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Can Pete Buttigieg, cool and cerebral, second that emotion?
By THOMAS BEAUMONT
Associated Press

WATERLOO, Iowa (AP)—John McKeever, a 77-year-old Air Force veteran, stood in an audience of hundreds in suburban Des Moines with an oxygen tank at his side, wheezing as he implored Pete Buttigieg to protect the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Democratic presidential hopeful offered a respectful, if perfunctory, “thank you for serving” and skipped any attempt to bond over their mutual military service. Instead, Buttigieg offered a list of proposals to fix the VA.

Of the many ways the 37-year-old mayor of South Bend, Indiana, is different from his better-known rivals, there is this: his ingrained emotional restraint in a show-all-tell-all era.

“You don’t really get the warm fuzzies from him,” said Lisa Ann Spilman, a retired Air Force officer who attended Buttigieg’s event. “But I really like how intelligent and down to earth he is.”

As Buttigieg, whose campaign appears better positioned organizationally in Iowa and financially overall than former Vice President Joe Biden’s, attempts to climb into the top tier of Democrats, voters will be taking a measure of him in all ways, including whether he can make the kind of personal connection they have come to expect, at least since Bill Clinton showed he could feel their pain.

Buttigieg chafes at being labeled an emotionless technocrat, and his supporters cite his intellectual agility as his main draw, particularly against someone like President Donald Trump, whose strained relationship with the truth is so frequently on display.

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Childhood cancer is devastating, not only for the child, but for the entire family. These families desperately need additional support to cope with the many harsh challenges that they face while battling their child’s cancer. The Tomorrow Fund supports children with cancer who are treated at Hasbro’s Children Hospital. 100% of the funds that are raised during our walk will be donated to The Tomorrow Fund.

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Buttigieg
Continued from page 1

edly challenging Sen. Elizabeth Warren on her health care plan and former Rep. Beto O’Rourke on gun control. “I don’t need lessons from you on courage, political or personal,” Buttigieg said to O’Rourke.

“I don’t mind being a little professorial at times,” Buttigieg acknowledged in a conversation with reporters last month. He added, “Sometimes I think I’m misunderstood because I’m laidback. I’m misread as being bloodless."

But to describe him as wooden or mechanical gets it wrong. Upbeat in his trademark white shirt with sleeves half-rolled, Buttigieg projects energy and youthful diligence.

He’s not a fiery podium speaker like Sen. Bernie Sanders. He isn’t given to big hugs or open self-reflection, like Biden and Warren.

In interactions with voters, Buttigieg’s style is evolving. During a late summer stop in southeast Iowa, he noted his mother-in-law “is alive because of the Affordable Care Act,” but he moved on without describing her illness or asking if his audience had similar experiences.

Buttigieg’s style is being adapted to the nation’s “crisis of belonging.”

And it does not always work. When the question turned to cancer at the Iowa State Fair, he said before discussing his plans, “Cancer took my father earlier this year, so this is personal,” skipping over any elaboration of the pillar Joe Buttigieg was to his only child.

When the questioner noted her family’s loss, he said poignantly, “I’m sorry. So, we’re in the same boat,” and then turned to a discussion of research.

Buttigieg’s mother, Anne Montgomery, says in boyhood her son was fun, curious, literate and multitalented but “a reserved person.”

“It’s been a part of his life for a long time,” she said in an Associated Press interview.

What Buttigieg suggests is his tendency to “compartmentalize” has been a liability for some other candidates, most notably for the 1988 Democratic presidential nominee, Michael Dukakis.

He offered an almost programmatic answer when asked during a nationally televised debate if he would support the death penalty if his wife were raped and murdered.

Dukakis, who lost in a landslide, acknowledged today that he “botched it” and that his answer fed the narrative that the pragmatic, policy-oriented Massachusetts governor was emotionless.

Buttigieg, Dukakis told the AP, is warm and thoughtful, “but he also happens to be very, very bright, and that, I think, is the biggest part of his appeal.” Dukakis has endorsed his home state senator, Warren.

“He’s not a typical politician,” said Katie Goodman, an associate principal for a Des Moines area high school who first saw Buttigieg at an event last month. “And he’s an intellectual judo master.”

As the campaign progresses, there are signs Buttigieg is becoming more comfortable opening up.

At an outdoor event at Des Moines’ Theodore
Rosendall  
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seek protection from the police even when in grave danger.”

A recurring ploy by opponents at the D.C. hearing last week was to conflate all sex work with sex trafficking—something S.I. Rosenbaum discussed in May in The Boston Globe. This is a perennial hit in political battles: people thinking their anger or trauma entitles them to declare unilateral ownership of an issue and overrule everyone else. It is one thing to describe your own experience; that is an essential element in reality-based policymaking. But other people have different experiences which are just as legitimate. Surely this deserves more than a hostage-taking

Many witnesses at the D.C. hearing touted the “Nordic Model,” which purports to help sex workers by criminalizing only the buyers. But the “Nordic Model,” which preserves the stigma, which disproportionately harms trans women of color and other minorities. Amnesty International reported in 2016 that police in Oslo “used sex workers’ reports of violence to facilitate their eviction and/or their deportation.”

Opponents at the hearing kept invoking the sex trafficking of children, despite the fact that under the bill, trafficking remains a crime. No one at the hearing, which went late into the night, supported human trafficking. One witness claimed District police have diverted anti-trafficking resources to easier prostitution arrests. That is a matter for legislative oversight.

Emotion-laden false equivalence is not new to this topic. In 2010, Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council accused GLAA of supporting trafficking resources to easier prostitution arrests. Those are budgetary priorities, not the proper bailiwick of criminal law—despite America’s long, ugly history of criminalizing minority populations.

Problems associated with the sex trade are only made worse by forcing it onto the black market. It is time for governments to focus law enforcement on rescuing those coerced into the trade, rather than trying to eradicate the oldest profession.

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

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Matthew Shepard's parents criticize AG
Barr on LGBT rights
By DAVID CRARY
AP National Writer

The parents of Matthew Shepard, the gay college student
murdered in 1998, assailed Attorney General Wil-
li Barr on Wednesday for what they called hypocrisy
on LGBT rights during a Justice Department ceremony
commemorating a hate-crimes law named after their
son.

The ceremony, held in the department's Great Hall,
marked the 10th anniversary of the Matthew Shepard
and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which
was signed by President Barack Obama in October
2009. The act expanded the 1969 federal hate-crime law
to include crimes based on a victim's sexual orientation,
gender identity or disability.

Judy and Dennis Shepard, unable to attend due to a
prior commitment, prepared a statement that was read
at the ceremony by Cynthia Deitle, a former FBI agent
who is now programs and operations director for the
Denver-based Matthew Shepard Foundation.

The Shepards praised Justice Department employees
who over the years have worked to implement and en-
force the act, but they blasted Barr—and by extension
President Donald Trump's administration—because
the department argued last week before the Supreme
Court that employers should be able to fire employees
because they are transgender.

The administration also has taken other steps to roll
back protections for LGBT people.

"Mr. Barr, you cannot have it both ways," the Shepa-
drs' statement said. "Either you believe in equality for all
or you don't. We do not honor our son by kowtowing to
hypocrisy.

The attorney general "must lead and demonstrate
his refusal to accept hate in all its manifestations," the
Shepards said. "He must demonstrate courage, even if
it means defying the administration. So far, he has
done none of these deeds."

Many of the guests at the ceremony rose for a standing
ovation after Deitle finished reading the statement.

By DAVID CRARY

Mombian
Continued from page 1
years.

Adiel, who was born in Israel, falls one year short of
the residency requirement. This requirement, however,
is not meant to apply to the children of married U.S.
citizens, Lambda Legal said in a statement. The Kitsivs
are at least the fourth same-sex couple to sue the State
Department for similar reasons.

In another frightening move, a federal judge ruled at the end of September that taxpay-
er-funded adoption and foster care agencies in Michigan
may use their religious beliefs as a reason to discriminate
against same-sex and unmarried couples, overturning
a settlement that had been reached earlier this year.

Even though District Court Judge Robert J. Jonker
said in his ruling that same-sex couples can be "great
parents," he felt that the plaintiff, St. Vincent Catholic
Charities, had the right to cite its beliefs as a reason not
to certify same-sex and unmarried couples as adoptive
parents.

This ruling, from the U.S. District Court for the West-
ern District of Michigan, is a preliminary injunction
allowing St. Vincent to maintain its state contract and
continue discriminating while the case is fully litigated.

The case could ultimately make its way to the U.S.
Supreme Court, along with a contrasting case from
Pennsylvania in which a three-judge panel of the 3rd
U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals earlier this year refused a
similar injunction to a Catholic child service agency in
Philadelphia.

The political and legal arena these days is indeed scary,
but I take heart from the increasingly positive representa-
tion of LGBTQ families and people in books, films, and
only available for online streaming or downloading out-
side the U.S., the producer tells me it will be well soon be
released here as well.

My Dad, My Moms and Me, by Julia Ivanova, fol-
lores three sets of queer parents and their teenage chil-
dren more than a decade after the first profiled them for
a 2007 film, Fatherhood Dreams. Randy and Drew have
an adopted son; Scott had twins through a surrogate; and
Steve is co-parenting two daughters with lesbian moms
Wendy and Cory.

La Serenata (The Serenade), directed by Adelina An-
thony, is the film adaptation of When We Love Someone
We Sing to Them (Cuando Amamos Cantamos), by Er-
nesto Javier Martinez (Reflection Press), one of my fa-
vorite LGBTQ-inclusive children's books of 2018. In it,
a father tells his son about the Mexican serenata tradition
of serenading a beloved.

When the boy falls in love with another boy, the father
helps his son create and perform a new song for the
person in his heart. La Serenata won Best Short Film at
the prestigious Imagen Awards (sometimes the Latino
Golden Globes), and its young star, Malik Quezada
Cano, won the Silver Award for Best Child/Young Actor
at the Independent Short Awards.

True, toys and films can't directly change political and
legal matters. Perhaps, though, they can shine a little
light into the darkness. Increased representation and
awareness may help sway hearts and minds in the long
run and may offer those of us in marginalized communi-
ties a sense of community and connection. May the rest
of the year be less spooky for us all.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian
(mombian.com), a GLAAD Media Award-winning blog
and resource directory for LGBTQ parents.

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Adam
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open, but didn’t understand how this was going to work
in mainstream America, or the world for that matter."

"Now, I think there’s been some research and they
know better. Now, people aren’t as scared. They’re not
as fearful. There’s answers. There’s examples,” he con-
cluded.

One person Lambert points to is “Old Town Road”
rapper Lil Nas X, who announced he was gay while his
song was on top of the Billboard charts this year.

“I think I can relate to someone like Lil Nas X who
waited until a song went to No. 1 to be like, ‘By the
way, I’m gay,’” Lambert said. “It proves a point that
you can have success, big success. It is possible. Anybody
is welcome to have that kind of success. And maybe it’s not
}
I spent the month of August in Alberta, Canada, shivering through unseasonably cool days and cold nights. The folks in Edmonton said that this summer was the coldest and wettest on record; though Canadian nights can be chilly this was downright frigid. I spent many of those nights huddling under two quilts and (after a trip to the local army-navy store) outfitted in sweats, as I was unprepared for 40-degree temperatures in mid-August.

So, I was relieved to get back to “normal” summer weather upon my return to Boston, and to be able to open my windows at night without huddling under my covers. Some of those nights were warm and humid enough to run my air-conditioner, and even then, I felt more comfortable than I did in Canada. It seemed that my seasons were flipped, as I had a month of fall in August, and then, I felt more comfortable than I did in Canada. It seemed that England winters were part of the attraction. I had recently learned upon my return to “normal” summer weather upon my return to Boston, and to be able to open my windows at night without huddling under my covers. Some of those nights were warm and humid enough to run my air-conditioner, and even then, I felt more comfortable than I did in Canada. It seemed that my seasons were flipped, as I had a month of fall in August, and then, I felt more comfortable than I did in Canada. It seemed that England winters were part of the attraction. I had recently learned that’s required of me. And so, when Halloween approaches and we get ready to “fall back” to standard time, I’m always a bit surprised. Since this is an annual event, I should be ready, mentally and physically prepared for the natural transition that is part of living in northern climates, and yet I never am.

Back when I first moved to Massachusetts in the late ’80s, New England winters were part of the attraction. I had recently learned to ski back in Ohio and felt ready and able to tackle the intermediate trails in the White and Green Mountains, which were far better than anything we had in the Midwest. Skiing was fun back in my thirties, but today at 60, the idea of schlepping all that equipment and standing out in the bitter cold to hurtle down a frozen hill does not excite me; I’d rather cozy up back in the ski lodge with a hot man or (more likely) a hot cocoa.

Now, I look out my window, or head out in the evening for an early dinner at dusk and discover encroaching darkness at 6:30. Though I haven’t been diagnosed with Seasonal Affective Disorder, I seem to have a mild form, or maybe just an aversion to this lack of light, the darkest time of the year. For me, winter is the trade-off for living in Boston; I like spring (when we have one), summer and fall, and four months of darkness is the price I pay for staying in the Northeast.

Still, I need an attitude adjustment if I’m going to stay in the area, or at least a strategy to keep myself from falling into my usual winter doldrums. That strategy will involve getting outside when I can, working out at the gym, making the best of those cold winter nights, and (most likely) counting down the days till we “spring forward” once again.

Judah Leblang is a writer, teacher and storyteller in Boston. His new memoir “Echoes of Jerry” is available at Porter Square Books and at Amazon.com.
There was no immediate response from the Justice Department.

Matthew Shepard’s murder was a galvanizing event for LGBT Americans, epitomizing the pain and discrimination that many had experienced personally.

Shepard was found badly beaten and barely breathing on Oct. 6, 1998, after being tied to a split-rail fence on a dirt road near Laramie, Wyoming. He had spent 18 hours there in the near-freezing cold before a cyclist discovered him, at first mistaking him for a scarecrow. He died five days later. Police said his two attackers targeted him because he was gay. Both were sentenced to life in prison.

James Byrd Jr., a black man from East Texas, was also killed in 1998. He was chained to the back of a truck and then dragged along a secluded road. Two of the white men convicted of his murder have been executed.

Wednesday's ceremony included opening remarks by Assistant Attorney General Eric Dreiband, who outlined some new initiatives aimed at increasing the reporting of hate crimes and improving law enforcement’s response to them.

The event also featured a panel discussion about the first hate-crimes murder prosecution brought under the Shepard-Byrd act. That case involved a group of young white people in Mississippi who drove into the majority-black city of Jackson in 2011 to harass black people. A 49-year-old black man, James Craig Anderson, was run over and killed by a truck driven by one of the white youths.

Utah won’t say how many support ‘conversion therapy’ ban

By LINDSEY WHITEHURST
Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—A week after The Church of Jesus of Christ of Latter-day Saints opposed a ban on so-called conversion therapy in Utah, regulators considering the proposal refused Monday to release how much public support it got.

A decision on whether to adopt the ban statewide could come as early as Tuesday or take up to four months, said Jennifer Bolton, spokeswoman for the Department of Commerce, Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing.

Eighteen states have banned or restricted the discredited practice of using therapy to change a LGBTQ person’s sexual orientation. The American Psychological Association says the practice is not based in science and is harmful to mental health.

The faith widely known as the Mormon church submitted its opposition to the ban in Utah shortly before the public comment period ended last week, surprising and disappointing advocates who had been heartened when the church said it would not stand in the way of a similar proposal months ago.

The Utah-based church said the proposed regulatory rule prohibiting psychologists from engaging in “conversion therapy” would fail to safeguard religious beliefs and doesn’t account for “important realities of gender identity in the development of children.”

A department staff member said nearly four weeks ago at a public hearing that about 85% of the 1,300 comments submitted at that time supported the ban. In an email Monday, Bolton said no final tally would be released based on nearly 2,500 public comments. She didn’t explain why.

Taryn Atkin-Hiatt, a supporter of the ban and director of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention’s Utah chapter, said she was told by a department staffer who oversaw the public comment period that support grew to 94%. The staffer she said she spoke with, Larry Marx, declined to comment Monday.

Hiatt said she hopes a decision is made as soon as possible to protect young people.

“I'm trying to remain hopeful that DOPL will listen to the experts and come down on the side of science,” Hyatt said.

State regulators crafted the rule at the request of Republican Gov. Gary Herbert, a member of the church, who in June asked for a set of rules after a similar bill died in the Legislature, though leaders of the faith said they would not stand in the way.

The church accounts for nearly two-thirds of the state’s residents and nearly every state lawmaker.

Decades ago, the church taught that homosexuality could be “cured.” Leaders have since said it’s not a sin, but the church remains opposed to same-sex marriage and intimacy.

The proposed rule has drawn opposition from right-wing groups who argue it would prevent parents from getting help for their children with “unwanted” gay feelings or even from talking about sexuality.

Lawmakers introduce bill prohibiting LGBTQ discrimination

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—Ohio lawmakers have introduced a bill to forbid employment and housing discrimination against members of the
**Continued from page 6**

**LGBTQ community**


The Columbus Dispatch reports the bill’s unveiling comes about two weeks after a request from minority Democrats to extend employment protections to gay House employees was denied by House Speaker Larry Householder.

More than two dozen Ohio communities, including Columbus, have adopted LGBTQ discrimination protections but that only covers about a fourth of the state’s population.

A similar bill has been filed every session of legislation since 2003 but has only won passage in the House in 2009, before it died in the Senate.

**Detroit suburb bans so-called gay conversion therapy**

FERNDALE, Mich. (AP)—A Detroit suburb has banned so-called conversion therapy, a scientifically discredited practice to change a gay person’s sexual orientation or someone’s gender identity.

Ferndale council member Julia Music says the ban is an effort to build a “safe and inclusive space” for all people. The Detroit News says the vote was unanimous Monday.

Conversion therapy will be a misdemeanor in Ferndale punishable by up to 93 days in jail. The city is home to Affirmations, the area’s largest LGBTQ community center. Affirmations director Dave Garcia says conversion therapy hurts young people and is not therapy at all.

New York City is taking steps to repeal a ban because of concerns that it could be challenged on free-speech grounds. Some states have banned the therapy for minors.

**Transgender woman’s attacker convicted of assault**

DALLAS (AP)—A man charged with felony aggravating assault in the beating of a Dallas transgender woman has been convicted of misdemeanor assault.

The Dallas Morning News reports Dallas County jurors deliberated about four hours Monday before convicting Edward Dominic Thomas of the lesser charge in Mahlayasia Booker’s beating. Thomas was sentenced to 300 days in jail, including time served since his April arrest, on the condition that he doesn’t appeal the sentence. That leaves a little more than four months left for him to serve.

Police say Thomas admitted beating Booker on April 12 outside a Dallas apartment complex, that Thomas was one of the assailants captured on video and that he was offered $200 to beat Booker.

Booker was found shot to death in May on a Dallas street. Kendrell Lavar Lyles awaits trial on a murder charge.

**Finding Hope: Suicide risk high among LGBTQ youth in Idaho**

By MADELINE WHITE

**KIW Television**

NAMPA, Idaho (AP)—According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, LGBTQ+ people are at a higher risk than the general population for suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts, and experts tell us, in Idaho, those rates are especially high among LGBTQ+ youth.

“It was very clear what needed to happen to remain alive and healthy,” Jess Czapiweski, trans woman from Idaho told Boise television station KIVI.

Czapiweski’s journey is similar to too many others in Idaho who are growing up LGBTQ+.

“Being different, I spent pretty much my entire life feeling like I was alone,” Czapiweski.

For the 23-year-old from Middleton, that journey meant eventually coming out as a transgender woman.

“I’ve always known that I was different... I never asked to be this way. I tried my entire life not to be this way, and I couldn’t do it anymore,” said Czapiweski.

And Czapiweski’s journey fits the statistics: “I’ve actually had several suicide attempts over the course of my life,” said Czapiweski.

Research shows LGBTQ+ students experience higher rates of school-based victimization than their peers, contributing to higher risk of suicide.

“So they might be victims of bullying, right?” said Alana Brunner, LCWC, St. Luke’s Clinic.

71% of LGBTQ+ students in Idaho report having been harassed or assaulted in the past year based on sexual orientation, and 60% for gender expression, according to a 2017 GLSEN National School Climate Survey.

“We know that they have decreased school belonging, they have higher rates of depression, higher-rates of substance use...” said Brunner.

She said since youth spend so much time in schools, school administrators and staff have a unique opportunity to ensure the safety of their LGBTQ+ students. She suggests they consider implementing gender neutral bathrooms, inclusive curriculums, or even something as simple as a sticker in classrooms.

“With our current political climate, it’s really important to offer a space that’s open to anybody.”

One way of creating safety among youth? Gay-straight Alliances or GSAs. They are student-led, school-based clubs often advocating for acceptance and open to all members of the student body regardless of sexual or gender orientation.

“Schools with GSAs have higher educational outcomes, they have students with an increased self-esteem and sense of belonging,”

And decreased rates of depression, according to the 2017 GLSEN survey. Additionally, students in schools with GSAs are less likely to hear homophobic remarks in school on a daily basis than students in schools without a GSA (57% compared to 75%).

“Please go and ask for this resource_ reach out for help because there are a lot of people there to support you,” said Brunner.

Yet two-thirds of Idaho students surveyed said their school doesn’t have a GSA or something similar. Of those surveyed, 21% of LGBTQ+ students say they were “unable” to form a GSA.

Czapiweski says her high school didn’t have one. But if they had, she says:

“Anybody that was different that I could have talked to? It would have been a game changer,”

And as similar as Czapiweski’s journey is to those others growing up LGBTQ+ in Idaho, Czapiweski’s journey is not one about suicide—it’s about resilience.

“We just want to not have issues when we go to the grocery store, ya know? Not be looked down on our judged... I deserve to be happy. And I deserve to have a good life.”

Resources aimed at helping LGBTQ+ youth include the Trevor Project, who also hosts a 24/7 crisis line, and GLSEN, which provides tools for teachers and administrators for helping to create safe spaces.

Locally, the Treasure Valley Rainbow Coalition is yet another resource for LGBTQ+ youth. Shaunna Jones, the leader of the group and parent of an LGBTQ+ child, told us more about Treasure Valley Rainbow Coalition.

“We hold monthly activities on the second Saturday of every month. We have an active Facebook group where we post all of our activity information, but it’s a secret group to preserve the privacy of our youth. You can direct anyone to our main Facebook page and have them message us there, and we can get them added to the private group from there!” said Jones.

If you or someone you know is feeling hopeless or suicidal, do not hesitate to reach out to the Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline at (208) 398-4357.

**Former jail guard says she was fired for being transgender**

ABERDeen, Miss. (AP)—A former jail guard in northeast Mississippi says she was fired for being transgender.

Eline Hebert says she was treated differently from other Chickasaw County jail guards, and that supervisors didn’t keep her transgender status secret despite her request.

The lawsuit, filed this month in federal court in Aberdeen, seeks back wages and damages from Chickasaw County.

Hebert says she was frequently belittled by coworkers and supervisors, including Sheriff James Meyers and Warden Brand Huffman. She says she was disciplined for incidents for which other guards weren’t punished, saying the treatment created a hostile work environment violating her civil rights. Hebert says she was fired in 2017 after her paycheck didn’t arrive on time and she couldn’t afford gasoline to drive to work.

The county has yet to respond.
Black Christians give away forgiveness like it’s confetti, and white Trump evangelicals give it away sparingly, if at all. As an African American, the act of forgiveness appears to be our immediate go-to place in the face of unimaginable racial honor done to us.

While forgiveness is foundational to growth, healing, and restorative justice—whether religious or non-religious—there are various ways we use forgiveness. Either it can enhance healing and create positive change in our lives, or it can cause tremendous harm by maintaining the status quo. And, there is a distinction between individual forgiveness and institutional forgiveness.

Former Dallas police officer Amber Guyger fatally shot Botham Jean in his apartment. His younger brother, Brandt Jean, could have never fathomed a conflagration would ignite offering forgiveness and a hug of his brother’s killer.

Brandt took the witness stand and spoke directly to Guyger, stating, “I know if you go to God and ask him, he will forgive you” and then hugged her before she was led off to prison. Some saw Brandt’s action as demeaning and dismissive of Botham’s murder, especially in light of the numerous unarmed black males killed at the hands of white officers across the country. Many queried, if the roles were reversed, would Guyger’s white family do similarly. Others contested that was not the point because Brandt’s action was that of a good Christian. Brandt’s efforts have been compared and lauded to that of the black parishioners of “Mother” Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, SC, who forgave white supremacist assassin Dylann Roof. Roof’s motive was that of a good Christian. Brandt’s act of forgiveness I understood as healing himself and honoring his brother. “I love you just like anyone else, and I’m not going to hope you rot and die,” Brandt told Guyger in the courtroom. “I want the best for you because I know that’s exactly what Botham would want for you. I think giving your life to Christ is the best thing Botham would want for you.” Brandt’s actions are an example of institutional forgiveness. Forgiveness, in this instance, is a gift you give yourself for healing. It’s a feeling of inner peace, and a renewed relationship with self.

On the other hand, Judge Tammy Kemp giving Guyger a hug and her personal Bible before led off to prison I found unforgivable. Kemp turned to John 3:16 and told Guyger, “This is where you start. He has a purpose for you.” Kemp’s actions are an example of offering institutional forgiveness on behalf of her actions. As a guarantor of justice, Kemp represents the laws and values of our American court system. Kemp collapsed the separation of church and state in her courtroom by giving Guyger a Bible, further devaluing a flawed judicial system that disproportionately and unfairly treats black and brown lives trafficked through it. Many felt, Kemp, who is African American, should have known better in this era of BLACK LIVES MATTER. Her actions toward Guyger would be perceived as abdicating a white officer and siding with the country’s culture of policing.

In the face of continued racial violence done to us, I now must question if our church teachings of forgiveness of the last centuries are serving us well in this new century, particularly with the resurgence of white nationalism.

Forgiveness is one of the essential tenets that runs deep in the theology, prayers, and songs of Black Christianity. When families of Emanuel church victims stood in court in 2015 and stated one-by-one, they forgive Dylann because their religion advises them to do so, the nation was in awe. In awe, too, Roof’s family said, “We have all been touched by the moving words from the victims’ families offering God’s forgiveness and love in the face of such horrible suffering.” However, four years later, family members of the victims are still struggling. Jennifer Berry Hawes captures their struggle in “Grace Will Lead Us Home: The Charleston Church Massacre and the Hard Inspiring Journey to Forgiveness.”

Hawes questions the moral mandate of expressing forgiveness by black people as deriving from dominant and racist ideologies that serve the ruling class. “So when one has been irreparably and tragically wronged by another, it bears asking: Who benefits from my forgiveness, and what does being the better person have to do with my loss?” she states.

The expectation of forgiveness is quickly drawn along marginal lines within religion, race, class, gender, and sexuality, to name a few. Within these marginal groups, too often, the theologies and praxis of forgiveness avoid fully reckoning individual or group pain, suffering, and the lingering effects of trauma, grief, and even rage. Embracing the Christian belief of redemptive suffering symbolizes the merit of one’s strength.

Offering absolution is a personal matter. However, as one whose identity intersects several marginal groups—black, female, lesbian—I must raise Hawes question. “Who benefits from my forgiveness? I no longer allow my Christian indoctrination to forgive automatically override my self-interrogation of why I should. I now make the distinction between blind obedience versus reason faith.

And I must remember, while Christianity is not a toxic religion, the form of Christianity taught to my ancestors was not to make us not better Christians but rather better slaves.
N Ireland laws on abortion, same-sex marriage, set to change
By DANICA KIRKA
Associated Press

LONDON (AP)—Northern Ireland is set to decriminalize abortion and set the stage for legalizing same-sex marriages as lawmakers Monday, bringing its laws in line with the rest of the U.K.

This is happening because British lawmakers voted last year in favor of changing these laws if Northern Ireland’s government wasn’t up and running by Oct. 21.

Under the new measures, the U.K. government will take responsibility for putting regulations in place to provide access to terminations. Women will be offered free transportation to obtain abortion services in England in the meantime.

Grainne Teggart of Amnesty International said the change would make the system more “compassionate.”

“From midnight tonight history will be made, these oppressive laws that have policed our bodies and our healthcare will be brought to an end,” she said. “Finally, our rights and our healthcare are being brought into the 21st century.”

But Democratic Unionist Party leader Arlene Foster said that the change would not mark the end of legal efforts to prevent the introduction of abortion services in Northern Ireland. She said the party would explore legal options.

“This is not a day of celebration for the unborn,” she said.

Same-sex marriage will become legal in January.

Northern Ireland’s government has been suspended for more than two-and-a-half years amid a dispute between the major Protestant and Catholic parties, leaving Britain’s Parliament to make some key decisions.

Activists on both sides of the abortion issue gathered outside the Stormont Assembly on Monday in hopes of pressing lawmakers. The assembly was sitting for the first time since March 13, 2017 after being recalled by lawmakers wishing to protest changes to the abortion laws.

The session ended bitterly.

Activists favoring the new law held aloft cardboard letters spelling out “decriminalised” in front of Parliament Buildings ahead of the sitting. Anti-abortion activists prayed.

France OKs bill legalizing IVF for lesbians, single women
By SYLVIE CORBET
and CATHERINE GASCHKA
Associated Press

PARIS (AP)—France’s lower house of parliament on Tuesday overwhelmingly passed a bill that aims to give single women and lesbian couples legal access to in vitro fertilization, egg freezing and fertility medication.

The assisted reproduction measures are part of a broader bioethics bill voted by the National Assembly, the lower house, where French President Emmanuel Macron’s government has a majority.

The bill passed 359-114. It must still go to the Senate for debate.

France’s health care system would cover the cost of the assisted reproduction procedures for all women under 45.

French law currently allows in vitro fertilization and related procedures only for infertile heterosexual couples. Many ineligible French women travel abroad to undergo IVF treatment.

Sandrine Rudnicki, 38, a single woman who lives near Orleans in central France, went to Denmark for IVF treatment and now is the mother of a 10-month-old daughter, Emilia.

She said she’s “delighted” in-vitro fertilization is set to become legal for women like her because she feels like her family of two is “not accepted” under the current situation.

Rudnicki estimated it cost about 10,000 euros ($10,997), travel included, for her to get IVF in another country.

“This is not all sorts of inequalities,” she said added.

Lesbian couples, single women or both already have legal access to medically assisted reproduction in 18 of the European Union’s 28 countries.

France’s pending legislation also would allow children conceived with donated sperm to find out the donor’s identity upon demand when they reach age 18, a change from France’s current strict donor anonymity protections.

“For me it’s something which is indispensable. It will enable these children to have a foundation, a reference,” Rudnicki said.

The legislation does not address surrogate motherhood arrangements, which are banned in France.

Earlier this month, tens of thousands of conservative activists of all ages marched through Paris to oppose the bill. The Oct. 6 protest was organized by the same groups behind 2013 demonstrations against France legalizing same-sex marriages.

Buttigieg
Continued from page 2

Roosevelt High School last Saturday, he ignited laughter and cheers for his answer to a question about how he would approach debating Trump.

“We know what he’s going to do, and it just doesn’t get to me. Look, I can deal with bullies. I’m gay and I grew up in Indiana. I’ll be fine,” he deadpanned.

In a rare personal revelation, he told reporters on a bus ride across northern Iowa that he dreads facing Buttigieg regularly mentions Iowa teen Margaretta Bostick, who described the courage she took from meeting him to announce she was diabetic.

Similar moments, Buttigieg says, prompted him to build his campaign around repairing Americans’ sense of connectedness.

In Waterloo recently, local organizer Caitlin Reedy introduced Buttigieg to hundreds at a rally explaining that she was drawn to him by having experienced the uneasiness of sharing her diagnosis with diabetes.

Leaning forward in his chair on the bus the next day, Buttigieg said the campaign was teaching him how people—feeling left out racially, ethnically, culturally, economically—yearn to connect.

“Where it comes from is going through the process of understanding that you’re different,” he said, “and then understanding that that’s part of what you have to offer.”

“Join me in picturing that kind of presidency,” he told more than 600 in Waterloo, “not for the glorification of the president, but for the unification of the people.”
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Ronan Satchel Allen O’Sullivan Sinatra Farrow has been everywhere—promoting his new book “Catch and Kill”, giving insight into the Matt Lauer situation, and sporting a new hairdo straight out of Wimbledon. I noted that he’s been less combative in these recent appearances than in his previous media spots. That may be because of another change in his life—he’s engaged! He popped the question to podcast host and former Obama speechwriter Jon Lovett (no relation) in an intriguing way. Jon would read over sections of the book as Ronan was writing it. One page simply said, “Marriage! On the moon or even here on earth.” Ronan said the reply was, “Sure”. That Lovett’s sure got a way with words.

File this under “And they said it wouldn’t last”. And by “they”, I mean me. Colton Haynes and Jeff Leatham are officially divorced. I know—let’s all put on our surprised faces. But, there is actually a surprise. As part of the legal paperwork, the couple signed a non-disclosure agreement. “Neither party shall discuss, publish or post, or cause to be discussed published or posted, directly or indirectly, any private information pertaining to the other Party, the Parties’ relationship, or this dissolution action on any media, including without limitation, the internet (including, but not limited to social media applications, Websites, blogs, new periodicals, etc.) or in other media in any manner. Neither party shall authorize, license or create (in whole or in part) a book, article, movie, or television production based upon, or which includes a character based upon, the other Party without the written consent of the other Party, or use the other Party’s name for any publicity related purpose.” Because you know Ryan Murphy is chomping at the bit to do another season of “Fead” based on this tumultuous affair.

Many of my readers are familiar with Scotty Bowers—the so-called madam of gay Hollywood. His memoirs and the subsequent documentary made many allegations about both male and female stars from Tinseltown’s golden age, including such people as Cary Grant, Katharine Hepburn, Rock Hudson, Vivien Leigh, and oodles of others. Scotty passed away last week at the age of 96—closing another chapter.

You know who else is dead? Kevin Spacey’s masseur. Sure you remember the story. An anonymous man claims that in 2016, he was forced to grab Spacey’s genitals during a massage in Malibu. He came forward last September with a lawsuit and in May, a federal judge ruled that the case could move forward. When the trial was scheduled, the masseur’s lawyer said he was going to release on National Coming Out Day. And in the video, he’s seen dancing suggestively with women AND men—shirtless. And then there is this suggestive lyric—“Do you know who you are?” I will remind people that not only has Styles branded his Pride flag in concert and supported all people, he’s also stated that he doesn’t feel the need to define his sexuality. So, a big ole whatever.

Since we’re clearly in the British section of the columns, I can finally fit in a story I’ve been holding onto for some time. I’ve previously told you about Gareth Thomas—the gay rugby star who is a very vocal LGBT activist and fundraiser. Well, a few weeks ago, he came out as HIV-positive. I didn’t give it much thought, until I learned that he came out because he was being blackmailed by a British tabloid. Even more interesting is that the British Royal Family is publicly supporting him. First Prince William congratulated him. Then Prince Harry posted this on Instagram: “Gareth, you are an absolute legend! In sharing your story of being HIV+. You are saving lives and challenging stigma, by showing you can be strong and resilient while living with HIV. We should all be appalled by the way you were forced to speak your truth, it is yours and yours alone to share on your terms and I and millions stand with you.” While I wouldn’t want to be his grammar teacher, I applaud the Prince—who is waging his own battle with the tabloids. It should be noted that AIDS was one of William and Harry’s mum’s primary causes.

Our “Ask Billy” question comes from Liam in London: ‘Knowing you love ‘The X Factor’, you must be loving this new ‘Celebrity’ season—especially for that trio of hot rugby players.’

The show kinda lost me with the song stylings of Martin Bashir! But, yes, the rugby blocks are hot. While Nicole Scherzinger is clearly enamored with Ben Foden (and his chesticles), she might wanna check out our website to see what this hottie’s got south of the border. As for me, I’ve always had a penchant for Foden’s fellow rugger-turned-singer, Thom Evans (who was previously in the awkwardly named boyband “Twenty 4 7even”). If I know my fans, I’m sure many of you remember the male pictorial Thom did with his lookalike brother, Max. If you missed it, it is truly a sight to behold. Take a good LONG look on BillyMasters.com.

When we’re bringing you ripped rugby players’ rods, it’s definitely time to end yet another column. With one of the gayest holidays around the corner—Halloween—it’s time to remind you to check out www.BillyMasters.com—the site that’ll show you some treats that you can trick with. If I could be of more personal assistance, drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Ronan becomes Mrs. Lovett. Until next time, remember, one man’s filth is another man’s bible.
Bravery reflected.

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