADOLPHUS

LGBT Detroit Executive Director A. Nzere Kwabena has stewarded Hotter Than July’s organizing, programming and coalition building for nearly three decades since co-founding the Highland Park-based Black LGBTQ+ festival in 1996. But when a cancer diagnosis forced him to step away from planning this summer’s festivities, the leaders he’d mentored became, in his words, his “saving grace.”

“I couldn’t work for a very long time,” says

Kwabena, 61, who says he’d been ill for years before finally receiving a cancer diagnosis in 2025. Although he did not make his cancer battle public, “my physical appearance has shown I’ve gone through a trauma,” he says, adding, “I’m on the recovery side, so I’m better.”

Still in recovery, Kwabena says this year that he experienced Hotter Than July in a way he never had before: as an attendee. “Events that were already curated, planned and organized. So I literally felt like a guest,” he says. “I’m very grateful how they stood up

and stepped up to make a successful Hotter Than July.”

LGBT Detroit’s broadcast studio manager Chris Sutton, 41, says Kwabena’s trust in their leadership gave them the confidence to press on serving LGBT Detroit’s community, no matter what unexpected challenges arose.

“I think about not only Nzere but Robert Tate and so many other people who have done this work so my generation and generations coming up can still have something that we don’t have to build from scratch,” Sutton says. “We don’t have to feel alone. We can

have a support system right here within our own community, and that’s essentially a big part of having Hotter Than July and LGBT Detroit.”

“Hotter Than July is a celebration of how far we’ve come,” he continues, “but it’s also a connector.”

Although a younger generation of leaders took the helm of ensuring LGBT Detroit’s operations continued in Kwabena’s absence,

See **Hotter Than July**, page 20

Education Department Opens Case Against Ann Arbor Schools Over Transgender Policy

District risks federal funding loss over policy protecting students' gender identity

BY KATHERINE DAILEY

The U.S. Department of Education announced July 27 that it is taking action against Ann Arbor Public Schools for what it believes to be likely violations of FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, in the district's policies regarding transgender students.

In a press release from the department, it announced that the Education Department's Student Privacy Policy Office, or SPPO, determined that the district's policy "requiring school employees to hide a child's 'transgender status' from his or her parents likely violates FERPA."

The department said that they have given the district until Aug. 10 to respond to these concerns and to demonstrate why

the department, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice, should not move forward with enforcement — noting that FERPA violations can result in the termination of an educational institution's federal funding.

The department is also demanding that the district "justify its policy that directs school officials to maintain records related to a student's so-called 'gender identity' in a separate filing system or be subjected to imminent enforcement action."

FERPA is a federal law that gives parents rights surrounding their child's education records, including the right to access those records, to seek to have those records amended, and to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records.



Community High School in downtown Ann Arbor. Photo: Dwight Burdette, Wikimedia Commons

"School districts that hide information from parents are violating federal law," said Assistant Attorney General Harmeet K. Dhillon in the press release. "FERPA is not optional, and any districts that attempt to bypass or distort its requirements should expect immediate federal action."

In partnership with the Department of Education, the Department of Justice will initiate enforcement proceedings with districts that fail to comply."

See **Trans Policy**, page 11



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FINALLY, LINDA PERRY



Linda Perry. Courtesy photo

For nearly 30 years, the hitmaker behind Pink and Christina Aguilera's biggest songs kept herself out of the spotlight. Now she's stepping into it.

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Linda Perry has spent most of her career behind the curtain — and she's built an empire there. She wrote “Beautiful” and handed it to Christina Aguilera. She has worked with Gwen Stefani, Alicia Keys, Miley Cyrus, Adele — one hit after another, almost none of them credited to her voice. And as she revealed to me recently, some of her best-known work for other artists came out of simply watching them: She wrote “Lonely Girl” for Pink while Pink was asleep on the studio floor a few feet away, and played it back to her when she woke up. All of it was, by her own account, a kind of hiding. A good one, even a fun one. But she was hiding all the same.

That ends this year, on three fronts at once. In May, Perry, 61, released her first solo album in over two decades, “Let It Die Here,” alongside a documentary of the same name that started, she says, as nothing more than a friend filming her songwriting process — until the footage caught something else entirely. Meanwhile, she reteamed with 4 Non Blondes, the band she left in her 20s, to put out a new record, their first in nearly three decades. And soon, she'll tour with the Indigo Girls, bringing together two queer-artist catalogs with very different relationships to visibility. The tour includes a Sept. 17 stop at Meadow Brook Amphitheatre in Rochester Hills.

Perry doesn't perform false modesty about any of it. She's a rockstar, confident enough to say so outright. But she's also a woman who, by her own description, watched her own documentary like a horror movie — and who found that

writing for herself was harder than writing for anyone else. What follows is a conversation about what happens when the person who spent 30 years observing everyone else finally turns the lens around.

Does this era of your career feel like a creative chapter unfolding across different mediums or three separate lives kind of colliding at once?

Well, I'm a pretty creative person. I'm constantly working or moving. I'm not saying I'm great at what I do. I'm just always creating. So I feel like I'm in a really awesome flow. The confidence, the emotional and mental instability, in a weird way, is making things stable. It's kind of like a weird chain of events that's happening that's just aligning. And I'm not going to lie: It's like, oh, there are some people out there that support what I've been doing this whole time. Because you get so in your own world and you don't even think anybody's watching or listening.

For much of your career, you were creating behind the scenes. What's it been like to step outside of someone else's recording booth?

It's quite different, obviously, because I've been able to kind of hide behind other artists in a sense, helping them with their vision and being the person behind it.

“Hide” seems like a packed word.

Yeah, of course it is, but we won't dive into that right now.

See **Linda Perry**, page 18

Whether or not FERPA covers these types of records is up for debate — the department's stance is clearly that it does, but according to Chalkbeat, a FERPA expert said that “the law requires that school districts share written records, such as gender support plans, if parents request them. But FERPA doesn't appear to create a duty to proactively disclose that students are expressing a different gender at school.”

Ann Arbor Public Schools' policy currently has a section dedicated to transgender and gender-nonconforming students, which includes a statement that the district “shall accept the gender identity that each student asserts. There is no medical or mental health diagnosis or treatment threshold that students must meet in order to have their gender identity recognized and respected.”

Regarding the disclosure of information, the policy states that students have the right to determine when and with whom they share their gender identity and expression, and directs staff to use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's gender assigned at birth unless the student, parent or guardian has specified otherwise.

Those opposed to requiring these types of disclosures under FERPA say they could endanger students with unsupportive parents, both physically and emotionally.

“The Superintendent shall ensure that all personally identifiable and medical information relating to transgender and gender-nonconforming students shall be kept confidential in accordance with applicable state, local, and federal privacy laws,” Ann Arbor's policy says. “School staff shall not disclose any information that may reveal a student's transgender status to others, including the student's parents or guardians and other school staff, unless legally required to do so or unless the student has authorized such disclosure.”

A spokesperson for Ann Arbor Public Schools did not respond to a request for comment.

U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon said in the press release that these policies are “an affront to basic moral principles,” continuing on to say, “Today, ED and DOJ are putting districts on notice that we will use every tool available to hold

them to account for this egregious behavior. Under the Trump Administration, ED and DOJ are working together to vigorously uphold parents' federal protections, and we will work to ensure that no parent is ever kept in the dark about important matters relating to their children.”

The Department of Education and Department of Justice entered into a partnership in June specifically focused on privacy policies, including parental rights.

In March 2025, McMahon sent a letter to state superintendents directing them that, under the Trump administration, the department would “insist that schools apply

“School districts that hide information from parents are violating federal law. FERPA is not optional, and any districts that attempt to bypass or distort its requirements should expect immediate federal action. In partnership with the Department of Education, the Department of Justice will initiate enforcement proceedings with districts that fail to comply.”

— Harmeet K. Dhillon, assistant attorney general

FERPA correctly to uphold, not thwart, parents' rights.” It specifically notes that FERPA compliance means that “schools must allow parents to review all education records of their student, including any document related to a student's gender identity.”

Ann Arbor schools were already the target of a Title IX investigation by the education department for allowing students to compete on athletic teams and use locker rooms based on their gender identities.

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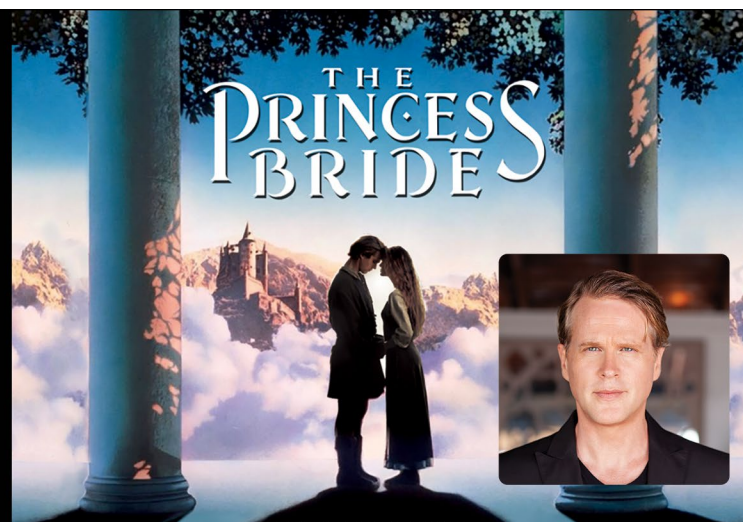
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Who Will Save Girls From the Ghouls Saving Girls' Sports?



BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

When I was in elementary school, my twin sister and I played in a youth soccer league. We were the only girls on an otherwise all-boys team. Now, I don't know how or why this happened. I do not know if this was a league where boys and girls played together on the same teams or if our dad talked our way onto a boys' team (which is something he probably would have done, overstating our talent and abilities, but I can't ask him because he is dead).

What I can tell you is that the boys absolutely hated us. Was it because we were girls? Yes. Was it because we were terrible at soccer? Also yes.

I do not have a lot of solid memories of my time on this team. I remember one game where it was raining and the field was basically mud puddles with small patches of grass. I remember having zero idea of what I was supposed to be doing every time I was on the field. There was no coaching, no explanation of positions. I remember hating every second of it.

When we were in middle school, my sister and I were on the seventh and eighth grade girls basketball team. We were not very good. I believe my sister scored two

and pulled my pants down. I was on my period and was wearing one of those giant 1980s maxi pads. Everybody laughed. Except for me.

What I am trying to convey is that, for me, school sports were a source of humiliation and anxiety. But I am very aware that for many kids, school sports are a source of community, friendship, fun and exercise. Which is how it should be.

And yet, school sports — specifically, girls and women's sports — have become the nexus of an ugly "debate" in this country. To hear conservatives tell it, transgender kids playing sports is the biggest problem facing this country. Something, they say, must be done to "save" girls' sports.

That's why voters in Washington will be asked in November whether or not the state should subject all girls wishing to play sports to an unnecessary and potentially invasive medical assessment to "prove" they are real girls.

"This fall, voters will weigh in on IL26-638, a ballot initiative seeking to amend Washington state law to bar transgender athletes from participating on girls' sports teams specifically," reports The Cut. "If it passes, the measure would impose special eligibility requirements on athletes from kindergarten through high school,

mandating that a healthcare provider certify the players' sex assigned at birth through genetic screening, a testosterone-levels test or an examination of their reproductive anatomy at their yearly sports physical."

Now, my teenage son just had his annual sports physical. I was there for the entire thing. The doctor asked about aches and pains, concussions and exercise-induced asthma. They also talked a little about weight lifting, but only because my son specifically asked. The doctor filled out a form, took our \$50, and sent us on our way.

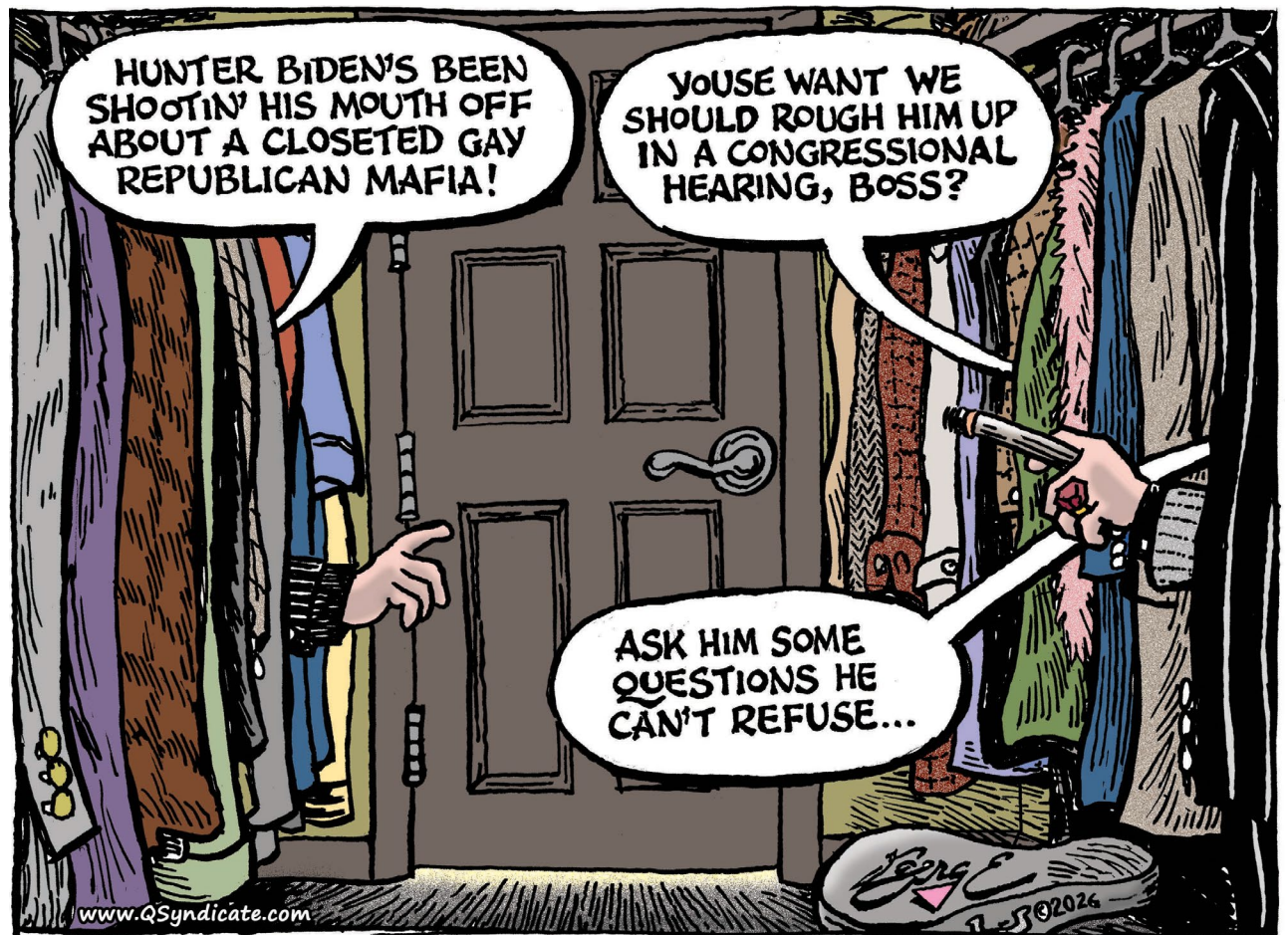
The doctor did not ask my son if he was biologically male. Did not insist on seeing his reproductive anatomy (which isn't even a sure-fire way to tell if someone is "biologically" male or female), did not insist on genetic testing (which I doubt our insurance would have even covered. Now, I did have genetic testing and our insurance did cover it, but that's because I had breast cancer at age 36, not because the sports police demanded it).

And, look, I know my son isn't the target of these laws. But my heart breaks for the parents who love and adore their kids as much as I do mine, for whom something that should be as simple as a sports physical becomes a way to deny your kid's humanity.

And I know that the anti-trans mob is not after cisgender guys. They are after cisgender girls and women, though. Transgender girls and women just come first.

And so does sports. Come first, that is. The mob that hates trans people also hates women. They don't care about girls' and women's sports, but they have found sports to be a softer entry point in their quest to chisel away women's rights.

Let's hope that Washington does the right thing in November.



My heart breaks for the parents who love and adore their kids as much as I do mine, for whom something that should be as simple as a sports physical becomes a way to deny your kid's humanity.

points between the two seasons. I scored zero. My sharpest memories about that time had to do with one of my teammates. Her dad would scream at her from the sidelines. And I mean scream. It made everyone, players and parents, very uncomfortable. But no one ever said anything to him. I also remember that one day after practice my sister and I were waiting for our parents to pick us up. We were horsing around and this same teammate with the screaming dad came up behind me

Michigan Supreme Court Rules in Landmark Police Sting Entrapment Case

The Michigan Supreme Court issued its opinion in *People v. Jade* on July 31, clarifying how courts must evaluate entrapment claims in police stings. The ruling affects the pending appeal of Evan Lakatos, convicted after a fake Grindr profile was used to arrest him in a 2021 “GHOST” sting; his case has been held in abeyance, or temporarily paused, pending Jade’s outcome.

The court held that appeals courts should trust a trial judge’s read of the facts, but must take

a fresh, independent look at whether entrapment occurred. It also made clear that when police push a suspect toward a much more serious charge than the one they seemed willing to commit, that alone can count as entrapment. Justice Elizabeth Welch’s concurrence went further, writing the doctrine could apply when police disproportionately target the LGBTQ+ community, citing an amicus brief that referenced *Between The Lines*’s reporting.

The case was sent back to the trial court. Lakatos’ attorney Dominica Convertino expects the ruling to help his case. GHOST was founded by Genesee County Sheriff Chris Swanson, a Democratic candidate for governor.



Michigan Supreme Court. Photo: Adobe Stock

Media Silence Surrounds Black Trans Teen’s Florida Killing

Jayla McGee, a 19-year-old Black transgender woman, was fatally shot July 5 in Belle Glade, Florida. The Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office is now investigating her death as a homicide, but its official response misgendered and deadnamed her, and her killing has received almost no media coverage.

Family and friends were left to document her identity, life and death themselves, sharing photos and organizing a vigil after institutions failed to. The National Black Justice Collective and Trans United Fund have since stepped in to publicly identify McGee and press for accountability, framing her erasure as part of a broader pattern across the South where deaths of Black transgender women are obscured by official records that fail to recognize their identities or investigate possible bias.

McGee’s homicide remains unsolved.

Entrepreneurs, Take Note: Apps Open for Queer Equity Impact Program

The Michigan Pride Chamber of Commerce, formerly the Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber

of Commerce, is now accepting applications for the fall session of its Queer Equity Impact Program, a 12-week business accelerator for LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs. The program runs Sept. 15 to Dec. 8 and includes expert-led workshops, one-on-one technical assistance, business planning and strategy support, pitch development and access to a network of queer entrepreneurs and business leaders.

The accelerator is one of the Chamber’s signature offerings following its expansion from a Detroit regional organization to a statewide one. More than 40 entrepreneurs have graduated from the program to date.

Applications close Aug. 30. Apply at mipridechamber.com/queer-equity-impact-program.

Affirmations Screens ‘Screaming Queens’ for Trans History Month

Affirmations will host a free screening of “Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton’s Cafeteria” from 6-7:30 p.m on Aug. 11. The Emmy-winning documentary revisits the 1966 uprising against police harassment at a San Francisco cafeteria, a queer and trans resistance moment three years before Stonewall. Executive Director Tracy Hall will lead a post-film discussion. The event is co-sponsored by ACLU of Michigan and the Gender Identity Network Alliance.

Japan Adopts Nationwide LGBTQ+ Education Plan

Japan is embarking on a new community education effort to raise public understanding of LGBTQ+ people, following 2023 legislation requiring such action. The program will reach schools, universities, workplaces and households, offering guidance, counselor training and educational materials. Universities preparing future teachers and healthcare workers will strengthen curricula on sexual orientation and gender identity. It’s Japan’s first standardized national approach, though the country still lacks marriage equality and federal nondiscrimination protections.

Anti-Trans Rally Flops, WNBA Star Claps Back

A planned anti-trans rally outside a Seattle Storm-Indiana Fever game on July 28 drew only “a few dozen” supporters of Fever guard Sophie Cunningham, who has faced backlash for anti-trans comments about “biological men” in women’s sports. Cunningham was booed during the game, and neither she nor the Fever addressed the rally. Storm center Stefanie Dolson, out since 2016, wore a “Trans Rights Are Human Rights” tank top in response.



Stefanie Dolson. Photo: Instagram/@seattlestorm



Members of the Naked Adventure Club of Detroit (NACD) pose at a spring gathering. Courtesy photo.

Building Community One Clothing-Optional Gathering at a Time in Detroit

From nude yoga to coffee meetups, the Naked Adventure Club is creating a welcoming social space for naturists — many of them LGBTQ+ — across southeast Michigan

BY KEITH LANGSTON

On any given summer weekend in metro Detroit, you might spot a group of friends gathered by the water, laughing, catching up or wading in for a swim. There's just one difference: No one's wearing clothes. It's a typical scene for members of the Naked Adventure Club of Detroit, a group that's grown from a

handful of curious newcomers into an 800-member community built around the simple idea of getting naked together, for reasons that have less to do with nudity itself and more to do with connection, freedom and a good time. "I didn't realize there were that many more people who were like me," Timmy Nakie tells BTL about his first time attending a naturist event. "They

value the freedom and the liberating feeling of being natural," he says. Timmy's journey started in 2021, when he discovered the Pittsburgh Area Naturists. "I had been looking into naturist groups for a while," he said about how he came across the group two states away. He traveled to Pennsylvania for their annual Young Naturist Bash, and that's where he realized he'd found the type of social

group he'd been looking for. "I went to it and thought it was amazing and knew I wanted to bring something like that to Detroit." Not long after returning home, he decided to start NACD. The group launched in 2022. Their first event was a nude basement party attended by just a handful of brave and curious naked guests. "I was a little nervous about getting murdered," John, who

asked that we only use his first name, says with a laugh while recalling that fortuitous first event. "But even worse, I was worried about being naked when I was murdered!" John, a longtime member, remembers taking the leap of faith during that first meetup, where guests were told to enter the house

See **Naked Adventure**, page 17



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Don't Call Me Trans

Why it's time we define ourselves on our own terms



BY ANNI ARBOUR

We are fighting our fight all wrong. We have accepted the terms of battle, of our very existence, from those who

seek to demean us, reduce us to insignificance, to erase us from society. It's time to stop and it starts with the way we define ourselves.

To begin: Why do we continue to call ourselves “transgender”? By definition, the prefix “trans” connotes a change from one form to another. That is patently untrue of anybody in our community. By putting the prefix of “trans” before my gender, a transformation is implied. And in truth, none has occurred.

I am a woman and have been as long as I can remember. I have been one since birth, despite the anatomical indicators otherwise. Nothing about me changed. And I wasn't any less a woman when I didn't present so outwardly than now when I do. Taking hormonal supplements or having surgery or the wearing of traditionally female clothing doesn't make anybody more of their true gender. Doing so simply makes a person more comfortable in their skin.

Historically, the prefix of “trans” was first employed in a speech by the noted German sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld in 1923. The actual term he created was “transsexualismus,” and in a translation of his own words, he used it to describe “the preliminary stages of hermaphroditism.”

While Hirschfeld was a pioneer in “transgender” research and healthcare (Lili Elbe, one of the first recipients of gender-affirming surgery, was treated by Hirschfeld), the term “transsexual” evolved, but was never clearly defined until Dr. Harry Benjamin did so in the 1950s.

Americans were still trying to wrap their heads around the story of Christine Jorgensen, the young GI, who after World War II went to Denmark and had gender-affirming surgery. Upon her return to the United States in December 1952, Jorgensen became headline news. Not long after, Benjamin — who eventually became Jorgensen's doctor — started using “transsexual” in various scientific papers he had written. Officially, it wasn't until his groundbreaking book, “The Transsexual Phenomenon,” came out in 1966 that the term



Christine Jorgensen receiving the Woman of the Year award from the Scandinavian Societies of Greater New York in 1953. Photo: TransasCity.org

was fully adopted into the popular lexicon.

Around the same time, Dr. John F. Oliven wrote “Sexual Hygiene and Pathology” (1965), which argued that “transsexual” was medically incorrect. He postulated that “the concept of sexuality could not account for the ‘all consuming belief that [transsexuals] are women who by some incredible error were given the bodies of men.’”

It was only a few years later that Virginia Prince, a crossdresser, wrote, “I, at least, know the difference between sex and gender, and have simply elected to change the latter and not the former. If a word is necessary, I should be termed a ‘transgenderal.’” But her concept of a “transgenderism” was “a middle ground between the episodic cross-dressing of the transvestite and the permanent genital

transformation of the transsexual.”

By the 1990s, “transgender” took precedence and generally replaced “transsexual” in common usage.

But realistically, why do we need special defining? Cisgender men and women don't usually preface their gender with the “cis” prefix. In fact, many cisgender people bristle whenever someone refers to them in that way.

In a sense, it's a numbers game. Just because most people describe themselves as “someone whose internal sense of gender corresponds with the sex the person was identified as having at birth,” as Merriam-Webster would have it, why should I acquiesce to their numerical dominance and declare myself as someone whose internal sense of gender does not correspond to my assigned sex at birth?

Of course, I get it. Early sexologists, psychiatrists and other medical professionals were trying to understand body dysphoria and they searched for a way of putting that into words. We have moved far beyond their misunderstanding, though. And now, medicine generally accepts that some people are born with this inherent incongruity between their inner and outer selves.

If we could get all of society to accept this concept, it would not only change the conversation about our community, but it would eliminate most transphobic arguments.

Instead of fretting about “biological men” participating in women's sports as

See **Don't Call Me Trans**, page 22

◀ Naked Adventure

Continued from page 14

and undress upstairs before walking down to the basement completely naked. “I entered the house, put my clothes in the cubby and walked downstairs,” he recalled. “It was weird right at the start, but then within like 10 minutes that went away and it became a really fun night. We played N64, and it was a great time.”

For Timmy, the group was a long time coming. “I was sort of always a nudist,” he says. “I was that guy who liked to get naked whenever there was an opportunity.” But seeing a group like the Pittsburgh Area Naturists is what finally showed him that he wasn’t alone. “Until I attended that group, I never realized how much of a great time it was, and how great the vibes were at a naturist gathering.”

But he makes sure to point out that naturists aren’t naturalists, a term more commonly associated with studying plants and wildlife than with communal nudity. Timmy says the mix-up comes up often enough that it’s become something of a running joke within the group, a small reminder of how unfamiliar this world still is to most outsiders.

NACD now hosts and attends a variety of events, from naked yoga to nudist 5K runs and more. Timmy says they also host a monthly clothed event called “New to NudiTea,” where the group visits local coffee shops and answers questions from anyone curious about naturism while sipping on tea and coffee. “I don’t really try to talk people into it,” he says. “I don’t want it to be weird.” Instead, the event is designed to offer information to those who are already interested, but might not know where to start or who to ask.

For anyone curious about joining, John has simple advice: “Don’t overthink it, just go for it because you’ll never know unless you try,” he says. Then, with a laugh, he adds: “You’ve got nothing to lose except your clothes!”

For those who do find the group, there’s a feeling of freedom and conviviality. “It’s a close-knit community, because a lot of people don’t necessarily talk about nudism in public,” he says.

Meanwhile, NACD’s social media has an easygoing, welcoming tone geared toward newcomers who might be curious but unsure where to start, matching the low-pressure spirit Timmy describes at the group’s events. “It’s freeing,” John says. “It’s about body positivity and camaraderie. It’s just a great space to feel free with friends.”

When asked if NACD is a queer group, Timmy says it’s not, and that its membership spans all walks of life and orientations.

Officially, the club isn’t organized around sexuality or gender identity at all. But that answer comes with a caveat: a large share of the group’s members are queer, and Timmy himself identifies as gay. Public events also tend to land in queer spaces, not by mission but by practicality. “Gay spaces are the most accepting space for stuff like this,” he says, before making sure to note that the events are still open and welcoming to everyone. Those businesses, he explains, tend to be “less judgmental or fearful” about hosting a nude event than more mainstream venues might be.

To give back to the community that has helped the group so much, NACD hosted a Pride event on June 28. Playing with the iconic queer tea dances of the 1950s and ’60s, the



Naked Adventure Club members show off their sunflowers at a club gathering. Courtesy photo

Group celebrated Pride with a NudiTea dance. “We partnered with Ruth Ellis for a tea dance,” Timmy said. “We had a dance party, and there was a little market outside in the courtyard. All the proceeds went to the Ruth Ellis Center.”

Looking to the future, Timmy also has big ambitions for the group. “We’re about to become a 501(c)(7) nonprofit social club,” he says, “which will put us in the same category as fraternal organizations.” He also wants to create a dedicated social space for the group that can be both their headquarters and gathering space, drawing on examples from around the world, including Europe’s nude beaches and Korea’s jjimjilbang culture. In Korea, communal nudity is a normal part of the bathing experience at jjimjilbangs, the country’s public bathhouses.

“I’m kind of envisioning something like an Elks Lodge for naked people,” he says with a laugh. “Maybe even with some saunas, steam rooms and hot tubs.” For Timmy, the vision is ultimately about access. “The goal is to make it more accessible to people,” he says. “Most people don’t know that you can go out and be naked with other people and have a blast.”

To find out more, follow NACD on Instagram and Facebook, or check out their website getnacd.org.

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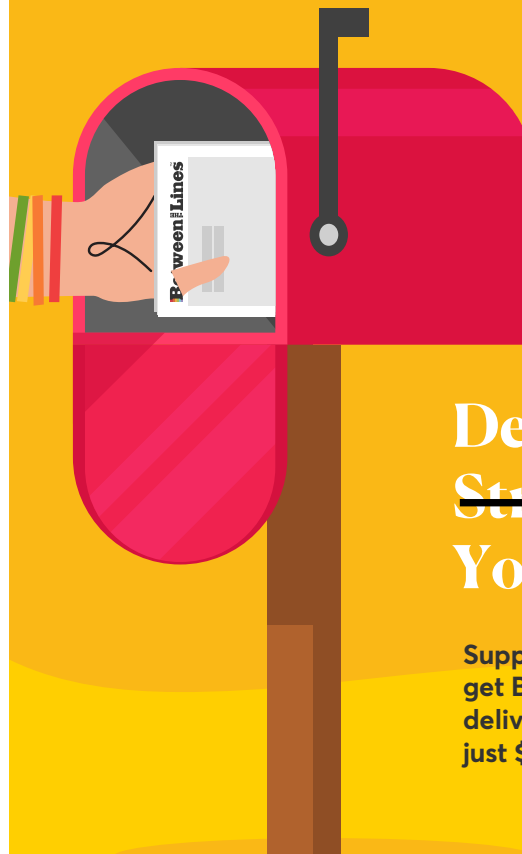
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Go watch the movie. But I'll say this: I loved being in 4 Non Blondes. I love attention. I'm a natural front person. I know that. I have that in me. I'm a rockstar. I got that. I'm very confident to be able to say that. But I have a very, very sensitive heart and I'm extremely passionate. And when I left 4 Non Blondes, I did it because I needed to go experience more. I didn't feel like I was ready to commit to that and that I needed to go look at other things and understand who I was as an artist, as a human being.

I was in my 20s when I made a beautiful record called "In Flight" [released in 1996] and my label shelved it because it wasn't 4 Non Blondes. They were trying to prove a point to me, and so it didn't get out there in the world. I was devastated and so overwhelmed and I felt everybody hated me. So I pulled myself out of the situation and asked, "OK, how else can I be in this business? I don't want to be a target. I just want to make music, man." And "songwriter-producer" fell organically in place.

So hiding, yeah, sure. But it was super fun because I've worked with so many incredible artists. Making that record with Pink changed my life. It was one thing after the next that helped me become stronger and better at my craft. And so it only made sense that the next venture for me to do is get back on the bicycle, put myself back out there and go do it again. And this time I control the narrative. I don't have a label sitting there telling me if I'm good enough or not.

Your video for "Beautiful" is so sensitive and emotional, a kind of reclamation of a narrative that was sung by someone else. What did revisiting that song reveal to you about yourself?

Christina did an incredible job on that song. I was impressed that she heard it because it was such a different song [compared] to anything that she was doing. I was a little shocked, like, "How does a girl [who did] 'Genie in a Bottle' hear this song for what it is?" And she did and she owned it and she nailed it. And for that, I have always had so much respect for her. In no way am I reclaiming this to make it better or to go, "Now people can hear it the right



Linda Perry. Courtesy photo

way." She did it the right way. And now I'm just doing it the only way I know how, and that's the Linda way. So "reclaim" wouldn't be the word I would use. I'm just covering a really great song and I happened to have written it.

You mentioned Pink's 2001 release "Missundaztood," a seminal album for me as a queer teenager, especially "Lonely Girl." Looking back on that record, do you see why queer listeners embraced it

the way that they did?

Well, one, Alecia [Moore, Pink's real name] is so open to everything. That girl welcomes everybody and everything. Such an incredibly empowering person out there fighting the good fight. She's always been like that. So I think that people are relating to her as a person, as an individual and as an artist that is not afraid to speak for others. So I would say, first and foremost, that's why the LGBTQ+ community embraces her and continues to. She's just a really

great artist for the queer community because she's just out there being her and we're just being who we are, and there's a lot of artists that are not. People can tell the difference.

The second part of that is she had me working with her and I have a different point of view. It's not because I'm queer; it's just because I'm a different type of person. I'm Linda Perry. I have a very different perspective when it comes to songwriting. I'm not looking to make hits. When I write, it's for everyone. My lyrics, my melodies, my style, it

is not segregated. It is for everyone to enjoy. And I do believe that there's a freedom on "Missundaztood" that people hear. It's a wacky record because what was Alecia before that? She was a white girl with pink hair singing R&B music and everybody thought she was Black.

This album still feels like her actual debut.

Right? And so I think that that's what people are responding to. There's a certain freedom. With "Lonely Girl," Alecia was stressed a lot. I think she knew that she was going to be one of the biggest artists in the world back then and I feel like she had a lot of stress around it because, and I'm just speculating, it was stressing her out.

So one day we were at the studio and I believe she had some stomach issues going on, like an ulcer. I'm like, "Maybe you need to chill out." Then she fell asleep on the floor and I was just watching her like a weirdo, just kind of trying to examine, because that's what I do. I'm trying to figure people out all the time. If you were sitting at a table by yourself, I would watch you and try to figure out what's going on with you because I want to see: Are you confident sitting there, or are you insecure sitting there? Did someone stand you up? Are you observing? So I'm watching her and I'm staring at her and I'm just letting all these things circulate in my mind. And then I just picked up the guitar and, as she was sleeping, I wrote "Lonely Girl." Then I recorded it right there while she was still sleeping. When she woke up, she's like, "How long was I out?" I go, "Well, long enough for me to write a song." And then I played her the song and she was like, "Holy shit, that's about me."

How do you observe differently in order to write for yourself?

There's the issue right there: I don't observe myself because it's hard. You would hope that you could apply all the incredible advice and thoughts to yourself that we are constantly preaching to everybody. Isn't it funny? With the movie, first of all, I didn't intend to make a documentary. I want that to be clear. I thought I was just letting my friend come in and observe me in my process of songwriting and that I was going to get some kind of cool content for social media. That's really all I thought was going on until he came to me and he was like, "I made

an edit of 30 minutes of the stuff I've been filming."

The documentary ended up being a gold mine of messy emotions for him because I ended up having all these things that started happening to me and one of them was a full-on breakdown because I couldn't figure out who I was in this picture anymore. I could write a song for everybody, Chris, but I couldn't write a song for myself. I couldn't give myself that advice, that beautiful power that I give to other people. I couldn't find it. I couldn't look in the mirror and say it to myself. And so, during the last part of the documentary, I wrote this song and that basically started everything. And then after that, I wrote a whole album and it was based upon the documentary of what I saw.

As somebody who is used to observing other people, what was it like to watch yourself in the documentary?

Very scary. It's so raw and embarrassing. This is not a fluff vanity piece about how amazing I am. It's like, "I am fucked up and here you guys go and I'm going to invite you into this." You know what it is? It's everything that happens to you, but they don't film it and they don't put it out in a fucking theater. That's what it is. It's everyday emotions that we all come across, but we hide them. I got sick, my mom got sick, I had a breakdown. There's all this shit going on. I'm like, "Holy shit, man, you thought you were just coming in to film my songwriting process and you got a fucking gold mine."

What made you give him permission to release it?

Well, I watched it as if I were fucking watching "Texas Chainsaw Massacre." I watched through my fingers, grabbing onto my best friend's hands, squeezing them at every moment, like, "Oh my god, I cannot believe he put that in there." And then afterwards I just hugged him and I said, "You made a really beautiful film." I knew it was not about me. It's very relatable because it's so messy and raw and emotional and honest, that's what makes it relatable.

Chris, we're sitting in place of "Is this real? Is this not real? Is that person's ass really that big? Did that really happen? Did those people really die? Is that person really our president? Is this really going on?" We're in some weird fucking morphed up, fucked up reality right now where you don't know what is real or fake. So I said to myself, "This is the realest thing I've seen in a long time. Unfortunately, Linda, it's you, but you just need to let it go." I mean, I could have picked this thing apart to a point where

there would've been no film.

Yeah, but you chose not to. Why?

What I did ask him to change is that he had more people in there talking about how great I am. I said, "Get rid of that."

As you get ready to hit the road with the Indigo Girls, what kind of dialogue do you think happens when those catalogs share space?

The Indigo Girls have really paved the way for queer songwriters, artists and people in the creative space because of their incredible storytelling, their relatability and who they are. They've always been out and open and confident and empowering. Just using their voice for the community. I really respect that about them. I mean, they are mentors. They are, to me, role models, and in that space I have a lot to learn from them. And so I'm really looking forward to that. I have not been the best role model.

Are you just being modest?

It's not about modesty. I feel like there's a lot more I could have done. I'm doing more now than I did back then. And not because I was embarrassed or ashamed. I've been very, very clear and very out, but I have gotten mad at the community. I've been outspoken in other ways where I was like, why do men not let women into their clubs and why do women not let the men into their clubs? I was out and around and crazy in San Francisco and I would constantly be sitting there while I should have been partying, having fun, observing — again — the women not letting the men into the clubs and then sneaking into the men's club with my roommate and them having a hard time with me being there, or any other girls. I never understood that about the community. Why the segregation?

Now, I don't know what is going on now because I'm 61 and I'm not club-hopping, but I never understood why there was segregation in our own community when we were fighting such big battles already outside of our community. I never understood also, when straight people would walk down the Castro holding hands, fucking people would yell from the clubs "breeders!" But then they wanted equal rights when they walked down the Financial District.

I love the community. I support it every way I possibly can. I ran a charity called An Evening with Women for the LGBTQ+ community and I ran it for four or five years, raised over 4 or 5 million. I've done so much. But I have unanswered questions and those were them. And so in that sense, I really feel like, OK, maybe there's a better way for me to approach this. And then when you talk about the Indigo Girls and us meshing together our narrative and how we have navigated through life being queer women, I'm excited to see them with their crowd, because that's going to be their crowd. That is exciting because I feel like I'm going to learn a lot. I'll be able to have really great discussions with them, and we will brainstorm a really incredible idea as to how to support the community.

"I could write a song for everybody, but I couldn't write a song for myself. I couldn't give myself that advice, that beautiful power that I give to other people. I couldn't find it. I couldn't look in the mirror and say it to myself."

— Linda Perry

Looking at the full arc of your career, from 4 Non Blondes to pop architect to solo artist, what do you think has been the most consistent version of you through all of that?

My honesty, for sure. Hands down. I've been honest from the moment I came out of that womb. I feel like I'm probably the most honest person I know. I truly believe that and I'm not saying that in an arrogant way, but I'm honest to a ridiculous fault where I can't help it. You don't want my fucking honesty and I'll still give it to you. Not a blunt honest, a different kind of honesty. It's cringey. I'm like, "Linda, why did you have to do that?" And I'm like, "Because they needed to know." I'll take that over them loving me for being fake. It's funny. It's a movie on its own.



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Horror at Any Price

Puzzle can be found on page 21

BTL | August 6, 2026 19

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A. Nzere Kwabena (left) at Hotter Than July. Photo: Chris Sutton

Hotter Than July Continued from page 8

program assistant Joseph Hunter says he wouldn't call it an official "passing of the torch" but an "answering a call" from someone the Black LGBTQ+ community immensely respects.

"It was kind of like when RuPaul pretty much tells all the 'Drag Race' contestants, 'OK, good luck, and don't fuck it up.' She doesn't actually think that any of the girls who made it on that show are going to massively fuck up a performance. It was just like, 'OK, you guys got this. I trust you guys.'"

The way the staff rallied in Kwabena's absence, Hunter says, is a reflection of what he's spent decades building.

"For a nice little moment, it was just kind of four or five of us holding everything down," says Hunter, referring to Sutton, finance and HR manager Kelley Jackson, facilities manager Wayne Moore and volunteer manager Dionta Brown. "None of us were gobsmacked with something that was totally new to us. We just had to do more of the stuff that we knew how to do."

For perhaps the first time in Hotter Than

July's history, the festival proved that the leader who spent three decades building it had also built the people who could carry it forward. In the process, Hunter says he learned more about his own leadership skills and just how hard Kwabena has worked to ensure LGBT Detroit maintains its place as a fixture in the Black LGBTQ+ community.

"I learned that Nzere is amazingly resilient and intelligent. I learned that LGBT Detroit serves a bigger role than even I was aware of," he says. "It inspires me to be better, and to try to push past my limits to do more. It really is awe-inspiring just hearing the stories of everything that Nzere has been able to do."

Watching a younger generation lead wasn't just reassuring — it also reshaped his understanding of what the next generation needs from LGBT Detroit. "What I've learned and what they taught me is that they want to be happy. So the program is the services and services are built around their happiness," says Kwabena. "If you're unwell, you want to be well. If you are not well economically, you want to be well economically. Those are rooted still in our mission and the programs that we design is to achieve whatever it is for them to be happy."

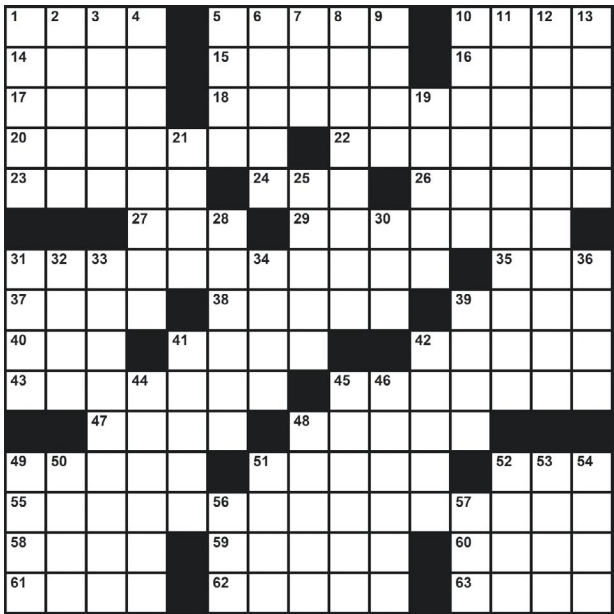
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Horror at Any Price

Across

- 1 "Beat it!"
- 5 Lifeboat lowerer
- 10 "Peter Pan" reptile, for short
- 14 Collette of "The Hours"
- 15 Where you live
- 16 Tow job
- 17 German auto

- 18 Stationery for Aaron Copland
- 20 Price of horror films
- 22 Start of what Price said he was impersonating
- 23 Forest moon in "Return of the Jedi"
- 24 Dupont Cir., on the Metro
- 26 Box to Vidal
- 27 Set burning
- 29 Wall Street workers
- 31 More of the quote
- 35 M.I.T. or N.Y.U.
- 37 Golda from the land of the cut

- 38 Buffalo bunches
- 39 Where a cobbler puts the tongue
- 40 Boy played by Martin and Duncan
- 41 Tough place
- 42 Fingerprint ridge
- 43 Patrick of the "Moby Dick" miniseries
- 45 Censored the word "lesbian," for example
- 47 Catcher's need
- 48 Tail feather
- 49 Overhand stroke, for Mauresmo
- 51 Strokes from Sheehan
- 52 Schnozz add-on
- 55 More of the quote
- 58 Baudelaire's liver
- 59 Nursery rhyme Peter, to a pumpkin
- 60 End of the quote
- 61 They aren't straight
- 62 Great balls of fire
- 63 Make beer
- 9 Stage crew worker, briefly
- 10 Phone receiver's spot
- 11 Mechanics' milieu
- 12 Music for "Aida," e.g.
- 13 Tops that pop
- 19 Range features
- 21 One of the Waltons
- 25 Car in the song "Fun, Fun, Fun"
- 28 Casual top
- 30 Suffix with lecher
- 31 They call balls
- 32 Like Felix of "The Odd Couple"
- 33 Like Fassbinder's work
- 34 Relief of Lincoln
- 36 Didn't give way
- 39 "A Boy Named Sue" writer
- 41 Clean up
- 42 Like the Ladies of Llangollen
- 44 Trio of genie grants
- 45 Rhett of "GWTW"
- 46 Water units
- 48 Clerk's minimum at Barneys
- 49 Love seat, e.g.
- 50 "Dial ____ Murder"
- 51 Excellent, in slang
- 52 Barbra's "Funny Girl" costar
- 53 Make more potent
- 54 From the top
- 56 "STNG" crew member
- Crusher
- 57 Metro area

Down

- 1 Where Susan Feniger shows a range of skills?
- 2 "Climb aboard"
- 3 Erect
- 4 Medium for Rosa Bonheur, perhaps
- 5 Dramatic word for the Yankees
- 6 Is adjacent to
- 7 Your, to Proust
- 8 Musher's race

See p. 19 for answers

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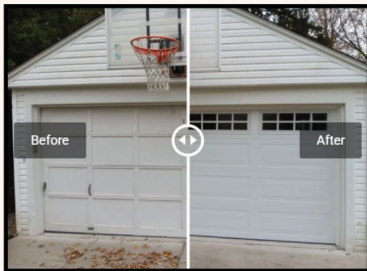
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◀ Don't Call Me Trans

Continued from page 16

“transgender women,” they would be seen as women, period. Same with using restrooms or any other space our presence invites unrealistic fears.

It all starts with us. We have to train ourselves to drop the prefix of “trans” from our description. If we wish to define ourselves, let’s adopt the term “gender-affirmed,” “true-gendered” or a similar, proper descriptive.

The same should go for the term “deadname.” That word has always bothered me since it carries a negative connotation. While I consider my past life living as a perceived cisgender man as separate from my current gender-affirmed life, it’s wrong to think of it as “dead.” I have too many good memories linked to those years to think of them in such nihilistic terms. I prefer to use “chosen name.” It’s philosophically neutral and demonstrably true.

I know this is all a big ask. The word and concept of being “transgender” is so fixed that usurping it and dropping it completely will be a long road. Doing so, however, comes with so many benefits, not

“ I know this is all a big ask. The word and concept of being ‘transgender’ is so fixed that usurping it and dropping it completely will be a long road. Doing so, however, comes with so many benefits, not the least of which is our taking back our self-description from antiquated medical terms and current transphobes who seek to accentuate our otherness. ”

the least of which is our taking back our self-description from antiquated medical terms and current transphobes who seek to accentuate our otherness.

I don’t expect everyone to stop using “transgender” overnight. That is their right and I’ll probably still use it for a while myself. But I want to be able to say “I am a woman” with no qualifier needed. It is my birthright. And if I decide to let someone know more, I am gender-affirmed.

Beyond that, as the old blues song had it, it ain’t nobody’s business but my own.

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