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Supreme Court turns down KY clerk second time over same-sex marriage

By Lisa Keen
Keen News Service

The U.S. Supreme Court today (November 10) rejected an appeal from a Kentucky clerk who was fined $100,000 for refusing to issue a marriage license to a gay couple.

The Court made no statement to explain why it was not taking the case, and no justice proffered a dissent. It takes at least four justices to agree to hear a petition before the full bench take up the matter.

The petition by Rowan County clerk Kim Davis, 60, was a long shot, and Davis had tried before to petition the Supreme Court to reverse a lower court decision.

The thrust of this petition was to seek a declaration from the Supreme Court that the county —not Davis— should be required to pay the $100,000 levied against Davis for refusing to issue the marriage license to David Ermold and David Moore.

In addition to the fine, Davis was jailed briefly for several days for refusing to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. She also accrued $250,000 in attorneys' fees. The primary issue of her petition to the Supreme Court was her argument that, as county clerk, she had qualified

see **SCOTUS,** *page 5*

LGBTQ+ representation on primetime TV grows thanks to shows like 'Abbott Elementary' and 'Hacks'

By Mark Kennedy
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — TV shows like "Abbott Elementary," "Hacks," "Heartstopper," "The Last of Us" and "Yellowjackets" helped increase the ranks of LGBTQ+ characters on prime time by 4% over the previous season, according to a new study by the advocacy group GLAAD.

This year's "Where We Are on TV" study, released Thursday, counted 489 LGBTQ+ characters across scripted prime-time broadcast, cable and streaming shows — up 21 additional

see **LGBTQ+ TV,** *page 5*

Hannah Einbender in a scene from "Hacks." Photo courtesy of HBO, via AP.

A Queer Parent's Thoughts on Gratitude and Hope

by Dana Rudolph | drudolph@mombian.com
contributing writer

We are heading into what is supposed to be a time to give thanks, but it feels like there is little to be thankful for right now. The federal government is shut down; food assistance to those in need has been slashed; LGBTQ+ equality, particularly trans equality, is under renewed attack. Finding gratitude is tough, but here's what I'm grateful for this year, and what is giving me hope as we head towards the next.

First and foremost, I am grateful for my family. My son, now an adult, brings joy and love to my life every day. My spouse of 32 years and I met at a very different time in our lives, but after living in four different states, starting our family via reciprocal IVF in the early aughts, raising our son, and caring for each other through the passing of our parents, we find ourselves still enjoying our adventures together (and plotting new ones). My brother is also part of my circle of gratitude, a loving uncle to my son and one of the people I am closest to. May we each find love this season with our families, whether they are by blood, law, or choice.

I am grateful this year, too, for the friends who share my anger over the state of our country and are helping to create change. Recently, I was glad to see many in my community respond in record numbers to the need for donations to our local food pantry as SNAP benefits have halted. Such donations should not have been needed—a government should never let its people go hungry—but under the current circumstances, I was encouraged

see **MOMBIAN,** *page 4*

OPINION

This Stonewall Pioneer Slams Ken Burns' Documentary "The American Revolution"

By Mark Segal
Philadelphia Gay News

In the 1970s, I launched a campaign to end LGBTQ+ invisibility on television. Years later, that mission to show the public who we were expanded to another arena we'd long been written out of: American History. Just as television producers ignored us, so too had historians. Sadly, such erasure is happening again today, this time because of both the glaring absence and defamatory framing of LGBTQ+ people in Ken Burns' new PBS documentary "The American Revolution." How can LGBTQ+ people be both omitted and defamed in the documentary? Simple: the use of age-old stereotypes.

see **SEGAL,** *page 4*

Transgender Awareness Week & Transgender Day of Remembrance 2025

November 13-20, 2025

Transgender Awareness Week (November 13-19) raises visibility for transgender people and addresses issues the community faces, culminating in Transgender Day of Remembrance on November 20 — an international day to commemorate trans, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming

see **TRANSGENDER,** *page 7*

Photo via Adobe Firefly.

"I don't know if there are any kids watching. But if you are, grow up straight."

Bill O'Reilly on "Real Time with Bill Maher." Curious words from someone who allegedly urged a female producer to rub a "falafel thing" on her.... We always thought he meant "luffa"—although neither seems particularly hygienic. What he meant for the "kids" was to grow up and stay on the "straight and narrow" ...unlike him, apparently.

more in Billy Masters on page 6!

Photo By Justin Hoch, via Wikimedia Commons.

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Building on victory

The bloom is off Trump's stink-blossom

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

Photo via Adobe Firefly.

Voters handed Democrats a sweeping victory across the country in the November 4 elections. Donald Trump's Republicans paid dearly for their inability to restrain or conceal their recklessness and cruelty.

In response to being roundly repudiated at the polls, Trump boasted, lied, made insults and threats. Mind you, this is a man who confuses dementia screening with an IQ test. And he once proposed nuking hurricanes.

Trump's howlers, including the claim that every election he loses is rigged, are persuading fewer and fewer people.

You would never know, on this bright autumn morning, that a pitched battle is underway for the soul of America. As I sip my coffee in the McDonald's, a little girl walking by with her daddy climbs into the chair at the next table. She is holding a TV remote control for some reason. I ask her not to point it at me because I don't want to be switched off.

To be honest, there are people I wouldn't mind switching off, at least from my newsfeed. For example, I saw this headline concerning an obnoxious congresswoman: "Nancy Mace escalates fallout from foul-mouthed airport meltdown with legal threats after criticism from fellow Republicans."

Is it possible that Rep. Mace, who is running for governor of South Carolina and has been calling trans people crazy, is so starved of attention that she has to scream at officers in airports and threaten lawsuits? I stress that I'm just a humble commentator and do not mean to provoke her.

I can't help recalling that the phrase "Trump Derangement Syndrome" arose not as a reference to Trump's own mental health issues but as an effort to deflect such concerns onto his critics. Lately, however, we who wish to be rid of the Worst President Ever have gone from being mad to being domestic terrorists in the eyes of Trump diehards. We are also called insurrectionists, despite never having incited a riot at the US Capitol, because the leading insurrectionist—who deems himself above the law—is considering invoking the Insurrection Act to consolidate dictatorial power.

Are you keeping up with all this? I know it sounds crazy. You never know what jarring images you'll stumble upon. On election night I switched to CNN, saw former Chicago mayor Rahm Emanuel, and immediately reached for my remote control like that little girl in the McDonald's. And Rahm is a Democrat!

New York City Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani is an immigrant who grew up in New York. I am a native Washingtonian who grew up in Maryland's 8th congressional district, currently represented by constitutional scholar Jamie Raskin. Raskin has happily dubbed Mamdani an FDR Democrat.

You might think comparing a gifted young politician to Franklin Delano Roosevelt would not scandalize anyone at this point; but you would be wrong. Lots of Republicans still decry FDR as a socialist. These are the same people set on robbing millions of their healthcare and nutritional assistance.

Trump, who hosted a Great Gatsby-themed party at Mar-a-Lago hours before millions of Americans lost their SNAP benefits, touted the Roaring Twenties as a high point in America's past. I don't want to burst his bubble, so please don't tell him that the 1920s ended in a stock market crash that ushered in the Great Depression. God forbid his tariffs lead to another crash. He would likely blame it on Mamdani, rebrand it a communist Islamic jihad, and deport it to Eswatini.

Democrats like me support capitalism, but with guardrails. By contrast, the oligarchs—epitomized by Elon Musk with his recently approved $1 trillion pay package—love to blame others for the harm they cause, while making off with the moolah. Do not fall for it.

I am rooting for Mamdani, who wants working people to be able to afford to live in New York. He includes trans people in his vision. His victory speech was a far cry from the Islamophobic caricature painted by his detractors, who range from right-wing pundits to Andrew Cuomo.

Based on the smears, you might expect the mayor-elect to rush to Washington to demolish part of the White House, had the president not beaten him to it. Yet in the wake of Mamdani's historic victory, billionaires who fought tooth and nail to defeat him bent the knee and pledged their help.

Mamdani is not the model for all Democrats; he reflects but one part of our diverse coalition. The midterm elections are a year away. All our voices and votes will be needed to defeat the authoritarians.

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

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Two Major Queer Arts Festivals Open Submissions for 2026

Fresh Fruit Festival and Newark LGBTQ Film Festival Seek LGBTQ+ Works

By Bay Windows Staff

Two prominent East Coast LGBTQ+ arts festivals are now accepting submissions for their 2026 seasons, offering queer creators multiple platforms to showcase their work this spring.

The Fresh Fruit Festival, entering its 24th year as New York City's premiere year-round LGBTQ+ theatre festival, has opened submissions for its MainStage programming, scheduled to run April 20–May 3, 2026, at The Wild Project. The festival seeks full-length plays, one-act plays, and musical events that are LGBTQ+-themed or include elements of interest to the community.

"The Fresh Fruit Festival is a vital platform for queer voices, and we are thrilled to bring the MainStage back to The Wild Project," said an All Out Arts spokesperson. "We invite playwrights, composers, and performers to join us in making the 24th year one of our most vibrant and inclusive festivals yet."

The festival is offering an Early Bird submission window through December 8, with scripts read first and early acceptances receiving more time for casting and promotion. Regular submissions run mid-December through mid-January, with notifications at the end of January. Complete guidelines are available at freshfruitfestival.com/mainstage26-app.

Meanwhile, the Newark LGBTQ Film Festival has launched submissions for its fourth annual event, taking place April 30–May 4, 2026. The festival, which saw audience participation double in its most recent edition, focuses on elevating Queer BIPOC films and filmmakers.

"We are excited to continue elevating the work of BIPOC Queer filmmakers, actors, and creatives from across our city, state, and country—right here in Newark," said Festival Director Denise Hinds.

The Newark festival accepts short films, documentaries, experimental works, student projects, and select feature-length films via FilmFreeway. Deadlines are: Early Bird (December 18, 2025), Regular (January 21, 2026), and Late (February 11, 2026). Filmmakers will be notified by March 7, 2026.

For more information: Fresh Fruit Festival (freshfruitfestival.com/contact-us) or Newark LGBTQ Film Festival (newarklgbtqcenter.org/newarklgbtqfilmfestival).

LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY CALENDAR FALL/WINTER 2025

Massachusetts & New England Events

November 2025

November 13-19 Transgender Awareness Week Multiple events throughout Massachusetts Programming leading up to Transgender Day of Remembrance Educational events, community gatherings, and awareness activities.

Thursday, November 14 The Fenway Gala 2025 SoWa Power Station, Boston Join Boston-based Fenway Health for an evening of queer joy, connection and purpose. Celebration of resilience and call to action to support affirming care, bold advocacy and the unstoppable spirit of LGBTQIA+ communities. Evening of community while supporting Fenway Health's mission to provide lifesaving services, drive groundbreaking research, and lead justice-centered advocacy for all.

Saturday, November 15 A Drag Queen Christmas 8:00 pm Boch Center Shubert Theatre, 265 Tremont Street, Boston Hosted by Nina West Featuring: Onya Nerve, Jewels Sparkles, Suzie Toot, Lydia B. Kollins, Bosco, Shea Couleé, Crystal Methyd, and Brooke Lynn Hytes VIP Meet & Greet available 18+ event

Saturday, November 15 *(Check for 2025 dates)* **25th Annual Transgender Day of Remembrance Ceremony & Vigil** Episcopal Cathedral Church, 138 Tremont Street, Boston Typically held the Saturday before TDOR

Thursday, November 20 Transgender Day of Remembrance Various vigils and memorial services across Massachusetts Boston typically hosts major ceremony at Cathedral of St. Paul, 138 Tremont Street Vigil includes candle lighting, reading of names, community speakers Potluck dinner often follows vigil

Monday, November 24 Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth Meeting 5:00-7:00 pm Location TBA Monthly commission meeting

December 2025

Monday, December 1 World AIDS Day Commemorative events throughout Massachusetts Check with Fenway Health and local AIDS service organizations Victory Programs typically hosts Remembrance Vigil at 4:00 pm on the steps of Boston Public Library (Dartmouth Street at Copley Square), followed by gathering at Boston Living Center

Sunday, December 8 Pansexual/Panromantic Pride Day National observance

Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth Meeting *(Check for updated meeting schedule)* 5:30-7:30 pm Location TBA Monthly commission meeting

Note: *Some dates and locations are subject to change. Please verify with event organizers before attending*

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by seeing people step up to do the right thing.

I am also buoyed by recent election wins that indicate many are eager for a government that helps and uplifts people, rather than harms and belittles them. We saw recent progress, too, as the Illinois General Assembly on October 29 passed the Equality for Every Family Act, which updates the state's parentage laws to better protect the children of LGBTQ+ parents and others formed via assisted reproduction, following 13 other states with similar comprehensive and inclusive parentage legislation. These wins should not blind us to ongoing anti-trans rulings, attempts to roll back marriage equality, and other anti-LGBTQ+ actions that we must continue to challenge. But they offer a spark of hope that all is not lost.

That leads me to my gratitude for being part of the queer community, which remains vibrant and strong despite everything that has been thrown at us. We have a history of resilience and resistance that will carry us forward.

As a queer parent, furthermore, I find tremendous hope for the world as I see many queer people still wanting to start and expand their families. In fact, resources for queer family building continue to flourish, from newer organizations like GWK Academy and PregnantTogether, long-established ones like Family Equality, and from local LGBTQ+ parenting groups, fertility clinics, and adoption agencies, among others.

I take heart as well from the ongoing representation of queer people and families in children's books and media. Representation in books has particularly grown over the past decade, with both the number of titles and the range of representation (queer and intersectional) increasing. Attempts to ban these books in many schools and libraries are still on the rise—but based on the number of titles I have queued up to review next year (and into 2027), authors and publishers aren't slowing down. There is a demand for these books because they give children important images of themselves, their families, and their world. Representation in on-screen media remains more limited, especially for younger children, as GLAAD's recent "Where We Are on TV 2024-2025" report shows, but is a definite improvement from where things were a decade ago.

Finally, I am grateful for the queer parents who have gone before, starting and raising children with much less support and fewer resources than we have today. Their experiences and the paths they charted still inform and inspire. Lately, for example, I have been thinking about a quote from Joy A. Schulenburg's 1985 book "Gay Parenting," one of the first published books on the topic. She wrote, "Throughout history, gay men and lesbians have been innovators, creative spirits and heralds of social change. As we seek to expand our horizons and invest our nurturing energy in another generation of human beings, let's hope that we can pass on to them our best selves—generous, talented, and possessing a tremendous capacity for love." I'd now widen the sentiment to include the full LGBTQ+ spectrum, but otherwise think it remains a valuable message for today.

The winter holidays mark a time of rebirth, of knowing there will be light after the darkness. That seems appropriate for the LGBTQ+ community right now. As we begin the season, then, let us use this time to reflect and recharge, to give thanks for our families and our communities, however we define them, and to find ways we can continue to make a difference.

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.

Segal

Continued from page 1

After a friend informed me a few weeks ago that Burns' documentary portrayed Revolutionary War General Baron Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben in a disingenuous and harmful way, I promptly reached out to both Terry Gross of NPR and the Museum of the American Revolution, who both had scheduled events with Burns, and soon after got a call from Burns' team, led by Burns co-directors Sarah Botstein and David Schmidt. We met on Zoom, they shared the relevant clip with me (which was, indeed, disingenuous and harmful), and I explained why their portrayal of von Steuben was historically thin and reinforced harmful tropes.

It is often difficult for heterosexual historians to fully appreciate how LGBTQ+ people have been labeled throughout history. From my conversation with Burns' team over the last month, it seems we agreed that most credible historians now accept that Baron von Steuben would be considered a gay man by today's understanding. That is never mentioned in the documentary. They risk erasing the fact that a gay man played a significant and indispensable role in founding this nation. Yet in Burns' documentary, the only reference to his sexuality is a single line: "he took familiarities with boys." That claim is misleading, damaging, and more harmful than if he'd just kept von Steuben in the closet. It reinforces the dangerous idea that all gay people are pedophiles.

That line, which the producers believe to be "fact," is based on a single rumor from a religious order with whom von Steuben had political conflict. Historians have often repeated it not because it is well-founded, but because it conveniently fits the long history of how gay men have been smeared through innuendo. In my correspondence with Paul Lockheart, who authored the definitive von Steuben biography "The Drillmaster of Valley Forge," he told me he didn't believe those rumors to be true. Even more institutions, including the Smithsonian, have called the rumors unproven and anonymously reported.

If Burns' film fully accepts the allegation, made in 1777, at face value, the logic becomes absurd: it would require the viewer to believe Benjamin Franklin knowingly sent a pedophile to George Washington to train our troops. Franklin was many things, but he was not a fool.

His note to George Washington reads:

> *"Sir,*
>
> *I beg leave to recommend to your Excellency the Baron de Steuben, a gentleman of rank and military experience, who served for many years with great reputation in the Prussian Army under the King of Prussia. His zeal for our cause has brought him from Europe at his own expense, with a desire to offer his services to the United States.*
>
> *I make no doubt his knowledge and discipline will be of great use in forming our troops. I therefore take the liberty to recommend him to your Excellency's attention and favorable notice.*
>
> *With great respect,*
>
> *B. Franklin"*

Franklin's letter — along with the writings of George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and Thomas Jefferson— all portray von Steuben as a man of extraordinary integrity and a true hero of the Revolution. None of that balance or historical nuance appears in Burns' series.

Sadly, I've seen this kind of distortion before. More than fifteen years ago, during a televised debate on LGBTQ+ equality, an opponent leaned across the set and snarled at me: "This country was not founded for people like you." I answered that one of the men who helped found this nation was "like me," General von Steuben. By then I had already spent years researching and writing about him. One of my lines has been repeated so often it's practically folklore: Benjamin Franklin sending von Steuben to the Continental Congress made Franklin the father of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

In Burns' portrayal of the Revolution, LGBTQ+ people are not only erased but defamed, reduced to a caricatured trope instead of being recognized as real participants in shaping our country's history. And this type of omission is not new in his documentary work.

In his 2014 series "The Roosevelts," he faced criticism from historians and LGBTQ+ advocates for omitting Eleanor Roosevelt's close and well-documented relationship with Lorena Hickok. In his 2017 documentary on the Vietnam War, there was no mention of Sgt. Leonard Matlovich, the most famous LGBTQ+ service member of that era and the poster figure for "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," or any other LGBTQ+ veteran who served. Taken together, these choices form a troubling pattern: showing America that LGBTQ+ people don't exist.

Burns' documentary correctly highlights von Steuben's crucial role in transforming Washington's troops and helping win the war. But it ends that portrayal with the oldest, most dangerous stereotype used against gay men. That isn't history. That isn't education. It's a blatant disservice to the truth, to viewers, and to von Steuben's legacy. That's what I take away from "The American Revolution."

LGBTQ+ Americans have always been part of our nation's story. We're done being erased, sidelined, or misrepresented. And as long as documentaries, museums, and classrooms continue to perpetuate old myths, we will keep demanding the accuracy our history deserves.

Mark Segal is an American journalist. He is the founder and publisher of Philadelphia Gay News and has won numerous awards for his column "Mark My Words," including best column by The National Newspaper Association, Society of Professional Journalists, GLAAD, and The National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association.

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SCOTUS

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immunity for actions she took as a public official.

Tacked onto that petition was a question asking the Supreme Court to overturn its decision in Obergefell v. Hodges. Obergefell is the 2015 decision in which the court ruled 5 to 4 to that states could not ban same-sex couples from obtaining marriage licenses.

Attorneys for the gay couple urged the Supreme Court to deny Davis's petition. Among other things, they noted that "Rather than attempting to invoke a religious exemption for herself, Davis instead

exercised the full authority of the Rowan County Clerk's office to enact an official policy of denying marriage licenses to same-sex couples, one every office employee had to follow."

The couple filed a lawsuit against Davis for refusing their application for a marriage license. In response to the latest petition to the Supreme court, the couple's attorneys noted that the Sixth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals held that in "the absence of any legal authority to support her novel arguments," Davis "should have known that Obergefell required her to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples —even if she sought and eventually received an accommodation."

Only two entities filed friend-of-the-court briefs in the petition this time around: one from a Long Beach, California, attorney who said he represented clients who said they had "suffered greatly" from having had same-sex parents. The other was from the National Organization for Marriage, which opposes allowing same-sex couples to obtain marriage licenses. NOM's brief said the Supreme Court should overturn Obergefell because the gay couple could have gone to another clerk to obtain the marriage license, rather than force Davis —who claimed religious beliefs against homosexuality— to issue it.

Jenny Pizer, Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives at Lambda Legal, had predicted the Court would not take the petition, noting that the Trump administration has not been intensely focused on marriage licenses.

Davis ran for re-election in 2018 but lost.

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LGBTQ+ TV

Continued from page 1

characters. It marks a boost after two years of decline, but remains far below the 2021-2022 record high of 637 characters.

Sarah Kate Ellis, president and CEO of the group, warned that those numbers could still decrease soon: More than 200 of the LGBTQ+ characters counted this year — in shows like "Heartstopper," "Harlem" and "Elite" — will not be returning due to a flurry of series cancellations, endings or because they were limited series.

"Storytelling brings us together and this current cultural and political climate calls on creatives and executives to double down on fair and accurate stories of LGBTQ people," Ellis writes in the report.

GLAAD added that the number of transgender characters on TV has slightly increased from last year to reach 33 — 24 trans women, seven trans men, and two nonbinary characters — but only four trans characters appear on series that have been officially renewed.

The report is the 20th edition of the annual tracking by GLAAD and charts a remarkable leap from just 47 LGBTQ+ characters in the first study. It arrives as President Donald Trump has targeted transgender and nonbinary people with a series of executive orders — including one declaring the existence of two unchangeable sexes — stripping government websites of "gender ideology" an reinstituting a ban on transgender service members in the military.

A recent Gallup poll found 9.3% of U.S. adults identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or something other than straight or heterosexual. The percentage has more than doubled since Gallup first measured LGBTQ+ identification in 2012.

The GLAAD study found that representation on broadcast and cable have continually declined, while streaming programming saw an increase of LGBTQ+ characters.

ABC last season had the largest percentage of network LGBTQ+ series regulars — with 12.9% — while Netflix had the most LGBTQ+ characters on streaming, with 177. It found that the eight major streamers added 45 characters from the 327 in the previous period.

GLAAD noted LGBTQ+ characters in such network shows as NBC's "Brilliant Minds," which has a gay lead, CBS dramas "Matlock" and "Watson," both of which feature supporting queer women, and ensemble characters on comedies like Fox's "Going Dutch" and NBC's "St. Denis Medical."

On streaming, GLAAD cited Netflix's "The Four Seasons," "Arcane" and "Kaos," and Amazon's "Clean Slate," "Harlem" and "The Wheel of Time." Hulu, meanwhile, had "Mid-Century Modern," "Big Boys" and "Wreck."

The study found that the percentage of characters of color slightly increased up to 51% of all LGBTQ+ characters counted, and, for the second year in a row, only one LGBTQ+ character was depicted as living with HIV — but that character, on HBO Max's "Cris Miró," won't be returning.

In their 2019-20 study GLAAD had asked the industry to reach 20% representation of regularly seen LGBTQ+ characters on all three platforms by 2025, and to ensure that half of LGBTQ+ characters on every TV platform were people of color within the next two years. This year's report does not include a challenge tied to a specific percentage.

"As this study and the TV industry have evolved, so too have our benchmarks," GLAAD said. "There is a need for urgent action and improvement today across all platforms with this newest study finding a significant portion of the LGBTQ characters counted will not return."

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billy masters

Last week, I was seated in the second row of a theatre. In front of me were four empty seats. In due time, two older ladies sat down. Just before the show started, four other people appeared with tickets for all four seats. Discussions ensued until the first ladies pulled out their tickets. In what was perhaps the greatest line reading of all time, one of them said with complete innocence, "You mean this isn't Row R?" Yes, because so many theatres begin the Orchestra section with Row R! They quickly scurried away—only to later be spotted in Row F. I have yet to determine if it was an issue of guile, malice, or presbyopia.

The performer I went to see was the incomparable **Sam Harris**, accompanied by the equally astounding **John McDaniel**. The high esteem and affection I hold for both has been duly noted. This was my first time seeing Sam since his vocal troubles during Covid, so I had some concerns—which were quickly alleviated. He is in fine fettle. In fact, his voice may be better than ever. This new show, "Beyond the Rainbow", is marvelously constructed with a healthy balance of witty showbiz anecdotes and new material alongside the expected showstoppers (apparently it is always 11 o'clock at Casa Harris). One cannot ignore the elephant in the room—or the lack thereof. Sam has lost a staggering 55 pounds. He's as svelte as a schoolgirl, and has seemingly turned back time. If you get the chance to see him, run, don't walk! BTW, some photos and videos can be found on BillyMasters.com.

People on both sides of the pond rarely agree on things. But one thing sources in both the US and UK governments tell me is that the **Andrew** formerly known as Prince holds the key to a number of bombshells. Whether he spills them or not depends on who he'd like to help—himself or us Yanks (Andy knows a thing or two about yanking). While he's under no obligation to speak, he also doesn't have royal prerogative to hide behind. Still, a certain Louis wannabe should be mighty concerned. You know what happened to the last Louis the crowd turned on.

Speaking of Brits, canoer (canoeist?) **Kurts Adams Rozentals** found himself in hot water after filming an "edgy" video in an airplane lavatory. The footage was for his OnlyFans account. "I have been posting videos that are consciously made to be edgy in order to drive conversations to my 'spicy content page', to fund this ultimate dream of going to the Olympics." The problem was, he posted the footage on his public Instagram account. Well, that was too much for Paddle UK, who apparently frown upon their athletes playing with their paddles in public. They ruled the video showed "indecent, offensive or immoral behavior" and called it an "offensive use of social media." They banned Rozentals from competing for two years—essentially killing his Olympic dream. Kurts is fighting back, saying he didn't show any actual nudity. "And while I understand the video could be described as crazy, it was not illegal and certainly shouldn't be the reason for banning an athlete." You know where he ain't banned? On BillyMasters.com.

Elsewhere overseas, the Netherlands just voted in their first gay prime minister. And his partner is an Olympian! 34-year-old **Rob Jetten** is engaged to **Nico Keenan**, who is actually a two-time Olympian from Argentina. That's the good news. His sport? Field hockey. It ain't just for future gym teachers anymore—at least not in Argentina!

Congrats to **Jonathan Bailey**, who was named "People" magazine's "Sexiest Man Alive". It's been noted that he is the first openly gay man to hold this title—although there are at least two non-openly gay men who have dabbled. That aside, this honor has always troubled me. They pick a new guy every year. So does that mean that the previous "alive" titleholders are chopped liver? Bailey now tops **Pitt, Clooney, Idris and Jackman**? Now, there's a visual I could get behind! Last week, Jonathan proved he's as beautiful on the inside as he is on the outside. After **Robert Irwin** did a "Wicked"-inspired routine on "Dancing with the Stars", Bailey sent him flowers with a note that said, "You are the shiz, Robert. You've done all the Fiyeros proud. Cheering you on from afar. Big love. JB." If that doesn't tempt Irwin, then he must really be straight!

Did you know that Bailey had one very notable fan? **Marianne Elliott** directed Jonathan in the gender-swap version of "Company" in the UK back in 2018. Three days before **Stephen Sondheim** died, Elliott told him that she'd be directing Bailey in a revival of the play "Cock" in London's West End (I saw the original production with Ben Whishaw and Andrew Scott). Sondheim allegedly closed his eyes, put his hand on his chest, and said, "Be still my beating heart." Another casualty of Bailey's beauty.

Another Jonathan made some news last week. When asked if he thought his character in a "Mean Girls" sequel should be gay, **Jonathan Bennett** was pretty direct. "I think Aaron would be straight because I wouldn't want to change the narrative of **Aaron Samuels** because Jonathan Bennett is gay." Finally, someone talking sense.

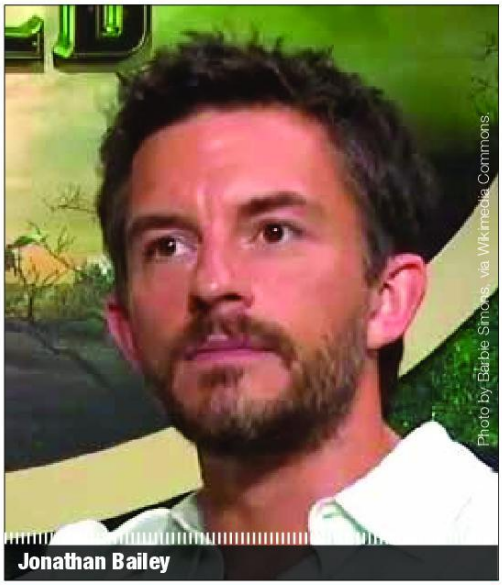
Lots of readers have been writing in about "Queer Eye" **Jonathan Van Ness**. He has transformed himself with a 70-pound weight loss. He reveals it began with some "medical issues" he had in 2023. In addition to portion control and Pilates (thank you, **Star Jones**), he adds, "I want to note, GLP-1s have been a huge help." He says he "didn't feel good", and adds that his whole life he wanted to see an ab—and now he can. "But I want to get one thing straight. I was always really, really cute. And I always felt cute, but I didn't feel good. And now I feel good."

Then there's sexy **Scott Clifton**, who appears as Liam on "The Bold and the Beautiful". The formerly hunky actor who was perfection to this viewer has lately been sporting a much leaner frame—which has led people to inquire about his health. Yes, his character had brain surgery for a tumor...that he actually didn't have (it's a long story). But insiders say his weight loss is due to stressful marital issues off-screen rather than health challenges on.

I've held onto this week's "Ask Billy" question for a while, because there wasn't anything timely about it...until now. Will in Chicago: *"I know you watch CBS soaps. Have you checked out 'Beyond the Gates'? The guy who plays Smitty is so hot—and so familiar. What do you know about him?"*

That would be **Mike Manning**—previously on "The Real World: DC" way back in 2009. At the time, he identified as bisexual (he has since married **Nicholas Tocco**). Over the years, he's done a fair amount of acting and producing, and last year joined "Beyond the Gates" as **Bradley "Smitty" Smith**. His character is married to Martin—making him part of a gay interracial couple. They even have adopted kids! In a recent episode, his character made the following speech: "We can't pretend that sex wasn't in every song we listened to growing up. Or on every season of 'The Real World'." Mike showed the clip online and gave kudos to whoever wrote and greenlit that line. For those who didn't know, he explained how that related to his own experience. He relates that when he moved to LA, his agent told him never to mention "The Real World" if he wanted to be taken seriously as an actor. "And now, here we are, all these years later. On 'Beyond the Gates', whichever writer decided to incorporate that line into my character's dialogue, it's so funny. Well played. Art imitating life. It feels so meta. I don't even know who it was or how you found out, but well played. That's hilarious." Well, Mike, it's not really much of a secret—especially since people can watch the clip on BillyMasters.com.

When life is imitating art, we've definitely come to the end of yet another column. While I try and investigate how Sam, Jonathan and Scott lost all that weight, you can check out www.BillyMasters.com—the site that will keep you on the edge of your seat. If you have a topic for me to tackle, send it along to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before someone charges Jonathan Bailey with the murder of Stephen Sondheim. Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.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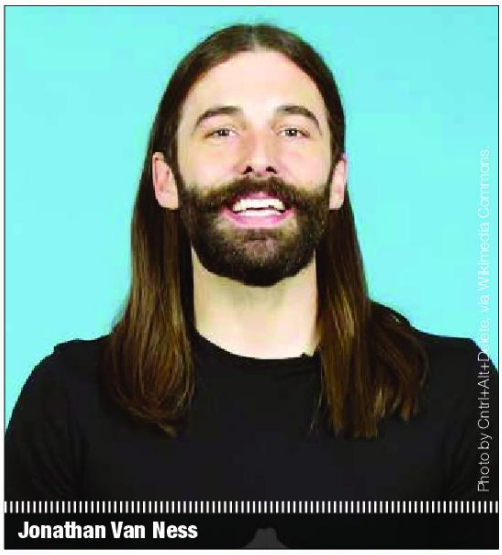
Jonathan Bailey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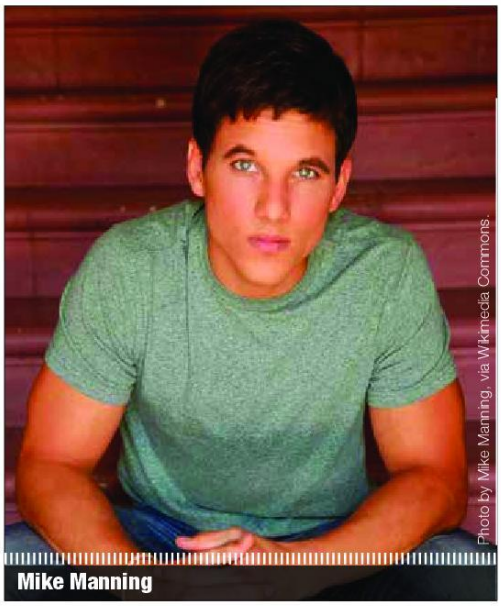
Photo by Mike Manning, via Wikimedia Commons.
Mike Manning

Transgender

Continued from page 1

lives lost to anti-trans violence and discrimination. TDOR was founded in 1999 by Gwendolyn Ann Smith following the murder of Rita Hester, a Black transgender woman killed in Allston, Massachusetts in 1998.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Trans Artists Showcase Saturday, November 15 A night celebrating trans brilliance across all art forms with performances, open mic, visual art vendors, and community magic. FREE, RSVP required. Organized by @helpbyamg, @tqncboston, and @transresistancema. Details: linktr.ee/helpbyamg

Trans Flag Memorial Sunday, November 16 Volunteers needed to help place flags memorializing trans and nonbinary siblings lost. Each flag represents a life, a story, a person who should still be with us. FREE, RSVP required. Organized by @helpbyamg, @tqncboston, and @transresistancema. Details: linktr.ee/helpbyamg

Self-Care is Resistance Monday, November 17 An intentional evening centering rest, reflection, and joy for trans, nonbinary, and gender-expansive community to recharge, connect, and reclaim rest as an act of resistance. Allies welcome with care and consent. FREE, RSVP required. Organized by @helpbyamg, @tqncboston, and @transresistancema. Details: linktr.ee/helpbyamg

Boston's 26th Annual Transgender Day of Remembrance Thursday, November 20 Organized by Queer History Boston

Community Vigil: 7:00-8:45 PM Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 25 Evans Way, Boston, MA 02115 Featuring a reflection on TDOR history, reading of names, and candlelighting ceremony in remembrance of those lost to anti-trans violence.

Community Dinner: 9:00-11:00 PM Simmons University, Linda K. Paresky Conference Center, 300 The Fenway, Boston, MA 02115 A space for connection, conversation, and collective care.

"Transgender Day of Remembrance is both a memorial of the transgender and nonbinary people lost to violence and injustice and a reminder of the systemic inequities that we continue to face, especially amidst a federal administration seeking to eradicate our community as a whole. However, we remain vigilant as ever, rooted in care and community."

Hyannis (Cape Cod)

Cape Cod Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil Sunday, November 17, 2:00-4:00 PM In-person vigil to honor and remember victims of anti-transgender violence, 529 Main Street, Hyannis, MA

North Shore/Peabody

North Shore Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil Thursday, November 20 Peabody Essex Museum Organized and led by members of the trans community, featuring trans speakers and the traditional reading of names, followed by an open mic. Presented by the North Shore LGBTQ Network in partnership with NAGLY and the Peabody Essex Museum. Open to all ages and all gender identities. Supportive allies welcome. **Note: Attendees are prohibited from taking photos during the vigil.**

Pittsfield (Berkshires)

Trans Day of Remembrance Celebration: Existence is Resistance Friday, November 21, 7:00 PM Pittsfield, Western Massachusetts The 2nd annual seeing rainbows TDOR event brings performers from across the region, featuring local poet and choreographer Gillian Ebersole (they/them), ambient lo-fi dream pop musician bobbie (he/they), anti-disciplinary artist Dorian Wood (she/they), and DJ Michael V (he/him). Includes an altar of remembrance created by local artists and food by Farah Momen of Bondhu. All ages/all identities event. Participants encouraged to mask as an act of community care. Pay-what-you-can; $30 suggested, $60 sponsors another's attendance. Curated by Michelle Daly.

RHODE ISLAND

Kingston

University of Rhode Island Trans Awareness Week & TDOR Vigil November 13-20 URI Gender and Sexuality Center hosts weeklong celebration with vigil to commemorate Transgender Day of Remembrance. Details: events.uri.edu

Statewide

TGI Network of Rhode Island TDOR Event Thursday, November 20 TGI Network of Rhode Island typically hosts a commemorative service. Contact: tginetwork.org for details. TGI Network is Rhode Island's only 501(c)3 nonprofit organization solely focused on Transgender, Gender diverse, and Intersex issues.

MAINE

Portland

PFLAG Portland Maine TDOR Vigil Thursday, November 20, Equality Community Center, Portland PFLAG Portland Maine has historically hosted Transgender Day of Remembrance vigils at the Equality Community Center with in-person and streaming options. Contact: pflagportlandmaine.org for 2025 details.

Statewide

OUT Maine is also an active resource for Maine's trans community. Visit: outmaine.org

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

National Resources:

- GLAAD TDOR Information: glaad.org/tdor
- Transgender Day of Remembrance official site
- National Center for Transgender Equality: transequality.org

New England Trans Organizations:

- Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition (MTPC): masstpc.org
- TGI Network of Rhode Island: tginetwork.org
- MaineTransNet
- Fenway Health Trans Health Program: fenwayhealth.org
- PFLAG chapters throughout New England: pflag.org

This calendar is current as of November 11, 2025. Events may be added as organizations finalize plans. Contact individual organizations for the most up-to-date information.

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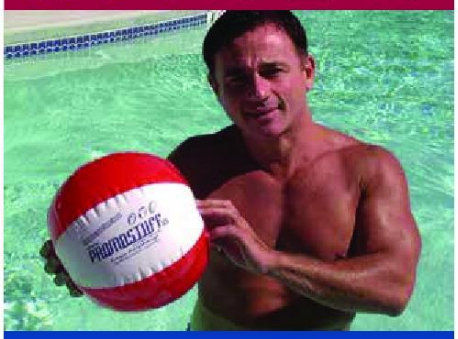

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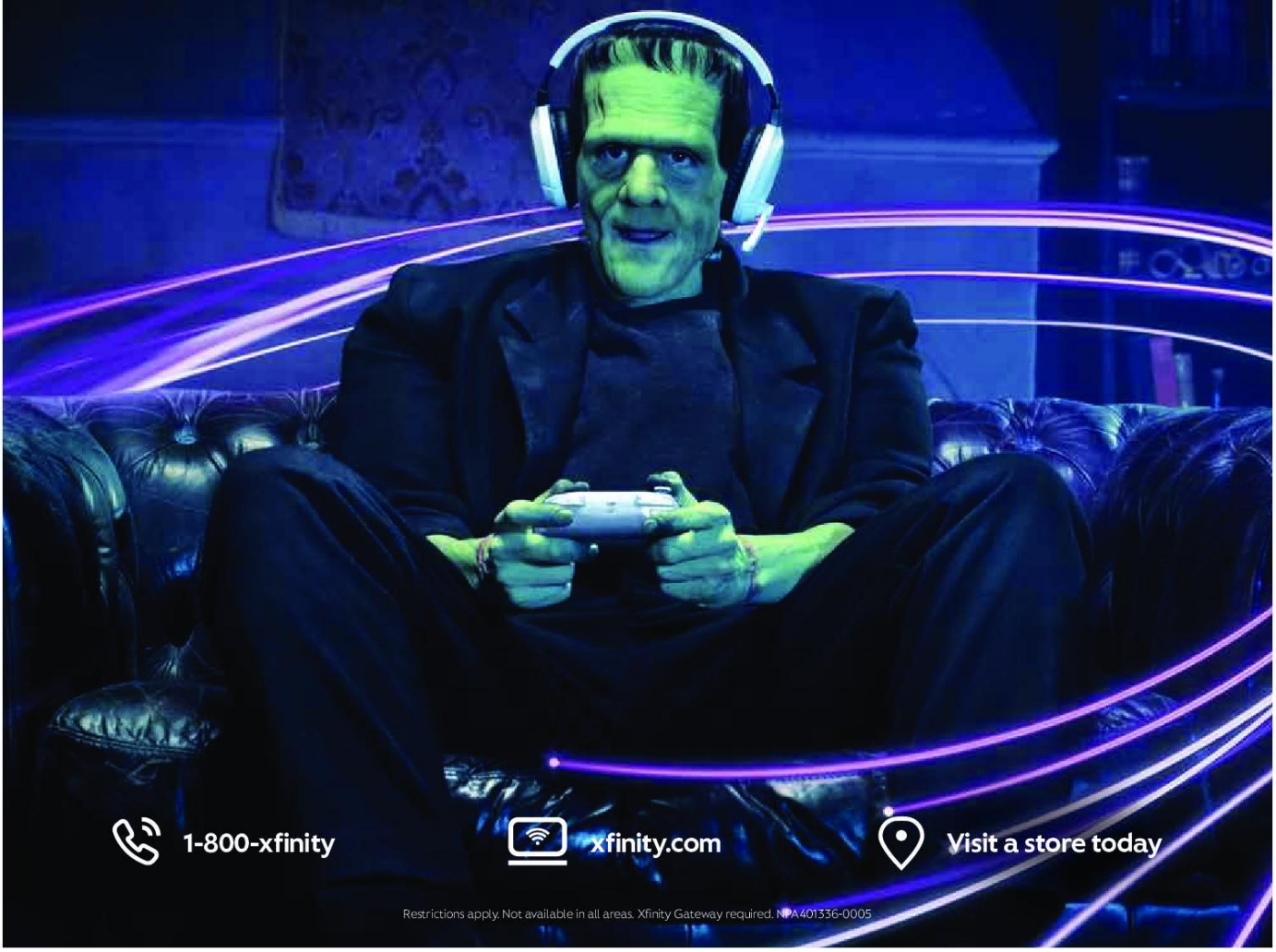

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