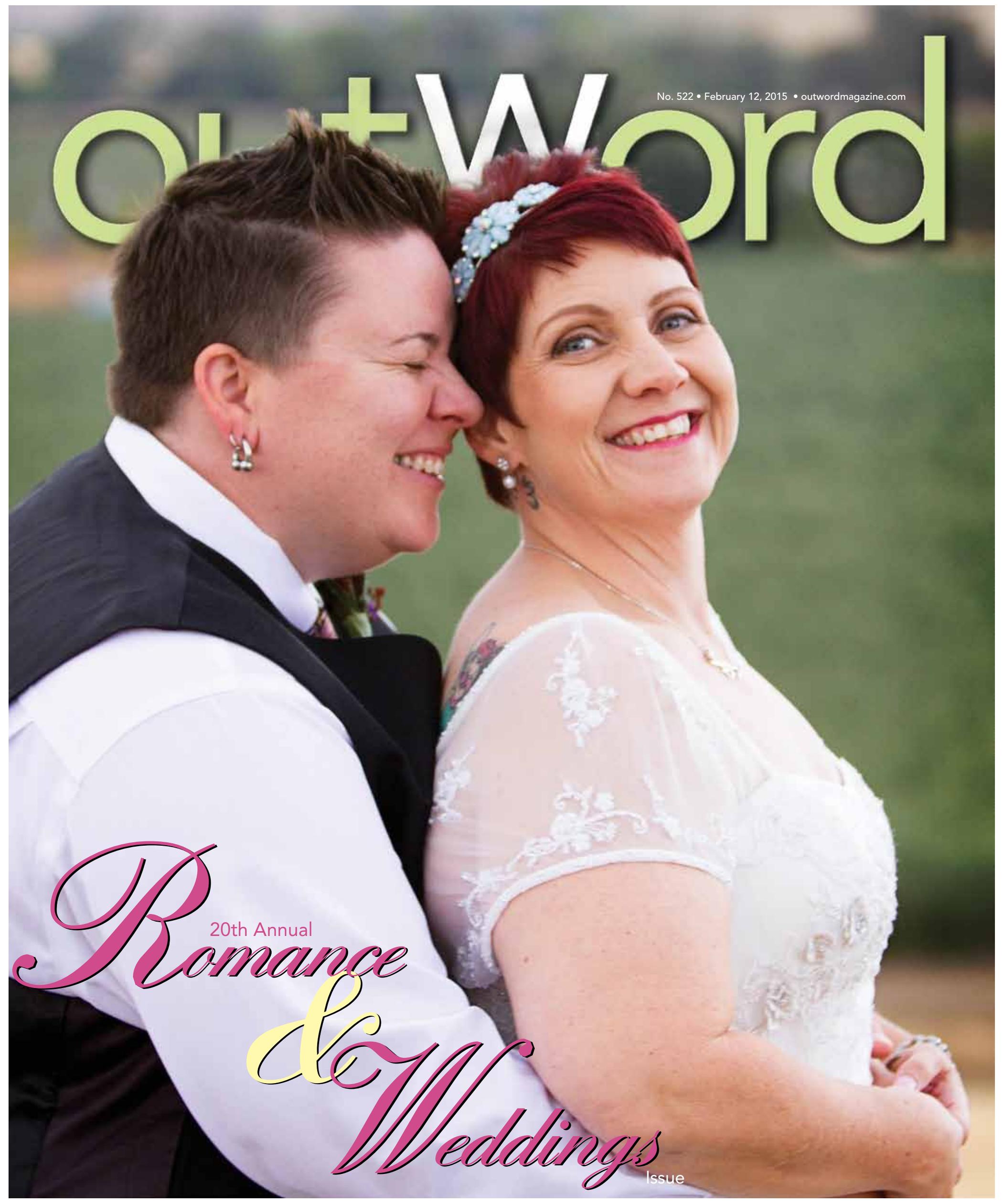


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Outword Staff

PUBLISHER
Fred Palmer

ART DIRECTOR/PRODUCTION
Ron Tackitt

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Ron Tackitt

EDITOR
Charles Peer
editor@outwordmagazine.com

ARTS EDITOR
Chris Narloch

SALES
Fred Palmer

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Diana Kienle
Frances Marlatt
Colt McGraw
Chris Narloch
Bonnie Osborn
Charles Peer

PHOTOGRAPHY
Charles Peer

ON THE COVER
Sharon and Michele Bettega, married
September of 2014 at Taber Ranch
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Photo by Vanessa Kearns

DISTRIBUTION
Kaye Crawford
Michael Crawford

ADVERTISING SALES

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Fred Palmer

National Advertising Representative
Rivendell Media
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PHONE: (916) 329-9280
FAX: (916) 498-8445

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PFLAG Sacramento Accepting Applications for Follansbee Scholarship

PFLAG Sacramento will accept applications for the Follansbee Scholarship from April 1st through May 31st.

Named for the Rev. and Mrs. Merrill Follansbee, the \$1,000 scholarships are awarded to select graduating high school seniors and college freshmen attending accredited universities in the fall of 2015.

For an application, complete scholarship requirements and submission instructions, please visit the PFLAG Sacramento website at www.PFLAGSacramento.org and click on the "SCHOLARSHIP" tab.

Join the LGBT Sacramento Valley Vets Color Guard

The LGBT Sacramento Valley Veterans (SVV) is reenergizing its Color Guard. The Color Guard participates and shows the colors at local community events and parades.

The SVV Color Guard is open to veterans, servicemembers and supporters. If it's been a

while, or even if you have never marched before, SVV can work with you to get you up to speed with facing movements, flag protocol and the like.

A Color Guard practice has been scheduled for February 21, from 4 to 5 p.m. at the Lavender Library, 1414 21st St.

If you would like to join the SVV Color Guard or if you have questions, please email SVV at info@sacvalleyvets.com with "Color Guard" as your subject heading, or visit SacValleyVets.com or www.facebook.com/events/375312885982569/.

The Court Is Looking for a New Emperor and Empress

One of, if not the most active LGBT organizations in Sacramento is C.G.N.I.E., The Court of the Great Northwest Imperial Empire.

Once a year, C.G.N.I.E. holds elections for a new Emperor and Empress, and you get to vote on who wins – but for even more fun, you can run for either title yourself!

Applications are now being accepted through Feb. 28, and you can download them and learn more about C.G.N.I.E. at www.cgnie.org.

New Options Are Good News for Transgender People

by Boyce Hinman

Many transgender people live with intense emotional pain because emotionally they are of one gender, but physically they are of another gender. For example, the person may know that he is male, and yet his body has breasts and female genitalia.

For many, surgery to change what the body looks like is the only way to end, or at least greatly reduce, the pain. The problem is the surgery is quite expensive.

Male-to-female surgery, that includes testicle removal, genital surgery and breast augmentation often costs a little over \$30,000. Female-to-male surgery, that includes mastectomy, areolar reduction and genital surgery, can cost between \$12,000 and \$25,000. Needed psychotherapy, hormone therapy, etc. adds to the cost.

There are now five options available for people to get help in paying for the surgery if their doctors demonstrate that it is medically necessary.

People on very limited income often get their medical care paid for by Medi-Cal. In 2004, Jennefer Grant, with the help of Legal Services of Northern California, got a court order requiring Medi-Cal to pay for the surgery.

Senior citizens generally get their medical care paid for by Medicare, although they may owe a co-pay for the care. On May 30, 2014 an appeal panel of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued a ruling saying essentially that Medicare providers must pay for the cost of the surgery when demonstrated to be medically necessary. It appears that, in California, all Medicare providers are in compliance with the ruling.

Californians who are not seniors, and who are not on limited income, can buy medical care coverage through Covered California or their employers may buy such coverage.

The companies offering some of those

products (managed health care plans) are regulated by the California Department of Managed Health Care and others (health insurance plans) by the California Department of Insurance. Representatives of both departments assure us that medically necessary sex reassignment surgery is covered by the products they regulate.

People who have been denied coverage for medically necessary sex reassignment surgery may get help from the following places: for complaints against a managed health care plan call 1-888-466-2219; for complaints against a health insurance company, call 1-800-927-927-4357; and for complaints against a Medicare provider, call 1-800-434-0222.

Boyce Hinman is the founder of the California Communities United Institute. He can be reached at b.hinman@calcomui.org or calcomui.org. Join their mailing list at <http://bit.ly/yZbxKC>.

Let the community know what's on your mind.

Please send letters to:
letters@outwordmagazine.com or **372 Florin Road, #133 Sacramento, CA 95831**

Not all letters may be published. Some may be edited for length and/or content.

Sac LGBT Center Adds Two New Board Members

The Sacramento LGBT Community Center has announced the addition of two experienced professionals to its board of directors, Stephanie Doute of Leading Age California, and Susan Hough, a long-time civil rights and employment law attorney.

"We are honored to have two such distinguished community members join the Center board to continue our growth and service to the LGBT community," said David Heitstuman, the Center's board president.

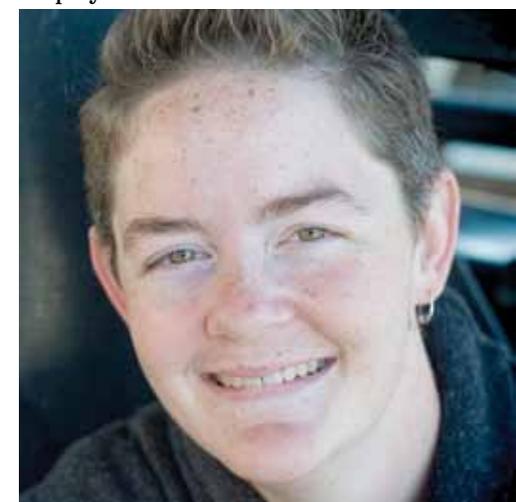
Doute is well versed in the management and operations of non-profits, currently serving as Vice President of Membership & Group Services at Leading Age California, an association representing California's not-for-profit senior living and service providers. Doute has cultivated a sound understanding of how to build meaningful partnerships and meet the needs of diverse people and groups in communities.

Hough is the founder of Hough Employment Law Practice in Sacramento

where she is a solo practitioner dedicated to civil rights and employment law. Her previous practice in Los Angeles provided legal services to various constituencies, including the LGBT community. Hough also has experience in human resource management in both the public and private sector in California, New York and New Jersey. She is a certified mediator and arbitrator.

Hough has been a member of the State Bar of California for more than 24 years and is a member of SacLEGAL, the Sacramento County Bar Association and the Los Angeles County Bar Association.

Both appointments are for two-year terms that began Jan. 1. For more information, visit SacCenter.org.



Stephanie Doute



Susan Hough

Freedom to Marry Opposition Is the Dog that Didn't Bark

Commentary by Evan Wolfson, *Freedom to Marry*

America's history tells us there will always be pockets of resistance to any civil rights advance. That is why the article ("States Renew Fight to Stop Gay Marriage," *NY Times*, Jan. 29) about a few state officials proposing license-to-discriminate measures to limit existing civil rights laws they never liked anyway was not surprising.

Despite a handful of apocalyptic pronouncements that marriage will be destroyed, as will America, all is pretty quiet amid much joy. No widespread resistance. No riots in the streets. The reality is that opposition to the freedom to marry is the dog that didn't bark.

In fact, as states issue marriage licenses to loving and committed gay couples, public support increases. In Wyoming, polls show that a majority now supports the freedom to marry, while even in ruby-red Utah, there is plurality support and the law has been followed. Fifty-nine percent of the American people and over 60 state and federal courts have embraced the freedom to marry, and

we've ended marriage discrimination in 37 states. That is more support and more states than we had when the U.S. Supreme Court struck down bans on interracial marriage in the best-named case ever, *Loving v. Virginia*.

What followed *Loving* in 1967 is precisely what we are seeing now, even in red states where we have won: the overwhelming majority moves on.

Notwithstanding isolated grandstanding and sideshows, the majority of the country has again moved to the right side of history. As in 1967, America is ready for the freedom to marry.

Evan Wolfson is the founder and president of Freedom to Marry.

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States Continue Assault on Marriage Equality

Even as the U.S. Supreme Court has decided to hear four cases concerning marriage equality, some state legislatures are still continuing efforts to make same-sex marriage unlawful.

With the 2015 legislative session in swing, the ACLU's Out4Freedom Campaign is tracking the bills that would allow religion to be used to discriminate and that are either intentionally aimed at LGBT people or are spurred in backlash to marriage equality becoming a nationwide reality.

These bills include state versions of the Religious Freedom Act Restoration (RFRA), marriage license ban bills, broad religious exemption bills and more.

Texas – Marriage License Ban

This bill's language says that a state or local government employee may not officially recognize, grant or enforce same-sex marriage. If an employee does so, they may no longer receive a salary, pension or other employee benefit at the expense of state taxpayers. Taxes or public funds may not be used to enforce a court order requiring issuance or recognition of same-sex marriage licenses.

South Carolina – Marriage License Ban

This bill's language says that no state/local taxpayer funds or government salaries may be paid for an activity that includes licensing or support of same-sex marriage. No government employee officially shall recognize, grant or enforce a same-sex marriage license. If employee does, they must not continue to receive a salary, pension or other employee benefit at the expense of taxpayers of the state. No taxes/public funds may be utilized to enforce a court order requiring the issuance or recognition of a same-sex marriage license.

Virginia – Broad Licensing

This bill's language says that a person seeking to obtain or renew a license, registration, or certificate from the Commonwealth, its political subdivisions, or any agency, authority, board, department, or other entity thereof, shall not be required to perform, assist, consent to, or participate in

any action or refrain from performing, assisting, consenting to, or participating in any action as a condition of obtaining or renewing the license, registration, or certificate where such condition would violate the religious or moral convictions of such person with respect to same-sex "marriage" or homosexual behavior.

Utah – Marriage License Refusal

This bill's language says that a person authorized to solemnize a marriage is not required to do so if it would violate the person's sincerely held religious beliefs, tenets, doctrine, practices, or the person's fundamental right to religious liberty.

Georgia – Religious Freedom Act

This bill's language would allow someone to challenge any governmental policy or law that substantially burdens his or her religious beliefs.

To follow these bills, and other similar bills as they are introduced, visit www.aclu.org.

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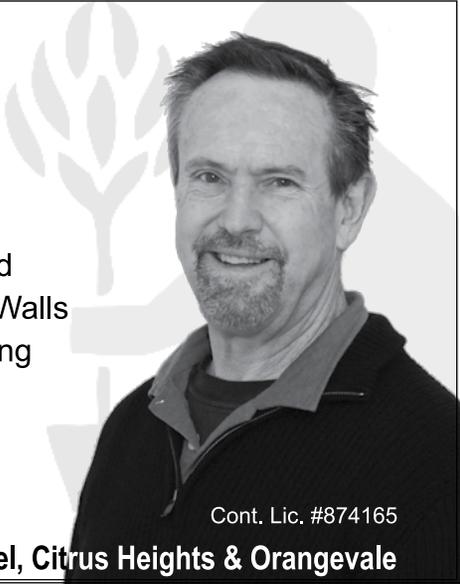
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Annie Lennox on Fifty Shades of Grey at the Grammys:

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WA Syphilis Explosion Reflects National STD Trend

There is a syphilis explosion across the U.S. as evidenced by six people in Washington State who have been infected with ocular syphilis in the past two months – including two who have gone blind – according to recent Washington Department of Health public warnings and news articles.



CALIFORNIA: #2 IN SYPHILIS CASES

The AIDS Healthcare Foundation reports that between 2008 and 2012, syphilis rates have increased among men and women of all ages and races across the U.S., including a 46 percent increase in Sacramento.

The *Seattle Times* and *Outbreak News Today* have reported that since mid-December 2014, four cases were reported in Seattle's King County, including three men who have sex with men (MSM). Three of the cases were also identified as HIV-positive.

"These latest cases underline the dangers of the syphilis explosion taking place in this country," said AIDS Healthcare Foundation President Michael Weinstein. "Recently, some have minimized the gravity of STDs like syphilis and gonorrhea, but these cases serve as a reminder that prevention of all STDs needs to be taken as seriously as the efforts to prevent HIV."

Ocular syphilis is typically a complication of primary or secondary syphilis and some strains of *Treponema pallidum*, the bacterium that causes syphilis, may be more likely to cause eye or central-nervous-system disease.

These disturbing reports from Washington State come on the heels of the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s latest STD Surveillance report released in December that claimed the rate of primary and secondary syphilis in 2013 was the highest recorded since 1996. Of those individuals diagnosed with syphilis, 91 percent were men and 75 percent were men who have sex with men (MSM) and over half of MSM with primary and secondary syphilis were co-infected with HIV.

To draw attention to the alarming syphilis rates that have been steadily climbing since 2000, the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) launched a series of billboard and media campaigns to encourage STD prevention and testing. Earlier this summer, AHF ran its "California: #2 in Syphilis" billboard and bus bench campaign featuring the California flag's iconic Grizzly bear smacking a paw to his forehead in a moment of "D'oh!" to draw attention to the CDC's previous surveillance report that ranked California's syphilis rate second in the U.S. only to Georgia.



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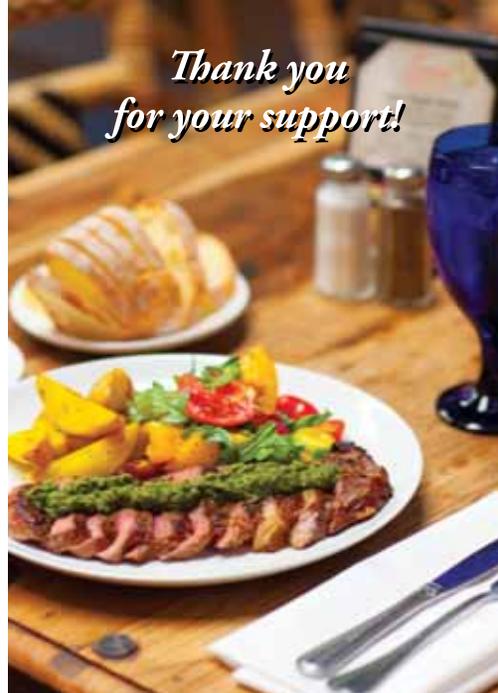
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Forcing the Spring Retells the Battle for Marriage Equality

Jo Becker, a Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter for The *New York Times*, will recount her experiences inside the fight for marriage equality at a presentation at UOP's McGeorge School of Law on February 12 from 5 - 6 p.m. in Classroom C.

Titled *Forcing the Spring*, the presentation is an account of five remarkable years in U.S. civil rights history, when the United States experienced a tectonic shift on the issue of marriage equality.

Beginning with the historical legal challenge of California's ban on same-sex marriage, Becker expands the scope to encompass all aspects of this momentous struggle, offering a gripping behind-the-

scenes narrative.

Becker won the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting for a series she coauthored on Vice President Dick Cheney for the *Washington Post*.

The presentation is co-sponsored by the Pacific McGeorge Capital Center, Lambda, and Sac LEGAL, and is open to the public. For more information, contact mcgeorgecenters@pacific.edu or 916-739-7316.

Briefly Put

Chile Approves Civil Unions for All

Chile's legislature voted on Jan. 28th to allow civil unions for all people, including same-sex couples. The decision grants legal status to stable and permanent cohabitation by two people, without regard to either person's sex or gender, but does not legalize same-sex marriage.

"This is a major step forward for LGBTI Chileans and families who can now enter into a life partnership under the law assured of benefits and rights," said María Mercedes Gómez, IGLHRC regional program coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The measure will give same-sex and unmarried couples many of the rights granted to married couples, including allowing civil union partners to inherit each other's property, join a partner's health plan and receive pension benefits.

Chile President Michelle Bachelet is expected to sign the bill into law.

Elton John AIDS Foundation Tops List of Donors for LGBTQ Issues

The Elton John AIDS Foundation (EJAF) has been identified as the top funder for LGBTQ health issues according to a new report by the Funders for LGBTQ Issues. The analysis, which examined LGBTQ health disparities and LGBTQ philanthropy, found that EJAF, along with the Ford Foundation, topped all other giving for LGBTQ health issues at over \$4 million.

"This groundbreaking study by Funders for LGBTQ Issues shines a light on how far we've come and how far we have left to go," said EJAF Executive Director Scott Campbell. "We are proud to be the largest funder and stand with strong allies like Ford, but believe that the foundation community and corporate funders can and must do more."

For more information, visit www.ejaf.org.

This Day in June Wins 2015 Stonewall Literature Award

T*This Day in June*, by Sacramento author Gayle E. Pitman, Ph.D. and with illustration by Kristyna Litten, is the 2015 recipient of the Mike Morgan and Larry Romans Children's and Young Adult Literature Award, from Stonewall Books.

The Stonewall Book Awards are given annually to English-language works of exceptional merit for children or teens relating to the LGBT experience. The award will be presented to the winning authors or editors at the American Library Association Annual Conference in San Francisco in June.

This Day in June celebrates the pride and diversity of the LGBTQ community from a child's point of view, and is the first picture book to win the award in the 44-year history of the awards.

"*This Day in June* reflects the ever-growing quality and quantity of the LGBTQ picture books being published," said Stonewall Book Awards Committee Chair Dr. Rebecca D. Hunt.

When not writing, Pitman is a Professor of Psychology and Women's Studies at Sacramento City College, and is the author of the award-winning book *Backdrop: The Politics and Personalities behind Sexual Orientation Research*.

"I truly am honored that *This Day in June* was chosen for this award," Pitman told *Outword*. "I'm still digesting the reality of it, to be honest. This wasn't on my radar screen at all, and it was a complete and total surprise to me when I found out *This Day in June* won. It's really humbling to receive an award that in the past was given to people like Sarah Schulman, Essex Hemphill and Randy Shilts."

Books that were also honored in the category included: *Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out*, written and photographed by Susan Kuklin; *I'll Give You The Sun*, written by Jandy Nelson; and *Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress*, written by Christine Baldacchio, with pictures by Isabelle Malenfant.

For information on the Stonewall Book Awards, visit www.ala.org/yma, and to learn more about *This Day in June*, visit gaylepitman.com.



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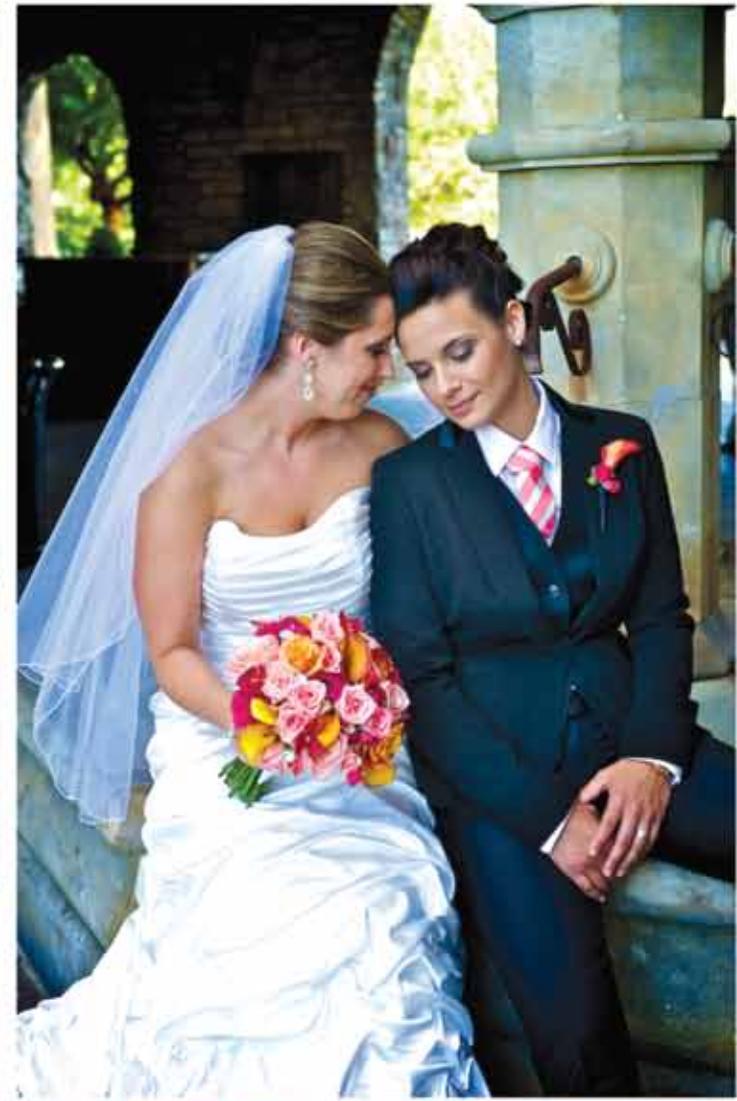
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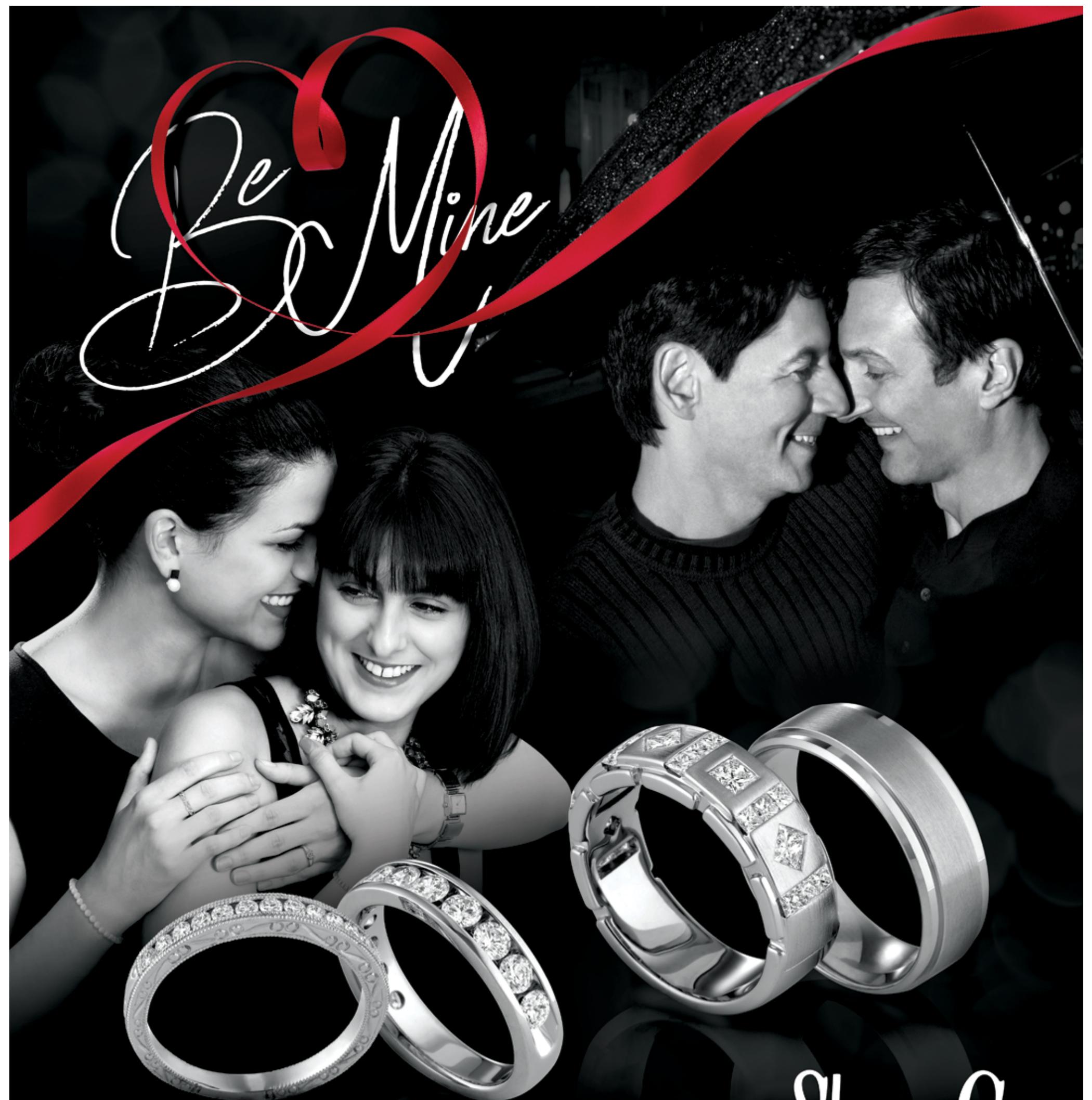
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How to Get the Most Out of Your Wedding Photography

by Vanessa Kearns

I have been a wedding photographer for the past eight years and have shot more than 75 weddings. Although I say I have seen it all, I am sure there are still some surprises left out there!

With my knowledge of the wedding industry, I have put together a few tips that will help you get the most out of your wedding photographer!

The number one tip I can give you is to get a recommendation from someone you know and trust. Word of mouth is such a powerful tool, and if they had a good experience with a photographer, you are much more likely to have a good experience as well.

If you don't know anyone that has had any experience with a photographer, another great place to ask is other wedding vendors you have hired. I have favorite DJs, planners, florists and caterers that I love to work with who do amazing work. I will always recommend them, because I know working with them will make my job easier, which in turn makes your day run smoothly!

Another tip to ensure your day runs smoothly is to make sure you budget enough time for photos! You will be shocked at how fast the day flies by! If you don't have enough time built in to take photos, everyone will feel rushed and it will be much more difficult to get relaxed photos of a happy couple enjoying their day!

I typically like to budget an hour for all

posed photography after the ceremony. I take all the family photos immediately following the ceremony, so that when your close friends and family not in the wedding party are done with photos, they can go enjoy the cocktail hour.

After that, I like to shoot the wedding party and the couple. It will rarely take a full hour to shoot all the photos, but if you build that time into your schedule, you have a little wiggle room if things are running late, you need to do an outfit change, or you just want a quiet moment with your new spouse!

The last tip is the most important one. Please, above all, make sure you TRUST your photographer. It will make your special day more relaxing and will make our job that much easier!

While we always appreciate input from the couple on photos they would like, try not to overwhelm your photographer with "must have" shots. A list of photos that is needed of things like "Photo with Grandma" is one thing, a comprehensive list of "Photo with couple in focus and background blurry" only stifles creativity and puts pressure on everyone to create something that might or might not be possible. Trust that your photographer will capture all of those special

moments!

Above all, try to relax and enjoy the moment! It is my job to make you look good, so take a deep breath, look at your brand new spouse and revel in your

wonderful day!

Vanessa Kearns is the owner of Vanessa Kearns Photography and has been shooting weddings since 2007. www.vanessakearnsphotography.com.



Sharon and Michele Bettega, were married in September of 2014 at Taber Ranch Vineyards in Capay, CA. Image by Vanessa Kearns.

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Valentine's Day Is for Us All

by Nicola Simmersbach

Valentine's Day, the annual flurry and rush that makes some people giddy with anticipation and others want to crawl under a rock to wait out the noise and fury, is back again.

The latter group often hasn't felt included in the Love Festival that just won't shut up from right after New Year's until the cold morning light of February 15th. It doesn't help that we're in the final months before the Big Bang at SCOTUS where we may finally get marriage legalized for everyone.

Symbols of exclusive, committed, coupled bliss are in overdrive, whether you like it or not. Seems that our societal approach to love doesn't work for everyone and perhaps its time to open the doors to more inclusivity.

If pink hearts and overpriced roses don't symbolize love for you, romance makes you cringe and the word marriage sounds like an ill-fitting pair of shoes, take heart. Science says love isn't what we have made it out to be. Once we peel off the layers of red and pink crepe paper, underneath is something much more raw, beautiful, primal and ubiquitous than we allow ourselves to know.

What a stodgy old Brit named John Bowlby discovered (and others have expounded upon), is that what we call "love" is human attachment.

Pack animals that we are, we develop emotional (and neurological) connections that protect us physically, spiritually and emotionally, and we will fight to preserve these connections with all our might.

That's it; that's love. Nothing about gender, sexual orientation or marital bliss. In fact, what we call love is often the socially acceptable behavior that is designed to protect and preserve the connection. Want to keep the wires of attachment buzzing? We do things like give attention, comfort, shiny objects, pleasure and sexual affection.

So how did we complicate something so simple and beautiful? The ways are myriad but the message is there under all the trappings: love is everywhere.

It exists in couples, in families, between friends and in groups of people. It is the couple with whom you spent the day in intimate conversation and in the touch of your beloved. It is the

buddy who calls you every single day and who can hug you like a bear. It is in the time your elusive friend gives you to listen and tell you the truth about yourself; that you are more than you allow yourself to believe.

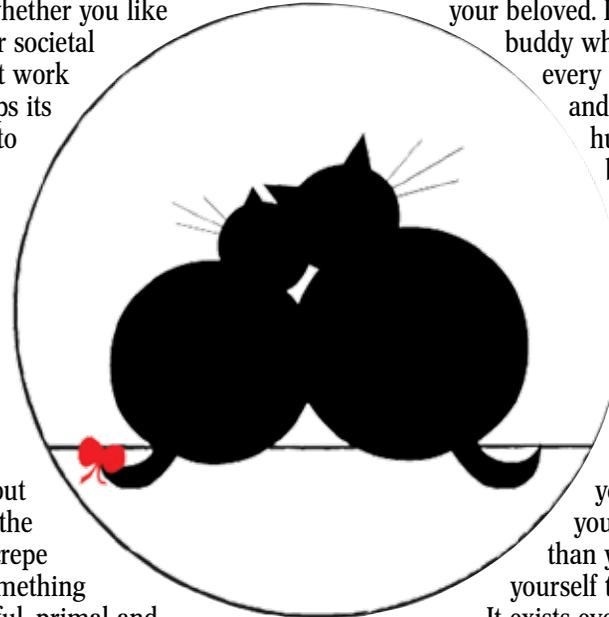
It exists everywhere that emotions bond two or more

people, where the only purpose of that bond is to feel connected, alive and to feel that you belong. Our hearts ache when separated from those we love and no logic or taboo can interfere.

Love is love. Coupled, married, complicated, single, poly or as-yet undefined. To queer something means to re-make it, to revolutionize and overhaul it and repurpose it for today.

Valentine's Day is for all of us, it's time we queer it because so far, every time we do, the thing we queer gets better.

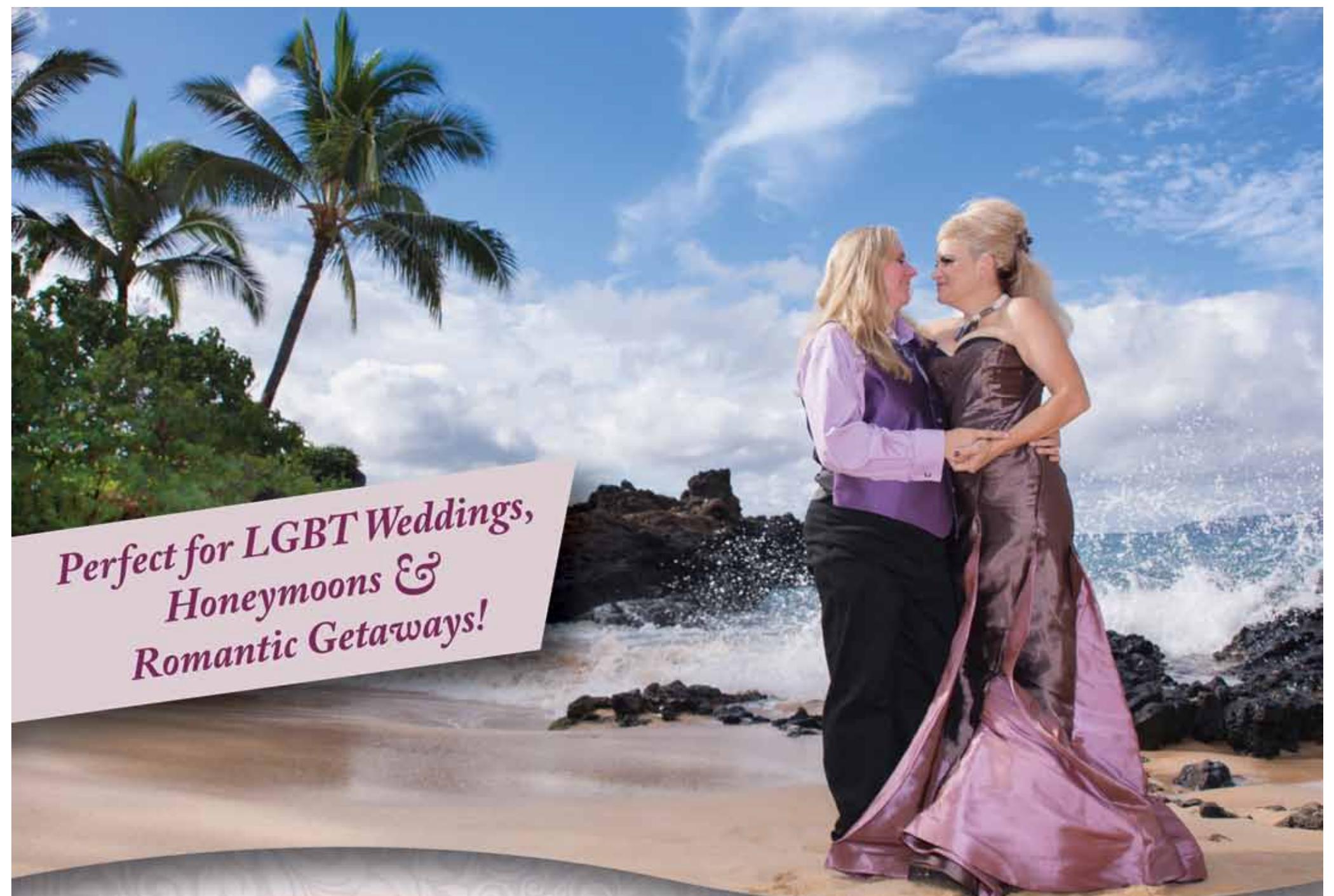
Nicola Simmersbach PsyD LMFT LPCC is a therapist in private practice helping couples and individuals lead the lives they choose. Contact her at her web site DrNicola.net.



Two Mothers Combats Bigotry in the Quest for a Family



When happily married German couple Katja and Isabella decide to have a child, they are confronted with many unexpected obstacles, inconsistent laws and bigotry that tests not only their resolve, but their relationship. *Two Mothers* is available from TLA Releasing, see the trailer at www.tlavideo.com/gay-two-mothers/p-366255-2.



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Florida Group Wedding Features Lance Bass

Couples from across the U.S. and around the world converged on Fort Lauderdale to take part in an historic group wedding and vow renewal to mark the new dawn of same-sex marriage equality in Florida.



Couples celebrating their weddings at the "Love is Love" Wedding at W Fort Lauderdale on February 5, 2015 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. (Photo by Rodrigo Varela/Getty Images for Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau)

Representing 18 U.S. states, Europe, and South America, the LGBT and straight couples were greeted by former NSYNC member and *Dancing with the Stars* alum, Lance Bass, who delivered a moving address on the meaning of love as the event's official "Love is Love" ambassador.

Hosted by the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) CEO and president, Nicki E. Grossman, the "Love is Love" destination wedding on Thursday, February 5th, was presided over by Reverend Dr. Durrell Watkins, senior minister, of the Sunshine Cathedral.

The landmark event coincided with Bass making TV history the same day with the broadcast of his wedding with Michael Turchin in the E! network special, *Lance Loves Michael: The Lance Bass Wedding* – the first American television broadcast of a celebrity marriage between two men.

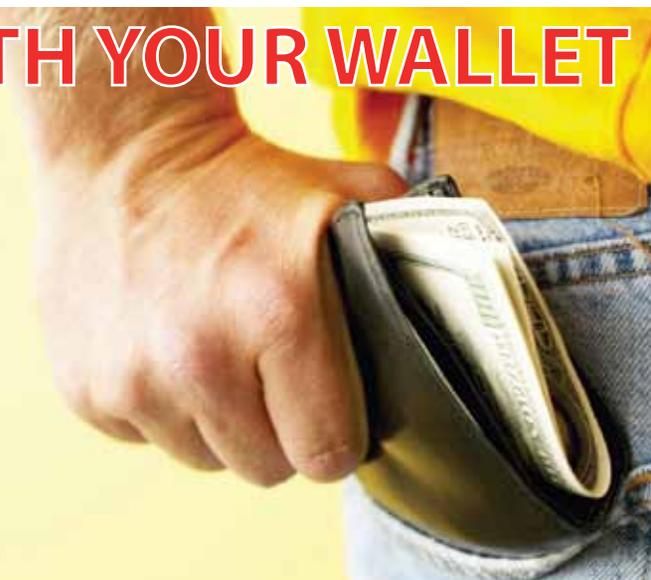
The newlyweds and recommitted couples attended a post-ceremony champagne toast and reception at the W Fort Lauderdale, with one lucky couple receiving a week-long honeymoon, provided by Cruise Planners, an

American Express Travel Representative and Celebrity Cruises. All couples received a welcome gift containing something "new and blue", courtesy of Jet Blue and Greater Fort Lauderdale's hotels, restaurants and attractions.



Michael Turchin and Lance Bass at the "Love is Love" Wedding at W Fort Lauderdale on February 5, 2015 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. (Photo by Rodrigo Varela/Getty Images for Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau)

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Set the Mood for Romance with Flowers

by Geri Ann Alviso

Ever feel let down when your partner wasn't entirely blown away by your gifts? Well chin up, I'm here to help. Flowers ARE a good choice, but you need to put a little effort into it.

Don't just throw money at some random 'florist.' You may not get results.

Start with your gut. Ponder your partner's personality and how they make you feel. Think of what you might say on your card message, and what you want to achieve with this person by sending them flowers. Flowers can mean anything from "I want to get to know you better" to "I want to spend the rest of my life with you."

Select your florist based on positive recommendations from friends, and then take a few minutes to make the call them. Online ordering will get you no advice at all.

OK, this is the FUN part. Introduce yourself to your florist and tell them your story: a little bit about you, your partner and how they make you feel. Yes, lay it all out on the table. This is the Inspiration that will drive your florist to help you get Results.

Don't be bashful. Describe his or her personality and give some juicy details that will make you memorable to this florist. You never know when this service relationship you're building will come in handy.

This will help the florist really bring your wish to life, and will help them seed through hundreds of flower varieties, greenery, accent items (rope, burlap, metal, glass, ribbon, etc.), and containers to select just the right match for what you have described. Schwing!

And, don't forget that card message. Don't sensor that by any means. If you have to, ask if there's an email you can send it to so you don't have to speak all those bedroom words out loud.

Do it right and your partner will blush the moment they get their hands on that card and those gorgeous flowers! No more bleh flowers. Results. You know what you're aiming for, the wow factor, and more.

Sending flowers to a workplace is effective if you're leading into a date that evening. Having them delivered to their home is better if you'll be staying in all weekend. Instant Romance! And don't forget you can also send a bouquet in advance of a dinner reservation, to the table. Voila! That really takes dinner up a notch.



Just one of the beautiful arrangements Geri Ann Alviso at Flower Fiesta, Custom Design Florist can create for your special day.

Additional tips:

If your partner is the quiet, shy type, start small in your bouquet selection. Nothing overwhelming. A dozen roses may make them blush in a bad way. A small nosegay in soft pastel colors or earth tones should do the trick.

Have fun. Be playful. You don't have to spend a ton of money on flowers. As long as you put your heart into it and be descriptive with your story, you WILL get results. Trust me. A good florist will listen to the words you use and take the time to choose just the right items for your partner.

Geri Ann Alviso, is the owner and designer at Flower Fiesta, Custom Design Florist. She has been creating memories in flowers since 2001, with 20 years design experience. She can be reached at 916-225-2623 and www.flowerfiesta.com or flowerfiesta@msn.com.

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Aim for the Heart Tour Brings Days Stars to Sacramento

Days of Our Lives stars Arianna Zucker (Nicole Walker) and Shawn Christian (Dr. Daniel Jonas) are coming to Sacramento for a weekend of fun and philanthropy when they visit on March 27-29 as part of the *Aim for the Heart Tour* benefitting Arrow-Heart Adventure Camps.

Committed to enriching the lives of young teens through challenging outdoor adventures, Arrow-Heart Adventure Camps have long been a passion project for co-founder Zucker.

"We inspire kids to want to make better choices, build character, confidence, credibility and critical thinking skills," begins Zucker. "These camps truly make a difference in the lives of the teens that come through our program."

Eyeing Northern California expansion for their next location, this weekend-long event will feature exclusive opportunities to learn more about the wonderful work of Arrow-Heart while mingling with the television favorites.

Weekend events include:

- **The Mix Downtown**
 "Mix" and mingle with the stars in a fabulous downtown setting with gorgeous views of the nearby State Capitol at this 21 and over event on Friday, March 27.

- **Lockdown Brewing Co**
 Get your boogie on with Shawn and Ari at this family friendly event that features exciting raffle prizes, live music and the chance to sample a one-of-a-kind specialty Arrow-Heart themed brew. Saturday, March 28, in Folsom.

- **Land Ocean Restaurant**
 Enjoy an intimate, VIP breakfast with Shawn and Ari to conclude the weekend on Sunday, March 29, in Folsom.

Event ticketing is limited. For more detailed information and to purchase tickets, please visit the www.arrow-heart.com/category/news-and-events.



Shawn Christian and Arianna Zucker at the 2014 Daytime Emmy Awards

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Hip-hop artist/DJ Cazwell and fashion designer Geoffrey Mac have teamed together on a playful new men's underwear line inspired by the rapper's iconic "Ice Cream Truck" song. Designed with go-go boys in mind, and to show off their junk and give their bubble butts a cute little lift, the special limited edition release is available at icecreamtruck.bigcartel.com.

Add a Little Gala to Make a Better Butternut Squash Soup

by Chef Rahn T

I have been working on a recipe for butternut squash soup for some time now. I have tried several off the web, even read ingredients off the side of boxes of soup to see what they might have put in them that I would like.



So far, this is the very best recipe I have come up with. Meaning, this is the best butternut squash soup I have ever made. Let me know what you think.

It's a pretty simple recipe, the most difficult part, by far, is cutting the rind off the squash. (I have found that my large, serrated Miracle Blade does a pretty good job.) Other than that, it's mostly cooking the veggies, then blending and adding some half and half.

Here's what you are going to need:

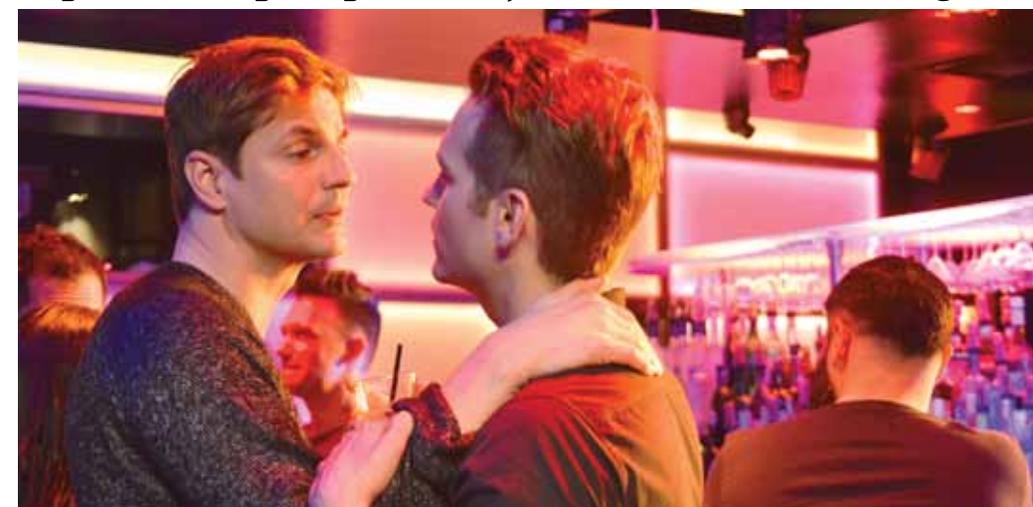
- 2 medium butternut squashes
 - 2 large yellow onions
 - 4 medium Yukon Gold potatoes
 - 3 cloves of garlic – crushed
 - 1 Gala apple
 - 1 1 quart box of vegetable or chicken stock
 - 1 pint of half and half (fat free works fine if you want to keep the fat down)
 - 2 Tbsp of butter
 - 3 Tbsp of olive oil
 - 1 Tbsp of sea salt
 - 1 Tbsp of fresh ground pepper
 - 1 Tbsp of ground cumin
- Cut the squash, onions, apple and potatoes into similar size chunks, approximately 1". In a large stock pot (6 - 7 quarts) add the olive oil and set to a medium or medium-high heat. Once the oil is

hot, add the squash, onions, apple, garlic and potatoes. Sprinkle the salt, pepper and cumin over the ingredients, cover with a lid and let them cook until they are soft. Check often so nothing burns to the bottom of the pan. Add the butter and stir it in. (If you cover with a lid, there should be plenty of liquid dispelled to keep things moist. If not, feel free to add a bit of water, or some of the vegetable stock.)

Once the mixture is cooked and soft, approximately 30 minutes, add the vegetable stock and let it cook for 15 minutes longer. You want everything to be soft and easy to blend. At that point, use an emersion blender (AKA motorboat blender) to blend the ingredients. If you like to have some extra texture to the soup, you can take out some of the potatoes, set them aside, blend the soup, and then return the potatoes. Just a thought.

When the soup is blended it should be thick but still soupy. Add about half the pint of half and half. I like to do a little at a time until I get the creaminess I desire. Remember you can easily add more, but you can't take any back once it's poured. Stir the half and half into the soup mixture well and then you are ready to serve. This should accommodate 6 to 8 people – more if you are using small soup cups. Enjoy.

Gay Murder Mystery *Kiss Me, Kill Me* Finishes Shooting



Production has just wrapped up on *Kiss Me, Kill Me*, a contemporary Alfred Hitchcock/Agatha Christie-style "whodone-it?" The mystery centers on Dusty (Van Hansis) who confronts his unfaithful boyfriend and blacks-out, only to wake up to find the boyfriend murdered and he's the prime suspect. Pictured are Stephen (Gale Harold) and Dusty (Van Hansis). The 2015 release date has not yet been set, but you can follow the news at www.KissMeKillMeMovie.com. Photo courtesy Spellbound Productions, LLC

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And the Oscar Goes To — Neil Patrick Harris!

by Chris Narloch

For the second year in a row, a gay performer will host the Academy Awards. And the Oscar goes to ... Neil Patrick Harris, who will follow in the footsteps of last year's host, Ellen DeGeneres.

We will have to wait until February 22 to see if Harris, a seasoned awards show emcee, can top DeGeneres, who famously "crashed" Twitter last year with an all-star celebrity "selfie."

Harris doesn't usually go in for the kill as some Oscar hosts have done, so he will probably do a great job this year. (For the record, I thought Ellen was one of the warmest, funniest emcees the Oscars has ever had.)

Few of the famous presenters had been announced as I wrote this, but I can report that last year's winners in the acting categories will all be returning to present. Quick quiz - can you name any of them?

(Jared Leto and Lupita Nyong'o won in the supporting categories, while Cate Blanchett and Matthew McConaughey took home the top acting prizes.)

Jack Black, who is usually good for a laugh (or at least an embarrassing moment), is also scheduled to do something this year, and five performers have been announced to perform the nominated songs: Adam Levine, Tim McGraw, Rita Ora, and John Legend with Common.

Harris will, of course, perform also, in "an original multimedia, musical sequence" written by Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez, the Oscar-winning



Neil Patrick Harris and his buddy Oscar

songwriting team from *Frozen*. (Please God, not that song again.)

This year's awards should be unusually suspenseful as several of the top prizes are still up in the air.

Nominees Patricia Arquette (*Boyhood*), J.K. Simmons (*Whiplash*), and Julianne Moore (*Still Alice*) are all considered shoe-ins to win in the acting categories, but comeback king Michael Keaton (*Birdman*) could conceivably lose to Eddie Redmayne, whose performance in *The Theory of Everything* is much admired.

I'm rooting for Keaton, and I think he will win, but the Best Picture and Directing awards are even more up in the air. (*Boyhood* could take both those awards, as

could *Birdman*, or they could split them one way or the other.)

If you have no idea what I am talking about, then you need to catch up on your Oscar preparation, and you can do that beginning Friday, February 13, when the Century 16 Greenback Lane Theatre will launch a marathon week of all the Best Picture nominees.

I plan to be there myself, on Oscar weekend, when that same theater will host all the nominated short films in one program (animated and live-action) for just \$10, Feb. 20-22. (That is a steal, considering the short films are sometimes better than the feature length ones.)

Go to www.cinemark.com/oscar-movie-week-2015 to learn more about the Oscar movie marathon. For a complete list of the 2015 nominees, go to www.oscars.org.

The 87th Academy Awards, for outstanding film achievements of 2014, will be presented on Sunday, Feb. 22, 2015, at the Dolby Theatre at Hollywood & Highland Center, and will be televised live on ABC in more than 225 countries worldwide.

La Femme Magnifique Dazzles

The California La Femme Magnifique and California La Femme Plus Pageant amazed the crowd at the first California regional pageant's quest to find and crown the most glamorous female impersonator in the state, held Sunday, January 25 at the Crest Theatre.

The queens competed in four categories: black and white, formal wear, talent presentation and the crowd favorite, the Las Vegas Showgirl category. Clearly no rhinestone or bead was spared in the entire state.

Entertainment included master violinist Kippy Marks and renowned singer Raquella.

At the end of the night, two winners emerged victorious: Miss Katrina Dual of San Diego who took the CA La Femme Plus 2015 title and Sacramento favorite Chantall won the coveted title of CA La Femme Magnifique 2015.

Both winners and their alternates Foxy and Harmony, respectively will continue to compete for La Femme Magnifique International

and Plus titles on Labor Day weekend in Portland, Oregon at the Civic Center.

In addition to the crown, art and prize package the two winners received, the pageant also contributed to local charity. Coordinator of the event, La Femme Magnifique International 97 Misha Rockefeller and CGNIE donated \$1,000 to the Jose Sarria International Scholarship Fund and \$250 to Golden Rules Services.

Team California welcomes sponsorship for their trip and also invites all to the Crest Theatre on Sunday, January 24, 2016 for the 2016 CA La Femme Magnifique Pageant. For additional information or to sponsor please visit their website at www.calafemme.com.



Sacramento's own Chantall is the new California La Femme Magnifique 2015

New Wine Column Is Just in Time for Valentine's Day

by Diana Kienle

Let me introduce myself: The first thing to know is that I love wine! I enjoy learning about it, buying it and drinking it! I spend many days in the wine country, tasting, sipping and enjoying all that is associated with the wine industry.

I've taken many wine classes at the Culinary Institute of America and at UC Davis. My goal is to become a certified wine professional. My commitment here is to share information, ideas and great wines that will add to your enjoyment and pleasure exploring what is in the glass.

Valentine's Day is fast approaching. One of the most fitting wines to toast and celebrate others is a sparkling wine. Although most commonly and collectively referred to as "Champagne," all that bubbles is not that. Champagne itself is made from grapes solely from the region in France named Champagne. Yes, it is a specific region that owns that name.

The effervescence is accomplished through secondary fermentation in the bottle. The winemakers in Champagne also use specific grapes (Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Munier). Many believe the



Outword's newest columnist, Diana Kienle, honing her skills at a recent wine tasting.

French have mastered the craft, and the bottles may be expensive (and worth it).

Another lovely sparkling wine is Prosecco. It comes from Italy and a grape variety sometimes known as Glera. The method for the "sparkle" is from a different method called Charmat (also known as Cuve Close) where the wine goes through a secondary fermentation in a large closed tank.

This approach allows for larger production at a lower cost and helps preserve some of the fruity character that makes the wine so appealing.

Average price here is \$12-15 dollars per bottle, a price that, in part, has spurred the growth of this wine. Sales of Prosecco priced between \$10 and \$15 now account for one-third of all sparkling wine sales.

Another option is Moscato d'Asti, a delightful sparkling wine that comes from the Muscat grape. Production is achieved similar to Prosecco, which again keeps Moscato d'Asti a very affordable option. It can be bone dry to very sweet. Expect an easy drinking wine that is low in alcohol with a peachy flavor.

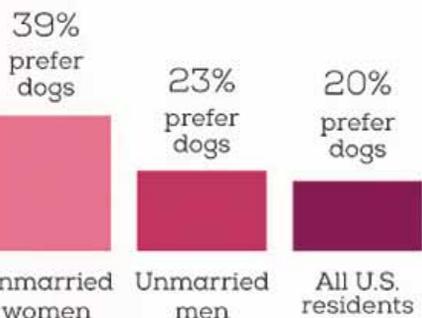
Whatever you choose, flutes may add to the fun with the bubbles rising up. Please make sure your sparkling wines are served chilled and do not use the freezer to chill them rapidly. These wines are best enjoyed between 46 and 50 degrees.

Enjoy!

Outword hopes to bring Diana's column on wine to you once a month. She also blogs about wine at www.dianaswineblog.com and can be reached at grapefan128@gmail.com.

Do people prefer "doggy dates" to romance on Valentine's Day?

When we asked married and unmarried men and women who they would rather spend Valentine's Day with – their dog or a romantic partner – the results were totally pawesome!



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Mike E. Winfield Is Bringing His Comedy to The Punchline

by Colt McGraw

Baltimore born comedian Mike E. Winfield took a teacher's recommendation from the classroom to a comedy club when he appeared at Old Sacramento's Laughs Unlimited. "I went two minutes short on the five minutes they allotted and had one of the least fun experiences that I've ever had," he says.

However, he did not give up. In fact, he persisted so much that he has found himself in some pretty impressive places, and you may recognize Winfield from his role on *The Straight Out Report* with co-host Stephen Guarino on the Logo Network.

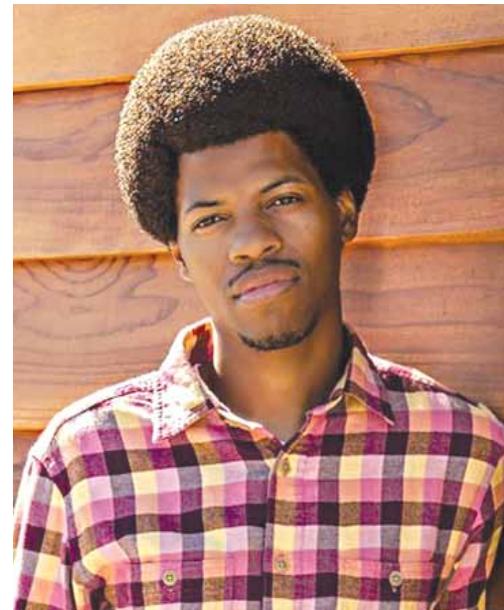
The Straight Out Report has been recognized as the first show to feature two men of different sexual orientations and races as co-hosts of a weekly TV show, spotlighting each host's distinct and hilarious viewpoint on current events and pop-culture.

"I was raised to love all humans beings the way that you want to be loved," Winfield says about being a straight man on a gay network.

Some of Winfield's other successes include a reoccurring role on NBC's *The Office* and a guest stand-up spot on *The Late Show with David Letterman*.

He can also be found traveling around the country as a comedy headliner, and is currently scheduled in Texas, Washington, Missouri and then back to Sacramento, which he now calls home.

"Sacramento has always been comfortable and easy to live in, which balances my high



Mike E. Winfield

level of ambition," he says. "If you live here, you know there's a lot to laugh about."

Winfield's sacramento appearance will be at the Punchline on February 24th. For more information and tickets, visit www.mikeewinfield.com.

Drag Queen Bingo Raises \$1,006 for PFLAG



Miss DoMeMoore and all of our Drag Queen Bingo Superstar Players raised \$1,006 for the Sacramento and Placer PFLAGs, to help support their great work on January 5 at Burgertown/Mango's. So far, Drag Queen Bingo has raised over \$94,695 for local charities and non-profits. Be sure to join us on Thursday, March 5 when DQB will be raising money to support the Lavender Library. To see more pics of these Superstar Players, and download them for free, visit outwordoutabout.shutterfly.com/12652.



SGMC Performs National Anthem at Kings Game



The Sacramento Gay Men's Chorus traded in their usual tuxedos for sports coats and jeans as they performed the *Star Spangled Banner* – to wild applause – at the Sacramento Kings' LGBT Night at Sleep Train Arena on February 5.

It's all about the Women at Dinah Vegas 2015



Dinah Vegas, now in its 4th year, will be tearing up the Vegas Strip the weekend of April 23-26. It's infamous *Infinity Pool Party* will feature a special live performance by *The Voice Season 7* finalist, Anita Antoinette, and DJs from Berlin, San Diego, New Orleans, and Los Angeles will be spinning your favorites at the Friday night GLITTER at Chateau Gardens and the Saturday night Vegas White under the Eiffel Tower at Paris. Sponsored by Caesar's Entertainment, host hotels are the Flamingo Resort and Planet Hollywood. Book now at www.dinahshoreweekend.com. Photo by Faye Sadou.

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Bruno Mars, Mark Ronson & Matt Zarley Release New Music

by Chris Narloch

“Uptown Funk,” a clever collaboration between super-producer Mark Ronson and singer Bruno Mars topped the singles charts recently. In addition to the new Ronson release, I also review the latest CD from openly gay singer Matt Zarley.



Bruno Mars And Mark Ronson

Mark Ronson – *Uptown Special*

I couldn't wait to check out this CD from Mark Ronson, the producer who helped make Amy Winehouse a star, especially after I heard the first single from the disc, Bruno Mars' addictive anthem, “Uptown Funk.”

Unfortunately, that beautiful blast of melodic, old school R&B is by far the best thing on the CD, and it's the only cut that Mars sings lead on.

Elsewhere on the disc, Ronson's arrangements are less exciting, and they are fronted by vocalists without the personality to make them pop.

Stevie Wonder adds his sublime harmonica playing to a couple tracks, and “Feel Right” featuring Mystikal would have been a classic James Brown-style jam, if it weren't for its repetitive and boring profanity.

That track's missed opportunity is sadly indicative of most of *Uptown Special*, which fails to deliver the fun and funkiness of previous sets from Ronson, such as the superior “Version” and “Here Comes the Fuzz.”

Matt Zarley – *hopefulROMANTIC*

This ambitious project is actually two different CDs by Matt Zarley, a talented singer/songwriter who makes no bones about the fact that he is an openly gay man and a hopeless romantic.

The complete project consists of a pop

album featuring original versions of each song, and a soundtrack to his short film of the same name with new arrangements of each track, re-imagined specifically for the film.

The short film is now playing the film festival circuit and just won the award for Best LGBT Short from the Hollywood Reel Independent Film Festival.

The CD merges Zarley's love of pop, soul, and musical theatre to produce a universal story about loving, letting go, and holding onto faith that there's somebody for everyone. See a trailer at mattzarley.com.



Matt Zarley

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NorCal AIDS Cycle Announces Beneficiaries of 2015 Ride

The HIV/AIDS cycling fundraiser NorCal AIDS Cycle (NCAC) has announced 16 non-profit beneficiaries for its annual four day, 330 mile ride, scheduled for May 14-17.



The beneficiary organizations selected are Cares Clinic Dental Program, Golden Rule Services, SANE (Safer Alternatives thru Networking and Education), Gender Health Center, Harm Reduction Services, Sunburst Projects, River City Food Bank, Strategies for Change, Volunteers of America and the Sacramento Gay & Lesbian Community Center, all of Sacramento; Sierra Foothills AIDS Foundation of Auburn; Caring Choices of Chico; Sierra Hope of Angels Camp; Nevada County HIV Testing Program of Grass Valley; and Women's Health Specialists and Shasta Trinity Tehama HIV Food Bank of Redding.

One of the things that has historically distinguished Sacramento-based NCAC from other California AIDS rides is its distribution of funds to multiple beneficiary agencies in Sacramento and throughout inland Northern California. In many cases, NCAC's contribution has meant the difference between enabling them to provide HIV/AIDS services to underserved and/or remote California communities that would otherwise be forced to close for lack of funds.

The mission of the NorCal AIDS Cycle is to support the organizations throughout Northern California, with an emphasis on the Greater Sacramento Valley, that are working to end the HIV/AIDS pandemic and care for those living with and affected by HIV/AIDS in our region.

The goals of the NCAC are to:

1. Raise funds to support HIV/AIDS-related services within the inland Northern California region;
2. Raise awareness about the benefitting organizations and their services within the

area;

3. Increase awareness of the needs throughout the community by increasing participation in the NCAC;

4. Encourage a positive environment for the dignity, quality of life, and acceptance of people affected by and infected with HIV/AIDS

In 2014, NCAC distributed \$222,100 to its beneficiaries and gave an additional \$9,000 in winter grants. This amounts to 72 percent of the funds raised by participants and makes NCAC the largest HIV/AIDS fundraiser in the Sacramento and Northern California area.

Each NCAC cyclist pledges to raise a minimum of \$2,000 and each volunteer crewmember pledges to raise \$500, although many participants raise far more than the minimums.

The 2015 ride will begin at 7 a.m. on Thursday, May 14, with an Opening Ceremony at Beal's Point Folsom Lake, and end on Sunday, May 17, with a moving closing ceremony on the west steps of the California State Capitol. In between, the cyclists will follow a circuitous, often challenging route through the Sierra foothills and the northern Central Valley, with overnight camps at Gridley, Williams and Woodland.

Since its inception in 2005, NCAC has raised some two million dollars to benefit non-profit HIV/AIDS service providers in the Greater Sacramento region and surrounding areas.

For more information about NorCal AIDS Cycle and to see how you can participate, visit www.norcalaidscycle.org.



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Julianne Moore Times Two on the Big Screen Plus Dueling Blockbusters at the Esquire IMAX

by Chris Narloch

Julianne Moore has been one of my favorite actresses ever since I first noticed her, over 20 years ago, walking around half naked in *Short Cuts*, a terrific Robert Altman film from 1993.

The actress has played everything from a repressed lesbian in *The Hours* to Sarah Palin in *Game Change*, and she almost never hits a false note.

This month she has two new films in theaters, including *Still Alice* which is poised to finally bring her the first Oscar of her career for her performance as a victim of early onset Alzheimer's disease.

Moore is also in another movie currently, playing the queen of a coven of shape-shifting witches in *Seventh Son*, a CGI-filled blockbuster that benefits greatly from her talent and beauty. **Still Alice**

Moore gives an impeccable performance in this heartbreaking movie, which details the plight of a linguistics professor who gets diagnosed with Alzheimer's while still in the prime of her life and career at 50.

The film very tactfully – perhaps too tactfully – portrays the effects of this devastating disease on Alice's husband and her three children, who not surprisingly are ill equipped to watch their mother deteriorate while she is still in middle age.

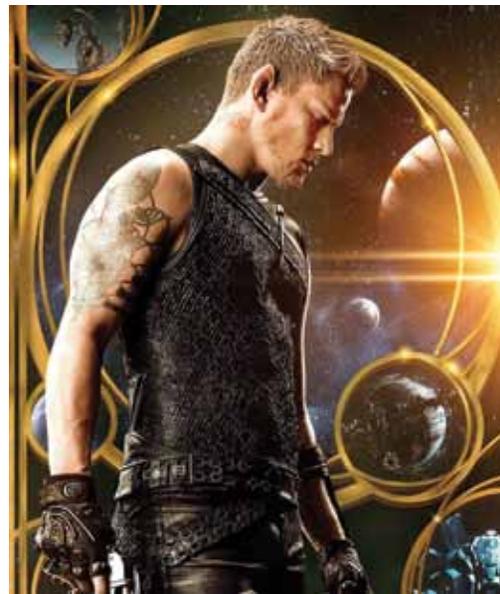
Alec Baldwin and Kristen Stewart are also moving as the heroine's husband and youngest daughter, respectively, but the reason to see the movie is for Moore, who doesn't overdo the

character's rage or her self-pity.

Still Alice is hard to watch, and I don't think that it's the best role of Moore's career, but she is so good in it that Oscar voters cannot justify passing her over again. At the Tower Theatre.

Seventh Son

Over at the Esquire IMAX, Moore is really larger than life in this sword and sorcery saga in



Channing Tatum in *Jupiter Ascending*

which she plays a dark queen. Jeff Bridges and Ben Barnes are the warriors who are tasked with ending her evil reign.

Moore's famous flaming tresses are a darker red than usual in *Seventh Son*, and with her pale complexion and some seriously dark eye make up, she looks ravishing and scary at the



Julianne Moore

same time.

The actress gives a regal star performance here, without chewing the scenery. The same cannot be said for Jeff Bridges, unfortunately, who has a truly bizarre accent in this film, although he seems to be having a good time.

The story offers few surprises, but the action sequences and the special effects in *Seventh Son* are first-rate, and after that recent dud *Hunger Games* movie, it's nice to see Julianne Moore in a popcorn movie that actually pops. **Jupiter Ascending**

Maybe they should have called this one *Jupiter Descending* because directors Lana and Andy Wachowski (*The Matrix* movies) seem to be on a steep slide down the Hollywood ladder after the failure of *Cloud Atlas* and now this dud.

Mila Kunis plays a cleaning lady named Jupiter who discovers that she is actually intergalactic royalty and the only hope to save her fellow human beings from being "harvested" by an evil baddie (Eddie Redmayne) who controls Earth's fate.

Eddie Redmayne acts up a storm – and I mean a tsunami of scenery chewing – which is

probably a good thing since Mila Kunis seems swallowed up by the scope of the production.

That leaves the ever-reliable Channing Tatum, sporting pointy ears as an alien warrior, who gives a sweet performance as Kunis's protector, and lucky for us, loses his shirt during part of the movie.

I don't usually recommend bad movies, but *Jupiter Ascending* is so wacky and yet so incredibly beautiful to look at that it appears destined for the failed film hall of fame. At the Esquire IMAX.

The Boy Next Door

Jennifer Lopez is remarkably famous for someone who isn't a great singer and doesn't have much range as an actress.

She is admittedly a terrific dancer and a stunning beauty, but her dancing in this film is in the sheets and with a 19-year-old who goes to her son's high school.

He's almost but not quite jailbait, which makes their big sex scene kind of a guilty pleasure, to say the least.

The script for *The Boy Next Door* is hopelessly contrived and clichéd, and the movie would have us believe JLo as a Classics teacher (!)

My favorite scene in this unintentional laugh-fest has her boy-toy stalker gifting her with a "first edition" of *The Illiad* that he found for "a buck at a garage sale," which would definitely qualify him for an entire episode of *Antique Roadshow* seeing as how that title was written almost 3,000 years ago.

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Adore Delano Rocks Out Badlands



Adore Delano, the rock and roll queen of *RuPaul's Drag Race Season 6*, brought her live band for a one night only extravaganza *Till Death Do Us Party!* on Jan. 22. Photos by Colt McGraw.

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