



# PRIDESOURCE



FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF **Between The Lines**

- HOME
- NEWS
- A & E
- GUIDES
- CALENDAR
- OPINIONS
- NEIGHBORHOODS
- YELLOW PAGES

IN THIS SECTION:

## Suicide of transgender youth in Holland raises questions

BY TODD A. HEYWOOD

Originally printed 11/08/2007 (Issue 1545 - Between The Lines News)



Capitol Correspondent

### HOLLAND -

The October 29 suicide of 16-year-old transgender Ian Benson has the LGBT community asking hard questions.

"As parents, this is one of our worst fears," said Collette Beighley, Triangle Foundations West Michigan operative. "Our worst fear is that some of our kids will end up like Matthew Shepard, but sometimes we have to remember the pain is so intense that they take their own lives."

Beighley knew Benson, and her daughter called Benson her best friend. Beighley organized a memorial vigil for Benson last week, but the questions about why Benson took his life remain. Benson was well liked and his family accepted him for who he was. In fact, his mother started a national group to support families dealing with transgender children. Something that did not exist before.

"All I can say is that the Trevor Project statistics are startling," Beighley said. The Trevor Project estimates that one out of two transgenders will attempt to take their lives, with many succeeding. "Supportive parents have a lot to worry about. They have to worry about not only the external forces but the internal conflicts that arise for these kids."

Dr. Julie Nemecek knows the internal conflicts all too well. A year ago, as she was struggling to keep her job at Spring Arbor University and transition into a woman, it almost became too overwhelming. She talks of sitting in her living room with a gun in hand, suicide note written. She stopped herself because she thought of her family and what her suicide would do to them.

### Latest News

**BREAKING:** Serial Craigslist Predators Targeting Gay Men In Lansing

Affirmations Says Goodbye To Founding Service

Polling v. Modeling: Can A Ballot Initiative Win In 2016?

First Grant Awarded by 'Our LGBT Fund'

Contentious Meeting Reveals Conflicting Data

Commentary: Can And Should We Fight For LGBT Civil Rights At The Ballot Box?

An Open Letter To Dana Nessel, From The Transgender Community of Michigan

Worship Guide: Holiday Services Calendar

### Calendar

"The SantaLand Diaries & Season's Greetings" runs Dec.17-21 at The Ringwald Theatre, Ferndale [Read More](#)

[More Events](#) [Add Events](#)

### Twitter

"What is terribly difficult is to explain how your mind works differently," said Nemecek. "Not even why, but how."

She said the issues around gender are difficult because American culture is built on a two gender model, leaving little room for cross over. "It makes it difficult and painful when you have to fit into a mold that is not of your making."

Beighley concurs. "I think there is nothing in our society which prepares transgenders. We are taught how to be a boy or a girl, and that is not fool proof," Beighley said. "There is no reference point for these children. There is no road map."

"I hear a lot of lesbian, bisexual and gay people talking about them," said Rachel Crandell executive director of Transgender Michigan. "Those tranny people, they are not really us. They are them."

Crandell said that separation is painful. "I think it can have a traumatic effect."

She said when she came out as transgender, one of her gay friends stopped talking to her.

Crandell and Nemecek both said the current debate about excluding gender identity and expression from the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA) has had a negative impact on the transgender community.

"I think it is telling them no one cares," said Crandell of the removal of gender identity and expression from the federal bill. "I think it shows people that it is really hard to trust. When people say they are with you, how do you really know?"

"It is more likely to push them into the closet," Nemecek said, "which means suppressing your true self, it brings on anxiety and depression."

All three said they wanted to see a more open dialogue about trans issues in the LGBT community, and note that no one expresses themselves one hundred percent within the confines of the traditional gender role structure.

"There is physical violence. But emotional violence also kills," said Nemecek.

### Online Resources/Helpline Resources

866-4-U-TREVOR

Established in 1998 to coincide with the HBO airing of the award winning short film Trevor, hosted by Ellen DeGeneres, The Trevor Helpline is the only national 24-hour, toll-free suicide prevention hot line aimed at gay and questioning youth.



www.UDMarts.com



### Pride Source Yellow Pages

#### Bakeries

People's Food Co-op and Bakery

#### Counseling

Prism of Possibilities  
Psychotherapy

#### National Organizations

GenderPac

#### Pet Adoption

Michigan Humane Society

#### Religious & Spiritual

Cathedral of St. Anthony  
Central Woodward Christian Church

#### Social/Community Organizations

Windsor Pride Community  
A2 TNG (Next Generation of Kinkster)

#### Sports

Team Detroit Aquatics (swimming)

#### Tax

#### Planning/Preparation

Ameritax Plus

[More Yellow Pages](#)

### Most Popular



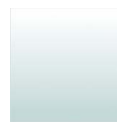
**The Authentic Life: Sarah Paulson Talks 'Carol,' Pressure To Be An LGBT Activist & Why She Misses Jessica Lange**



**Q&A: Joe Jonas On Gay Clubbin' With Nick, Flattering Advances & How a Jonas Brothers Reunion Could 'Easily Happen'**



**An Open Letter To Dana Nessel, From The Transgender Community of Michigan**



**Breaking: Anti-LGBT Rally At State Capitol**

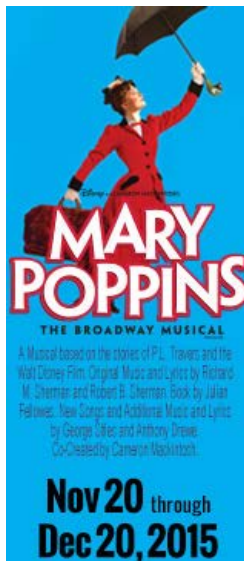


**Affirmations Says Goodbye To Founding Service**



### Subscribe

Sign up to receive our weekly newsletters today!



The Trevor Helpline is geared toward helping youth in crisis, or those wanting information on how to help someone in crisis. The Trevor Helpline is maintained by two call centers, at San Francisco Suicide Prevention and The Trevor Project's Los Angeles Call Center. Helpline calls are handled by highly trained counselors and are free and confidential.

Learn more at <http://thetrevorproject.org>

SHARE ▶      

[More topstory](#)

by George Sizer and Anthony Zinni  
Co-Created by Carmen Rabinovich

**Nov 20 through Dec 20, 2015**  
**Baldwin Theatre**  
 Tickets \$22 - \$24  
 All seats reserved  
 Rated G, Ages 7+ No refunds/exchanges

Generously Sponsored by **AMERITAX**  
 \*\*\*\*\*

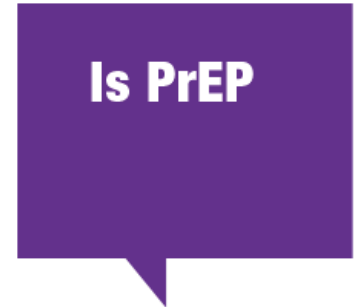
**Stagecrafters**  
 THE BALDWIN THEATRE • ROYAL OAK, MI

248-541-6430  
**STAGECRAFTERS.ORG**

[Enter To Win](#)



Enter contests to win great prizes like CDs, DVDs, concert tickets and more



[Special Section: Pride Guide Lake Effect](#)



Hot off Season 7 of the LOGO channel's "Ru Paul's Drag Race" phenomenon, Darienne Lake of Season 6 spoke with Between the Lines about her upcoming hosting gig at Motor City Pride June 6.

[View More Pride Guide](#)

**HunterDouglas** Gallery



AREA'S LARGEST SELECTION OF WALLPAPER  
Multi-purpose Fabrics - Slipcovers - Custom Bedding - Accent Pillows

[This Week's Issue](#)



Download or view this week's print issue today!

[DOWNLOAD PDF](#)

Jun 18, 2015



[Subscribe](#)

Sign up to receive our weekly newsletters today!



[www.williamsautoworld.com](http://www.williamsautoworld.com)



Royal Oak  
**FARMERS MARKET**

316 East Eleven Mile Rd. 248-246-3276  
[www.ci.royal-ok.mi.us](http://www.ci.royal-ok.mi.us), click on Farmers Market  
Open Saturdays All Year Round! Like us on Facebook!

[ABOUT](#) [CONTACT](#) [SITE MAP](#) [ARCHIVES](#) [ADVERTISE](#) [SUBSCRIBE](#) [DOWNLOAD PRINT ISSUE](#) [CLASSIFIEDS](#) [PICK UP A BTL](#)