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Finding Courage

Zach Wahls's Viral Marriage Equality Speech and His Message for LGBTQ+ Families Today

by Dana Rudolph | drudolph@mombian.com
contributing writer

Zach Wahls (right) with wife Chloe Angyal and son Elijah. Photo courtesy of Zach Wahls.

In 2011, a 19-year-old named Zach Wahls gave a speech to the Iowa legislature during the state's marriage equality battles, describing his life with two moms. It went viral, catching national attention. Wahls, now a two-term Iowa state senator running for U.S. Senate, spoke with me for the speech's 15th anniversary, looking at its impact and offering advice for parents and young people today.

Wahls was a University of Iowa student when he testified, famously asserting, "The sexual orientation of my parents has had zero effect on the content of my character." The speech gave insight into the lives of same-sex-headed families, while Wahls's eloquence and conviction (he was a high school debate champion) made the case for equality

see **MOMBIAN,** *page 4*

Markey Reintroduces Transgender Bill of Rights Resolution

By Bay Windows Staff

U.S. Senator Ed Markey of Massachusetts on Feb. 11 reintroduced a congressional resolution calling for sweeping federal protections for transgender and nonbinary Americans, reviving an effort first introduced in a prior session of Congress.

The "Transgender Bill of Rights" resolution, filed in the Senate alongside companion legislation in the House led by Rep. Pramila Jayapal of Washington and co-led by Reps. Sara Jacobs of California and Mark Takano of California, outlines a broad framework urging Congress and federal agencies to strengthen civil rights protections based on gender identity.

According to Markey's office, the resolution calls for updating and enforcing federal civil rights laws, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX, to explicitly prohibit dis-

see **MARKEY,** *page 2*

Two trans men sue Kansas over a law invalidating their driver's licenses

By John Hanna
Associated Press

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — Two transgender men are suing Kansas over a new law that invalidated their driver's licenses and about 1,700 others for reflecting people's gender identities and not their sex assigned at birth, arguing that the measure is "dehumanizing."

The men filed their case Thursday, the same day the law took effect, and

see **KANSAS,** *page 2*

The Rev. Dr. Mandy Todd, left, pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church in Lindsborg, Kan., and Rabbi Moti Rieber, right, executive director of Kansas Interfaith Action, protest a new Kansas law that will invalidate hundreds of driver's licenses and birth certificates for transgender people. AP photo by John Hanna.

UMass Boston Athletics Named NCAA Division III LGBTQ+ Institution of the Year

By Bay Windows Staff

The athletics department at the University of Massachusetts Boston has been recognized as the 2025 NCAA Division III LGBTQ Institution of the Year, an honor awarded by the NCAA's Division III LGBTQ Working Group during the annual NCAA Convention.

The award recognizes colleges and universities that demonstrate sustained leadership in promoting LGBTQ+ inclusion, advocacy, and support within Division III athletics programs.

University officials said the recognition reflects a multi-year effort to build a more inclusive athletics culture for student-athletes, coaches, and staff. In a statement announcing the award, Vice Chancellor and

see **UMASS,** *page 7*

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Womencrafts Marks 50 Years as a Lesbian-Owned Feminist Landmark in Provincetown

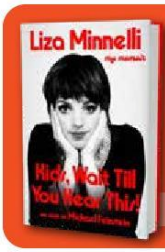
By Bay Windows Staff

One of the country's last remaining feminist bookstores is turning 50.

Womencrafts, the lesbian-owned and operated bookstore and gift shop on Commercial Street, will celebrate its golden anniversary in 2026 with a weekend of events March 20–22, according to a press release issued by the

see **WOMENCRAFTS,** *page 5*

Courtesy photo.



Courtesy photo.

"Ideally, I'd like to date an older elegant man who speaks beautifully and is filthy rich. Then I'd like to date a 40-year-old guy who is passionate about something. I don't care what. Then I'd like to date an 18-year-old who I see twice a week and whose name I don't know."

— Liza Minnelli, as told to Michael Feinstein. Although I suppose it could just as easily be a Feinstein quote.

more in Billy Masters on page 6!

Markey

Continued from page 1

crimination based on gender identity in employment, housing, education, health care and public accommodations. It also urges federal agencies to ensure access to gender-affirming health care, protect transgender students, and address violence targeting transgender people.

"Trans rights are human rights," Markey said in a statement announcing the measure, arguing that transgender Americans are facing increased discrimination and legislative attacks in states across the country.

The resolution itself does not change federal law. Instead, it expresses the sense of Congress and lays out policy goals that supporters say should guide future legislation and regulatory action. Similar versions introduced in previous sessions did not advance to a vote.

In announcing the reintroduction, lawmakers cited what they described as a growing number of state-level measures restricting access to gender-affirming care, limiting participation of transgender athletes in school sports, and curtailing how gender identity is addressed in schools.

Advocacy organizations including Advocates for Trans Equality endorsed the resolution, calling it a reaffirmation of federal commitment to protecting transgender people from discrimination.

The measure arrives in a closely divided Congress, where major civil rights legislation faces steep procedural hurdles. Whether the resolution gains traction beyond its introduction remains uncertain, but supporters say it signals continued Democratic backing for expanding statutory protections for transgender and nonbinary Americans.

Markey, a longtime supporter of LGBTQ+ rights, has previously co-sponsored the Equality Act and other federal legislation aimed at expanding anti-discrimination protections.

Kansas

Continued from page 1

argue that it violates rights to privacy, personal autonomy and due legal process guaranteed by the Kansas Constitution. The men also are challenging the law's tough, new enforcement provisions for the state's 3-year-old policy of barring transgender people from using public restrooms or other single-sex facilities associated with their gender identities.

The men want to block the law, which also invalidated roughly 1,800 transgender people's birth certificates. They filed their case in district court in Douglas County, where they live, which is home to the main University of Kansas campus and is a liberal bastion in a red-leaning state.

"The Kansas Constitution prohibits the Kansas Legislature's targeting of transgender individuals for this discriminatory and dehumanizing treatment," the lawsuit says.

The state Supreme Court declared in 2019 that the Kansas Bill of Rights confers and protects a right to bodily autonomy — a decision that protected abortion rights.

The new law was enacted last week when Republicans, who hold a supermajority in the Legislature, overrode a veto by Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly. The judge handling the lawsuit, James McCabria, was appointed to the bench in 2014 by Republican Gov. Sam Brownback, and Douglas County residents have voted three times since to keep him on the bench.

A 2023 state law, also enacted over Kelly's veto, defined male and female by a person's "biological reproductive system" at birth. The Kansas Supreme Court hasn't yet reviewed it.

This year's law calls for stiff fines for cities, counties, public schools and state agencies that don't restrict transgender people's use of facilities, as well as fines and criminal prosecutions for transgender people who violate it. People also can sue trans individuals over alleged violations.

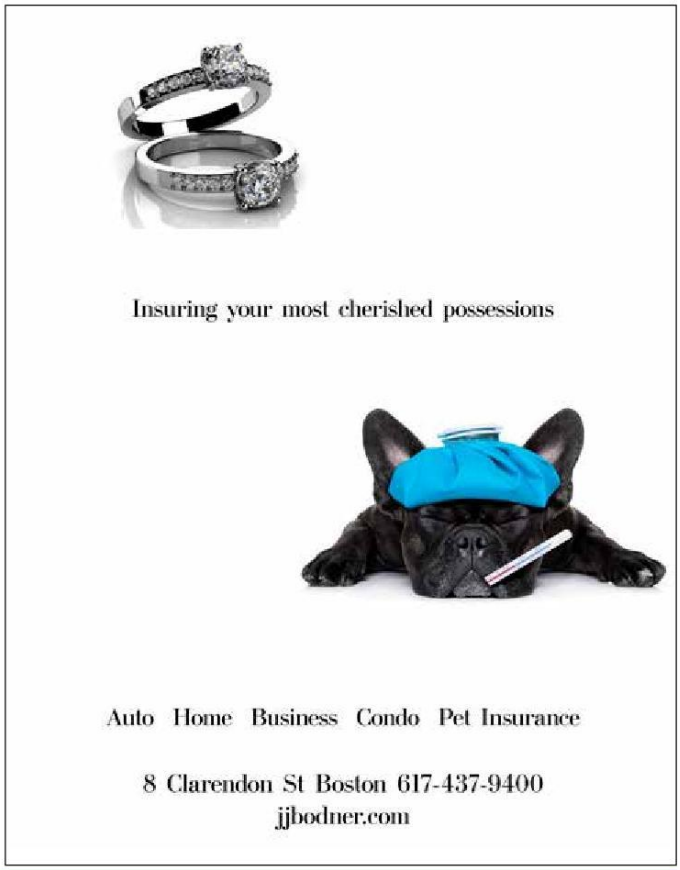
Republican legislators argued that the new law will protect girls and women and often described transgender women and girls as male.

"Kansans expect clarity, not confusion," House Speaker Dan Hawkins, a Wichita Republican, said after the law was enacted. "They expect leadership, not surrender to radical activists."

The law bars any "sex" listing on driver's licenses and birth certificates other than the one assigned at birth and invalidates existing records that don't comply. The state has started notifying transgender people by mail that their licenses are invalid and they must get new ones immediately.

At least eight other states don't allow transgender people to change one or both documents, but only Kansas has invalidated documents that were previously changed.

The two men suing over the new law are from Lawrence, about 40 miles (64 kilometers) west of Kansas City, and represented by American Civil Liberties Union attorneys. They're identified as Daniel Doe and Matthew Moe, saying they fear discrimination, harassment and violence if they don't remain anonymous.



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WORLD BRIEFS

Ugandan police arrest two women for allegedly kissing in public

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — Ugandan police detained two women who were reported by their neighbors to be engaging in same-sex activities, a police spokesperson said on Thursday, one of the first known instances of arrests under an anti-LGBTQ+ law enacted in 2023.

The women were arrested in the northwestern city of Arua on Feb. 18 after police were notified they were often seen kissing. When officers arrived, they caught the couple "red-handed on the cement floor," said spokesperson Josephine Angucia.

The women were later freed on police bond and have yet to be charged as the investigations are continuing, she said.

The controversial Anti-Homosexuality Act was supported by many in Uganda but widely condemned by rights activists and others abroad. Its promoters said it was necessary to protect children.

While the legislation does not criminalize identifying as LGBTQ+, it mandates the death penalty for "aggravated homosexuality," which is defined as cases of sexual relations involving people infected with HIV, as well as with minors and other categories of vulnerable people.

The detention of the women in Arua "underscores the grim reality we are facing on the ground under the Anti-Homosexuality Act," said Frank Mugisha, a prominent LGBTQ+ leader in Uganda. "We have seen a surge in a targeted crackdown that goes beyond just arrests; it has fueled a dangerous cycle of blackmail and extortion."

Same-sex activity is separately criminalized in the East African country under a colonial-era law that punishes relations against "the order of nature."

Homosexuality is criminalized in many of Africa's 54 countries. The West African nation of Senegal is currently trying to impose tougher penalties for same-sex activity.

Senegal introduces legislation to boost minimum sentence for homosexuality to 5 years

By Babacar Dione, Associated Press

DAKAR, Senegal (AP) — Senegal 's Prime Minister Ousmane Sonko introduced legislation in parliament Tuesday that would toughen the prison term for homosexuality in the West African nation to at least five years from the current minimum of one year.

The bill also seeks to broaden the scope of what is defined as "unnatural acts" under the law that has criminalized homosexuality in the conservative country since its independence from France in 1960. But the legislation would not elevate the crime from the current level as a misdemeanor.

"We can achieve the intended objectives without going so far as to elevate the acts" to the level of more serious crimes, Sonko said.

Human rights groups in Senegal say the situation for gay people in the country has been deteriorating since 2018, and that at least a dozen people have been arrested in recent weeks over allegations of homosexuality.

The legislation fulfills one of Sonko's campaign promises and now needs to be passed in the National Assembly, where Sonko's PASTEF party is in control.

Netherlands' coalition government takes office led by youngest-ever premier Rob Jetten

By Mike Corder, Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — A new minority Dutch coalition government took office Monday led by Rob Jetten, the Netherlands' youngest-ever prime minister who will have to use all his bridge-building skills to pass laws and see out a full four-year term in office.

Jetten, 38, heads a three-party administration made up of his centrist D66, the center-right Christian Democrats and the center-right People's Party for Freedom and Democracy.

Jetten, who is the Netherlands' first openly gay premier, said in a post on X it was "an enormous honor to be able to get to work as prime minister."

The coalition parties together hold only 66 of the lower house of parliament's 150 seats, so Jetten will have to negotiate with opposition lawmakers to find support for every piece of legislation his government wants to pass. The largest opposition bloc, the newly merged Green Left and Labor Party, has already signaled it will push for changes to some of Jetten's plans.

Jetten and his team of ministers took their oath of office in the presence of King Willem-Alexander in the ornate Orange Hall of the royal palace in a forest on the edge of The Hague. The king wished the new government good luck "in uncertain times."

A small group of demonstrators from the Extinction Rebellion environmental group protested outside the gates of the palace during the ceremony and sounded sirens as the new ministers lined up for a formal photo.

Following the traditional photo of the new Cabinet on the steps of the palace, the new government ministers held their first meeting.

The Netherlands' main LGBTQI+ organization, COC, welcomed Jetten's appointment.

"The new premier can be a role model for people from the rainbow community," it said in a statement. "It shows that your sexual orientation doesn't have to matter. That you can become a construction worker, a doctor, a lawyer, and even prime minister."

The government was sworn in 117 days after national elections that Jetten's party won by a narrow margin over the Party for Freedom led by anti-Islam lawmaker Geert Wilders. The final result was decided only after a count of postal ballots after the fourth national election since 2017 in the politically splintered Netherlands.

The new government took office a day before the fourth anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Jetten has pledged to continue his country's strong support for Kyiv as it battles the forces of Russian President Vladimir Putin. He has also said he will continue spending to strengthen the Dutch military in times of geopolitical uncertainty.

Dilan Yeşilgöz-Zegerius, the new defense minister, will be in charge of overseeing that goal and she underscored its importance in her first message on social media after taking up her post.

"Our own security is at stake, and we must not be naive about that," she posted on X. "If we want freedom to prevail and our way of life to endure, then the Netherlands and Europe must take matters into their own hands."

Images from left to right: Claude Cahun (French, 1894–1954), *Self-portrait (reflected image in mirror, chequered jacket)*, 1928. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy of the Jersey Heritage Collections. Narcissister (American), *Untitled Self-Portrait Series (Pink Nails)*, 2012. C-Print. © Narcissister. Courtesy of the artist. Samuel Fosso (Cameroonian), *Self-Portrait (Malcolm X)* from *African Spirits* series, 2008. Ilford Fiberbased Glossy Paper. © Samuel Fosso. Courtesy of the artist and Yossi Milo, New York.

The cries of a child

Lessons from society's treatment of children

by Richard J. Rosendall | rrosendall@starpower.net
contributing writer

Mirabel is a queer refugee who runs a safe house in Nairobi, Kenya.

The house provides shelter to seven adults and eight children. My focus here is on the children. They are fed and cared for; they got the shoes, sweaters, and notebooks they need for school.

Recently, someone abandoned a 4-year-old boy outside Mirabel's safe house before dawn. She found him shivering on the ground. He cried, but did not speak. All he was wearing was a shirt, shorts and no shoes. She held him, gave him medicine and wrapped him in her T-shirt. She contacted the local village chief and the police and consulted a nonprofit group that helps children. She was told to take the child to a county facility a good distance away.

She sang for the child to comfort him. He was fascinated and touched her face. When they reached the place where she was to turn him over to the county officials, the boy cried as she was leaving. In the space of a day, a bond of trust had formed. It was heartbreaking, but Mirabel is at capacity with the children she already has.

The next day the officials called and said the boy is not Kenyan but Congolese. He is a refugee whose mother died in an accident. Because they put refugees in a different category, they told Mirabel to come and take him to some other place.

She refused. She said she had done her best to get him the help he needed, and had no further responsibility. Fortunately, she has a paralegal certificate which helps her deal with government officials. The police she spoke with told her she had done the right thing.

The world can be a cold and cruel place, especially for children. There are thousands of homeless children in Nairobi.

In 1988, the late gay historian and Yale professor John Boswell wrote a book called "The Kindness of Strangers: The Abandonment of Children in Western Europe from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance." The practice was common. Parents used churches and foundling hospitals.

With such a history, it should be no surprise that recent weeks have seen Customs and Immigration Enforcement officers in America arresting parents while leaving their children on their own, as well as cases in which a parent and child were seized and sent to one of Trump's concentration camps.

The boy in Nairobi could have been treated worse by whoever left him outside the safe house. In America, cases arise of newborn babies being found in trash bins by passersby who hear their cries.

It requires receptivity to gain understanding of others' suffering. I am much better off than a refugee in Kenya. I have a pension, health insurance and a personal support network. I am not estranged from my family and I have loving friends. I have legal rights for which I and many others fought. Those rights are now under attack by Trump and his allies, not because Trump personally cares, but because stoking the culture wars helps him consolidate power.

Some gay and trans refugees who fled to Nairobi from neighboring countries have had to hide from family members who went there to hunt them down. Dissertations could be written on why murders of family members for being different came to be called "honor killings." There is no honor in ignorance, cruelty and hate.

Recent events show that if we do not learn to respect our differences, society will splinter into conflict and needless suffering. Those who will suffer the most are children.

None of us can solve all the problems in the world, but we can do our part. Mirabel did so when she comforted the abandoned boy and looked for where to take him for the care he needed. She still doesn't know his name, but she remembers her heartbreak when he cried at their parting.

When she returned home, the children at her house were waiting and greeted her warmly.

Let us hold our children close while giving a thought to those who are lost, alone and afraid. We should not accept a caste system in which our own children are safe and well cared for, while others fend for themselves in the streets.

Suffering that we ignore can metastasize into a threat to things we take for granted. The more of us who step in to fill the gaps instead of leaving the task to others, the more we will build community rather than chaos.

Richard Rosendall is a writer and activist who can be reached at rrosendall@me.com.

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Mombian

Continued from page 1

more clearly than many had heard before.

"I had no idea the impact it would have on my family, on my life, on so many other people across the country," he reflected. "I think even all these years later, it's still reverberating in ways that are sometimes hard to fully appreciate."

When he gave the speech, Wahls was studying engineering, but said he was "probably more aware of politics than your average engineering student, because at a relatively young age, I learned that politics was very interested in me and families like mine." His speech, however, was "a catalyzing moment" that "accelerated an awareness of how advocacy could have a positive impact in the world," he explained. He thus continued to work on marriage equality in Iowa and nationally. An Eagle Scout, too, he helped found and lead Scouts for Equality, the successful national campaign to end anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination in the Boy Scouts. In 2018, he won a state senate seat.

The marriage equality he helped secure had a direct impact on his life. His mom Terry has multiple sclerosis, which "did really devastating things to her physically and mentally," he noted. For her and his mom Jackie to be able to navigate the healthcare system like any other married couple, "because their relationship was recognized as valid and equal," he explained, was "a very important development for our family."

As an outgrowth of his advocacy work, too, he said, "I almost feel like I have a sibling relationship in a lot of ways with any other kids I meet who are also the children of LGBTQ parents."

His speech also connected him with his now-wife, writer Chloe Angyal, after she penned a 2011 article jokingly titled "Marry Me, Zach Wahls" for the blog Feministing, in praise of his testimony. Wahls reached out; they married in 2021 and welcomed their first child in 2024.

Now, as efforts grow in Iowa and nationally to push back on LGBTQ+ rights, including transgender rights and marriage equality, Wahls offers this advice from his experience both as someone who grew up with same-sex parents and as a parent himself. "For parents, obviously, there's a pretty innate desire to want to protect your kids and your family," he observed. He suggests "being candid about what's happening" when speaking with kids, but also assuring them "that they're not facing those dangers or those threats alone, that not only do you have a family, you have a whole community coming together to try and fight back." In the early 2000s, when marriage equality "was a very hot political topic," he shared, "I was aware of what was happening out in the world, but never thought that my parents couldn't take care of me or our family. I think that projecting that strength and commitment to defending each other, taking care of each other, is probably the thing that's ultimately the most important."

Because his parents had heeded that, he explained, when the opportunity arose to testify to the legislature, "I was safe enough and secure enough in who I was as a young adult that I could do it." To youth with LGBTQ+ parents today who also wish to speak out, he advises that the most important thing is not just to present arguments, but rather "to connect on an emotional level and on a human level" and, by emphasizing, like his speech, "the things that we have in common, not the things that make us different." At the same time, he recognizes that "advocacy isn't for everybody" and for some, "There might be other opportunities or ways to be supportive to people in the community."

Whether through advocacy or otherwise, he sees movement towards change. During his current campaign for U.S. Senate, he said, "Everywhere we go, there are more and more people who understand that the way things are in our politics is not the way that they have to be, that a better future is possible, but that it's not going to happen on its own. It is going to be the result of ordinary people doing extraordinary things."

Even though times are hard right now, he's hopeful for the future. "It won't be easy, and there are going to continue to be terrible things that are happening between now and where we're trying to get to," he explained. "But I'm sure that we're going to get there."

"I had a speech that happened to go viral at the right time, and it had a much larger impact than I would have ever thought possible," he reflected, urging others, "You never know when it might be your courage that reaches a much broader audience than you expect. I think it's always worth it to find that courage."

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), a two-time GLAAD Media Award-winning blog for LGBTQ+ parents, plus a searchable database of 1,900+ LGBTQ+ family books.

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Womencrafts

Continued from page 1

organization.

Founded in 1976, Womencrafts has functioned as more than a retail store. The shop offers books, music, art, jewelry and gifts created by women and trans artists, while also serving as a gathering space and organizing hub for women and the LGBTQ+ community, the press release states. For decades, it has provided "a welcoming and affirming space where people have found safety, connection, and the courage to be fully themselves."

At its height in the 1970s through the early 1990s, the women's bookstore movement included dozens of feminist retail spaces nationwide. Today, fewer than a dozen remain in the United States, according to the press release. Current owner Michelle Axelson purchased Womencrafts in 2015.

The shop's future in Provincetown was solidified in 2022, when supporters raised $215,000 through a GoFundMe campaign to purchase the building that houses the store, the press release notes.

Womencrafts continues to serve the Provincetown and Outer Cape community as a center for activism and civic engagement, hosting planning meetings, educational events, letter-writing campaigns and protests, according to the release. It remains a cultural anchor for visitors and residents who view Provincetown as a place of safety and belonging.

Anniversary Weekend Events

The 50th anniversary celebration will feature a mix of performances, workshops and community gatherings.

A cabaret night spanning five decades of Womencrafts will include performances by Melissa Ferrick, Natalia Zukerman, Karen Grenier, Marissa Miller, Poppy Champlin, Anne Stott and Suede, according to the press release. Other scheduled events include a storytelling night, a workshop focused on preserving women's "herstory," film screenings centered on lesbian, queer and feminist themes, art exhibits, a craft fair, and a wellness event combining a sound bath, meditation and gentle yoga.

The weekend will also launch "Womencrafts' 50th Anniversary Presents," a yearlong series of author talks, discussions and community gatherings, the press release states.

"As attacks on bodily autonomy, LGBTQ+ rights, and trans lives continue across the country, spaces like Womencrafts are not just cultural and historic landmarks — they are lifelines," Axelson said in the press release. "Womencrafts exists because our community needs places where we can gather, organize, reflect, and be seen. That was true in 1976, and it's true now."

Many events are free, with reservations requested.

Event Schedule (Selected)

- Storytelling Night: March 20, 6 p.m., Unitarian Universalist Meeting House, 236 Commercial St. (Free; reservations requested)
- Morning of Relaxation: March 21, 9 a.m., location to be announced (Free; reservations requested)
- Cabaret: March 21, 7 p.m., Unitarian Universalist Meeting House, 236 Commercial St. ($39–$55)
- Preserving Our Herstory Workshop: March 21, 2:30 p.m., Provincetown Commons, 46 Bradford St. (Free; reservations requested)

How to Get Tickets and More Information

Tickets for the March 21 cabaret and reservations for free events are available through Womencrafts' official website, womencraftsptown.com, according to the press release. The site includes the full anniversary weekend schedule, ticket links and updates about the yearlong "50th Anniversary Presents" series.

Additional information is available in person at the store, located at 376 Commercial St. in Provincetown, and through Womencrafts' social media channels on Facebook, Instagram (@womencrafts) and TikTok (@womencrafts1976), the press release states.

Womencrafts showcases work by more than 100 female artists and carries approximately 1,000 books. It is one of 13 remaining feminist bookstores in the country, according to the organization.

This article is based on information provided in a press release issued by Womencrafts.

For more information go to womencraftsptown.com

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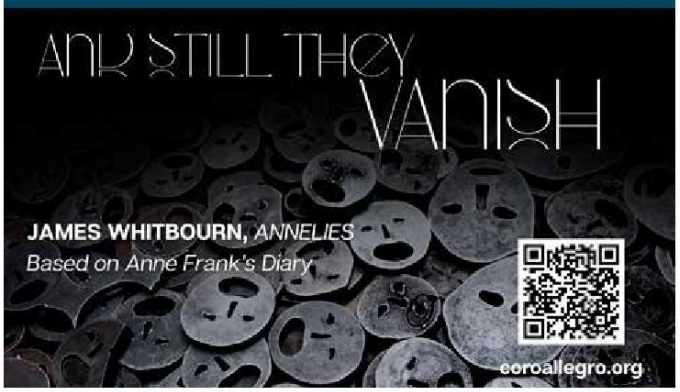

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billy masters

This is supposed to be the fun, frothy, frilly column that delivers some entertainment news, some industry dish, and a few chuckles. So, I hate to kick things off with bad news. When people talk about the current government infringing on people's rights, none of us is immune. The latest target is transgender people in Kansas. If you live there and have gone through gender reassignment, you likely petitioned to change your birth certificate and driver's license. As of last week, those changes have been invalidated—and future changes to those documents are banned by a recent ruling. I can't say that this is how it begins...but this is how it's happening now.

I am always delighted to spotlight great work of those I love. So let's start with the magnificent **Miriam Margolyes**, who is in the Oscar-nominated live action short "A Friend of Dorothy". What is extraordinary about Miriam is she always appears completely authentic. There's no "actor-y" nonsense about her. She just "is". As Dorothy who bonds with a teenage boy, one suspects Miriam identifies with her more than some other characters. But that doesn't make it any the less staggering. It should be noted that she's well-partnered with **Alistair Nwachukwu** as Dorothy's "friend". It's a sweet, touching, lovely film which you can see on BillyMasters.com.

Then there's my Play Mama, **Jenifer Lewis**. Superlatives are almost superfluous when it comes to describing her. Suffice it to say, she is someone whose talents are boundless and who always delivers. Yes, she's in "GOAT" playing warthog Florence "Flo" Everson, owner of the basketball team (fun fact—she also played Flo in "Cars"). But the big news is that she'll be reprising a memorable role when she joins the cast of the reboot of "A Different World" for Netflix. In the original, she played Hillman College's Dean Dorothy Dandridge Davenport. In the reboot, Davenport is still at Hillman—but now she's a professor. Stay tuned.

Then there's the divine **Charles Busch**—who I am certain would not mind being lumped in with Jenifer and Miriam. With his own brand of "je ne sais quoi", he's carved a unique niche for himself in the theatrical annals. One of his biggest successes was when he wrote the hit Broadway play, "The Tale of the Allergist's Wife". In 2019, Charles joined the original cast by taking on the leading lady role (that evening, the original leading lady, **Linda Lavin**, played the mother). Busch is once again slipping into the pumps of Marjorie Taub. This time, the venue will be Palm Springs' Plaza Theatre as part of their "rePLAY" series. This script-in-hand reading of the play will also feature **Chris Carranza, Alix Korey, Lewis J. Stadlen,** and the phenomenal **Harriet Harris** in the role created by **Michele Lee**. Two nights only—March 13th and 14th. You can grab your tickets at PalmSpringsPlazaTheatre.com.

Speaking of theatre, **Megan Thee Stallion** is headed to the Great White Way. For her Broadway debut, Meg is joining the cast of "Moulin Rouge! The Musical". Yes, the same "Moulin Rouge" which recently announced it will close this summer (a coincidence, I'm sure). Starting on March 24th, Stallion will take over the role of impresario Harold Zidler—the role currently played by **Bob the Drag Queen** and previously embodied by **Boy George**. Reflective of the times we live in, Megan is being touted as "the first female-identifying performer to play the role". She will stay with the show for eight weeks, wrapping up on May 17th.

The fun never stops in our coverage of "Traitors". This anecdote comes from the premiere party, which took place at West Hollywood hotspot The Abbey. **Lisa Rinna** claims that someone slipped something into her drink. "I had fentanyl in my system. I'm not kidding. I had fentanyl, high levels of amphetamines and other things. But I can't talk a lot about it because we're still dealing with it." During a promotional appearance on "Good Day New York", she went on. "So many people that I know have had this happen at The Abbey. All my daughter's friends. I mean, this is not a first-time thing. This is something that's gone on for years." We're told that fellow "Traitor" **Colton Underwood** first noticed Rinna was unwell at the party and alerted her team to intervene. A spokesperson for The Abbey says, "We pulled and reviewed all available surveillance footage from the time in question and interviewed staff on duty. We found no evidence of drink tampering or suspicious behavior toward her."

You wanna talk about outta sight casting? "Star Trek: Starfleet Academy" is going further than **Gene Roddenberry** ever imagined—we're getting our first gay Klingon! Since the show started, people have speculated that the character of Jay-Den Kraag could have a secret. And he sure does. In the most recent episode, he had more than a little sexual tension with a fellow academy cadet. Actor **Karim Diane** portrays Jay-Den and he wrote this on social media: "Not gonna pretend like I wasn't afraid to take on this role. Part of me still kinda is. I knew that I was gonna, you know, receive a lot of negative comments that were rooted in homophobia and racism and bigotry. But what y'all have to understand, I have received 10 times more messages from LGBTQ+ people around the world telling me how much the character Jay-Den means to them. And that is all that matters to me, truly."

Tom Daley had a close encounter with the Muppets on "Sesame Street". His first scene was with **Bert and Elmo**. "We're fans of your athleticism, but also of your knitting," said Bert, forever putting to rest those pesky rumors about his relationship with Ernie (he admitted that he's knitting his "roommate" a scarf). But things really got cooking when Tom shared the screen with Cookie Monster. Daley gifted him with a kind of "cookie cozy"—with predictable results. You can check it out on our website.

I don't think the boys from "Heated Rivalry" are into knitting—but perhaps that could be a twist for season two, which they won't even begin filming until this summer (episodes will air spring of 2027). Since the fans aren't content waiting for the second season, they're making their own episodes. TikTok creator **Carter Tyra** came up with her own continuation. "They're settling into their new home with their new baby, **Edward Jacob,** or EJ for short. Shane found out he was pregnant again on Valentine's Day." Well, who didn't see that coming?

I'm sure you all watched **Connor Storrie** host "Saturday Night Live". I thought he did a commendable job. He's kinda goofy and game for anything (which is how I like my men). He even showed off his body as a stripper who had been in a car accident, a character he developed during clown classes at the Elysian Theater in LA—and we've got the original stripper photos to prove it. Of course, Hudson Williams showed his support. But one of the best skits didn't make it past dress rehearsal. In it, Connor played **Armie Hammer**, who admits to having Tourette's Syndrome. "Not many people know this, but one of the most common side effects of Tourette's is cannibalism. You could be casually DMing with a girl when suddenly the Tourette's takes over and you're typing stuff like, 'I'm literally going to eat you.' And she's like 'LOL what?' And you're like, 'I'm not LOLing, or ROFLing. I'm gonna drink your blood and gnaw the meat off your ribs like I'm at an Applebee's." Check out the skit on BillyMasters.com.

We have time for a brief "Ask Billy" question which will warm the cockles of your cockles. Jared in Miami said, *"I just saw a clip of 'Young Hercules' on YouTube. Is that a young **Ryan Gosling**?"*

That is indeed. I had forgotten about this short-lived series, which came from the makers of "Beastmaster" and "Xena". Ryan sports that floppy blond 'do that I continue to be so partial to. The show came to the former "Mouseketeer" in an odd way. **Ian Bohen** played the role in the pilot movie and four episodes of "Hercules: The Legendary Journeys". When the series changed from a one-hour adventure show to a half-hour children's show, Bohen passed. He also didn't want to relocate to New Zealand, where it would be filmed. Enter the lovely Gosling, who gave off a more youthful exuberance. And he wasn't alone—many of the scenes were stolen by his onscreen cohort, **Dean O'Gorman**, who was not only hot but funny! Check out some of their footage on BillyMasters.com.

When I'm using the Wayback Machine to answer a question, it's definitely time to end yet another column. And I didn't even need the assistance of Mr. Peabody (or his boy Sherman, which sounds awfully Epstein-esque). I am back in the States, but who knows for how long. For now, I'm just focusing on bringing you the latest gossip on www.BillyMasters.com—the site that always delivers. Send your questions to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I go to an Applebee's! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

Photo courtesy of Peacock.

Colton Underwood

Screenshot via Tom Daley, Instagram

Tom Daley, Elmo, & Bert

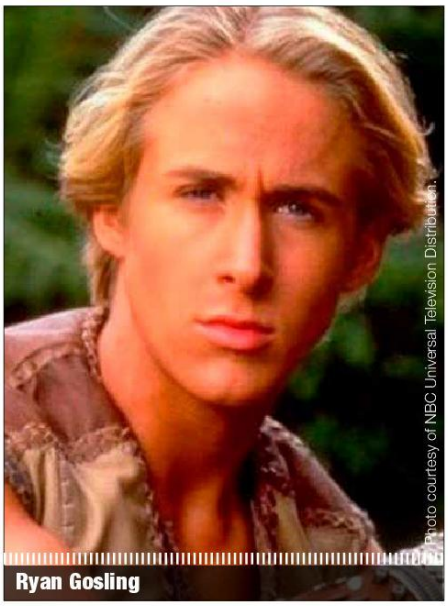

Photo courtesy of NBC Universal Television Distribution.

Ryan Gosling

UMASS

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Director of Athletics and Recreation Dr. Jacqueline Schuman said the honor represents "intentional work" across the department to create an environment where all athletes feel supported and able to succeed.

UMass Boston has expanded its inclusion infrastructure in recent years. In 2023, the department created a Director of Community Engagement and Inclusive Excellence role to coordinate equity initiatives across teams and campus partners. The athletics program also launched an active Athlete Ally chapter, hosted Pride-themed athletic events, and sent student-athletes and staff to national inclusion programs including the Athlete Ally Activism Summit and the NCAA's Common Ground initiative.

In addition, the department maintains a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee composed of athletes, coaches, and administrators who meet regularly to identify challenges and advance policy improvements. University officials also highlighted implicit-bias training and campus partnerships designed to strengthen inclusive hiring and team culture.

The NCAA's Division III LGBTQ of the Year awards program honors both institutions and individuals who demonstrate leadership in advancing LGBTQ+ inclusion within intercollegiate athletics. This year's coach honoree was Mitchell McPartland of the University of Chicago.

The university announcement detailing the award was reported by Crystal Valencia for UMass Boston News.

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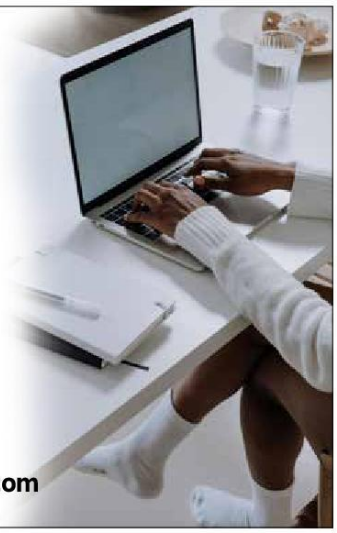
e-mail: letters.baywindows@gmail.com



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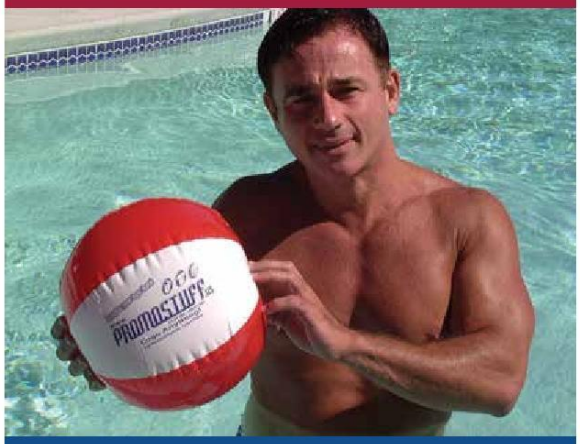

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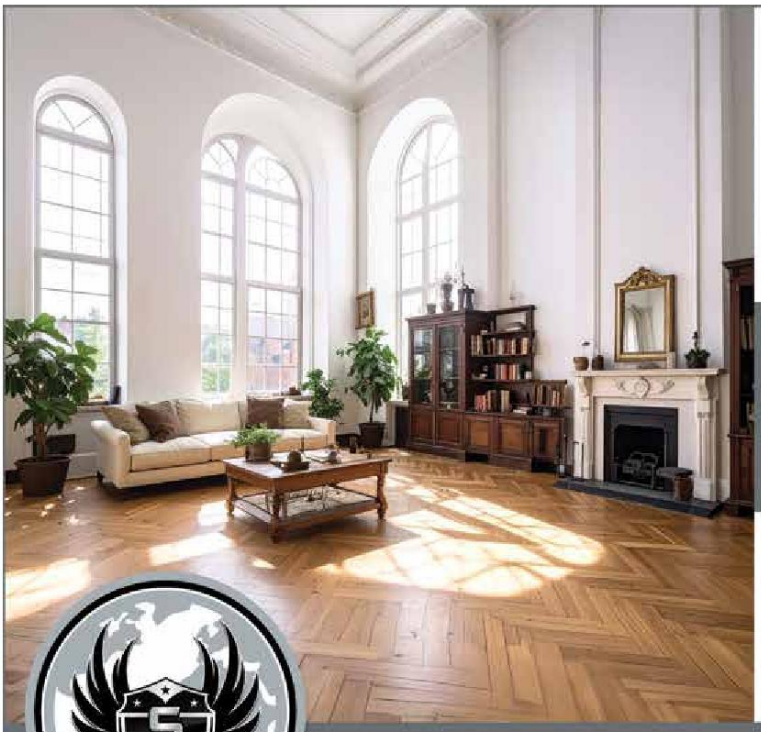

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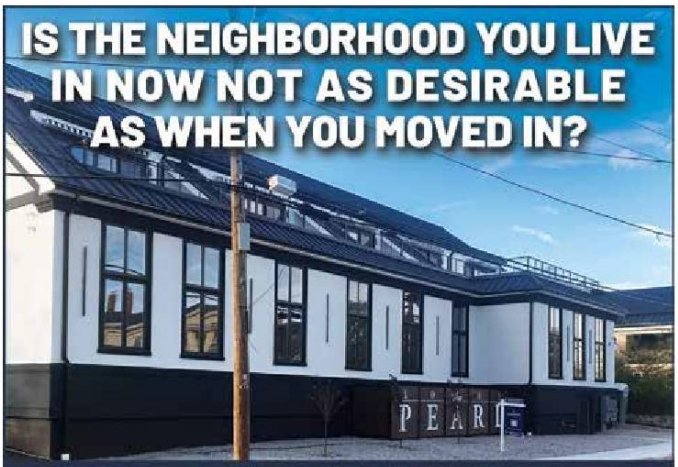

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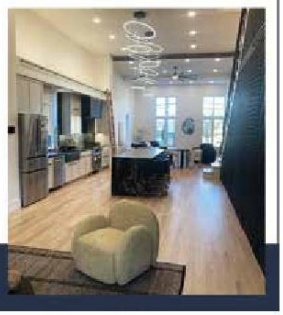

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