

outWord

No. 602 • June 14, 2018 • outwordmagazine.com

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ISSN # 1084-7618 United States Library of Congress

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Leno Poised to Become First Openly Gay Mayor of SF

With provisional and absentee ballots left to be counted in the San Francisco mayoral race, Mark Leno appears poised to make history after ranked-choice voting put him in the lead.



Mark Leno working to get out the vote

After the ranked-choice votes were sorted, Leno stood at 50.42 percent to Supervisor London Breed's 49.58 percent.

Equality California, endorsed Leno and ran a robust get-out-the-vote operation in support of his campaign – including over 150,000 pieces of direct mail – to turn out approximately 30,000 members across the city.

“Tonight, we are cautiously optimistic that Senator Mark Leno may finally break San Francisco’s rainbow glass ceiling,” said Equality California Executive Director Rick Zbur. “We’re proud to have stood with him in this critical race and look forward to the final results.”

Mark Leno’s demonstrated commitment to full equality and justice for LGBTQ Californians is unmatched in the race to become San Francisco’s next mayor. After losing his partner to the AIDS epidemic, Leno dedicated his life to serving San Francisco, as a community leader, as one of the first openly gay men to serve in the California Assembly and then as the first openly gay California Senator.

In the Legislature, he championed landmark legislation that advanced marriage equality, provided groundbreaking protections for transgender Californians and raised the state’s minimum wage to \$15 per hour.

Gary Miller Wins Equality Award From PSDC

Gary Miller, a member of the Roseville City School Board, received an award for his many decades working for equality from the newly formed Placer County Stonewall Democratic Cub.

2018 marks Miller’s 50th year working on behalf of LGBT issues. His first involvement was with the Phoenix Society in his hometown of Kansas City, Mo.

In 1970, he and his first husband moved to San Francisco, and he was a founding member and is past president of the Alice B. Toklas Democratic Club, which was the first LGBT Democratic Club in the nation.

In 1976, the two of them moved to Sacramento. In 1987, Miller won a seat on the Robla School board, in North Sacramento, becoming the first gay person

to win an elective office in Sacramento County. He served on that board for almost 20 years with each election cycle enduring anti-gay campaigns against him.

Miller had moved to Roseville by 2008 and decided to run for the Roseville City School Board. He won a seat becoming the first LGBT person to win an elective office in Placer County.

More information about Miller can be found at his website at rosevillegarymiller.com and he can be contacted at rosevillegarymiller@hotmail.com

Fort Lauderdale Plans Pride of The Americas for 2020



Fort Lauderdale's Pride at the Beach has already proven to be a big hit, and should make a great location for the first ever Pride of the Americas in 2020

Greater Fort Lauderdale is vying to be the host destination for the first-ever Pride of the Americas Festival in 2020, a planned 10-day event that will include a parade, a beach party, arts festival, social events throughout the destination, and a human rights conference focused on LGBT+ rights.

Announced at the International Gay & Lesbian Travel (IGLTA) annual conference, held May 9th - 12th in Toronto, The Pride of The Americas Festival will be hosted by Pride of Fort Lauderdale and presented by the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The planned conference will draw attention to the issues LGBT+ individuals face in Latin America and the Caribbean. Although Greater Fort Lauderdale is close in proximity to Latin America and the Caribbean, they are miles apart regarding the treatment and acceptance of the LGBT+ individuals in their communities. The event hopes to bring international attention to these inequalities while improving education and understanding of the LGBT+ community on a global scale.

"We worked extremely close with Pride Fort Lauderdale to develop the concept of this important and transformational event," said Richard Gray, vice president, LGBT+ Marketing with the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau. "Greater Fort Lauderdale has been at the forefront of LGBT+ sensitivity and

issues for decades and we look forward to continuing to lead the way by bringing together experts for this important and thought-provoking event. The Pride of Americas Festival joins the Southern Comfort conference as two of the most important LGBT+ events to take place in our destination."

Greater Fort Lauderdale is well-suited to host this prestigious conference. With hundreds of gay-owned and operated businesses and the highest concentration of same-sex couple households in the country, the destination is one of the most diverse and welcoming in the world.

It's also home to one of the largest Pride Centers in the country, the world's first AIDS museum, the global headquarters of the International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association, and the Stonewall Museum, one of the only permanent spaces in the U.S. devoted to exhibitions relating to LGBT+ history and culture.

To learn more about Pride of the Americas, go to PrideOfTheAmericas.org. For more information about Greater Fort Lauderdale, visit Sunny.org.

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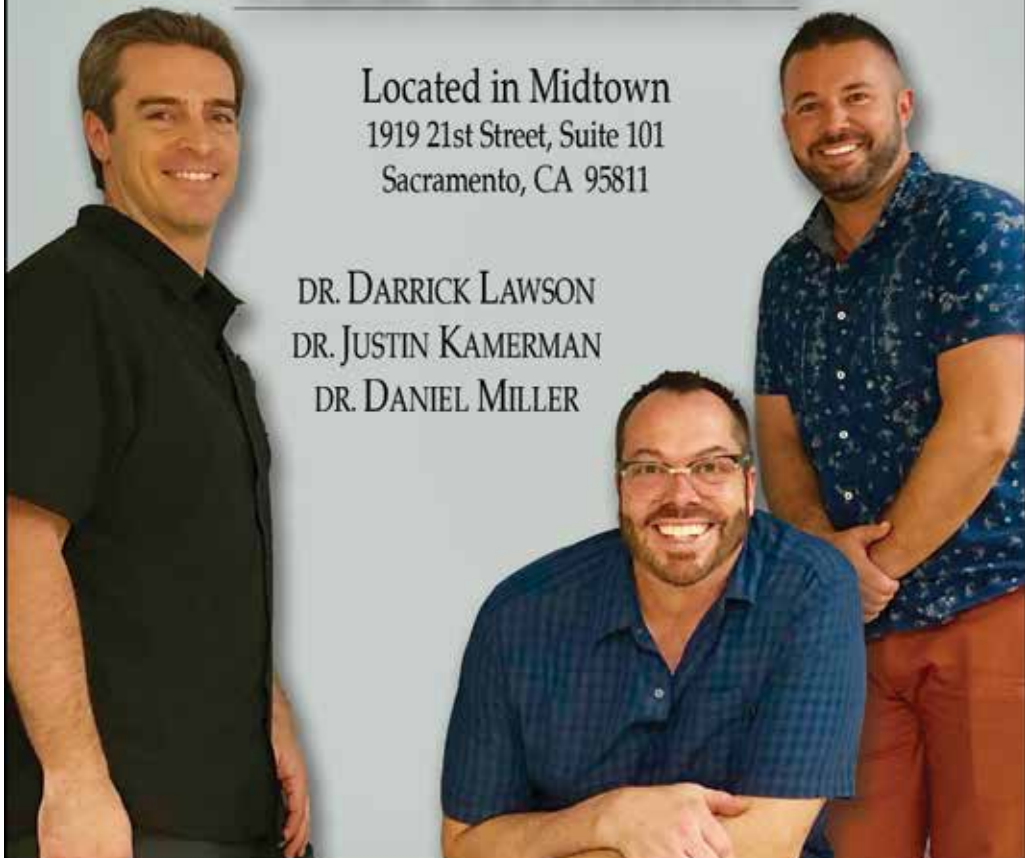




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DOD Sued Over People Living with HIV Policies

Lambda Legal and OutServe-SLDN have filed a lawsuit on behalf of a sergeant in the D.C. Army National Guard who was denied the opportunity to serve as an officer and faces possible discharge from the United States armed services because he is living with HIV.



Sgt. Nick Harrison

The lawsuit, filed May 30th, challenges the Pentagon's current policies preventing enlistment, deployment or commissioning as an officer if a person is living with HIV, and likely would affect implementation of the new "Deploy or Get Out" policy unveiled by the Trump administration in February.

Lambda Legal and OutServe-SLDN filed the lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia on behalf of Sgt. Nick Harrison, a veteran of two overseas combat zones who was denied a position in the Judge Advocate General (JAG) Corps because current Pentagon policy considers service members living with HIV non-deployable, and will not allow them to enlist or to be appointed as officers.

"After serving in Afghanistan and Kuwait, I knew I wanted to become an officer in the U.S. Army and a leader for all of the great men and women in our armed forces," Harrison said. "I spent years acquiring the training and skills to serve my country as a lawyer. This should be a no-brainer. It's frustrating to be turned away by the country I have served since I was 18 years old, especially because my HIV has no effect on my service. It was an honor to be chosen to join the JAG Corps for the DC National Guard, and I look forward to my first day on the job."

OutServe-SLDN is also an organizational plaintiff in this case to advance the interests of its members who are living with HIV and serving in the military. In a companion lawsuit, Lambda Legal and OutServe-SLDN are representing an anonymous service member living with HIV who the Air Force refused to commission as an officer after he graduated from the Air Force Academy,

despite recommendations from medical personnel to do so.

"Nick's situation is the perfect example of just how archaic and harmful the military policies regarding people living with HIV really are," said Scott Schoettes, Counsel and HIV Project Director at Lambda Legal. "These oppressive restrictions are based on antiquated science that reinforces stigma and denies perfectly qualified service members the full ability to serve their country."

Despite current science and medical advancements, most service members living with HIV remain classified as non-deployable under military policies developed in the 1990's.

"Nick has every quality Americans want in a member of our armed services: dedication, intelligence, and a burning desire to serve his country," said Peter Perkowski, Legal Director of OutServe-SLDN. "The military has spent thousands of dollars training Nick to be a soldier, a lawyer, and a leader – now they are turning their backs on him."

The "Deploy or Get Out" policy was announced on February 14, 2018, and directs the Pentagon to identify service members who cannot be deployed to military posts outside of the United States for more than 12 consecutive months and to separate them from military service. Because current U.S. military policy identifies service members living with HIV as non-deployable, they could face immediate discharge under this new policy.

The cases are entitled *Harrison v. Mattis* and *Voe v. Mattis*. Joining Lambda Legal and OutServe-SLDN on the legal team are attorneys from Winston & Strawn LLP, serving as pro bono counsel.



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Corporate Recognition

The National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce has more than 150 corporate partners that understand not only the value of the LGBT dollar, but the economics of inclusivity and loyalty.

It's In The Numbers

The 2016 estimate reflects roughly 7 percent of the adult U.S. population as willing to self-identify as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and/or transgender (or roughly 16 million adults).

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Historic Campaign Ad Includes Same-Sex Kiss

A new campaign ad for Maryland gubernatorial candidate Richard Madaleno – which focuses on his record of progressive accomplishments for the state – ends with him kissing his husband Mark Hodge on the front lawn of their home.

This is believed to be the first political ad in American history to feature a kiss between a candidate and a same-sex spouse. work as a state senator – standing up to the Trump agenda, defending Planned Parenthood and passing a statewide assault

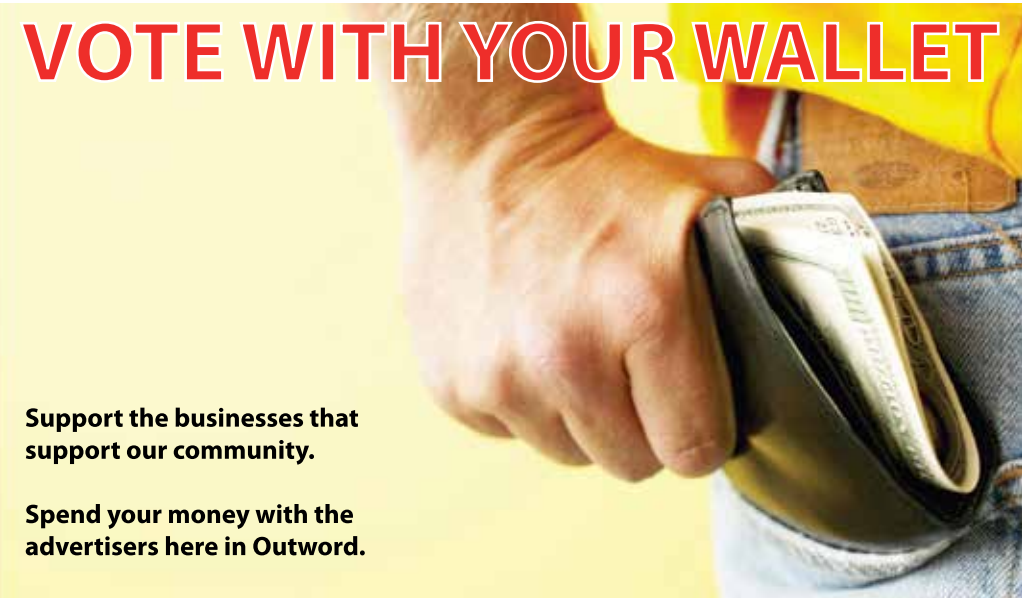


Rich Madaleno with his husband Mark Hodge and their family.

The groundbreaking ad ran on the Fox News show Fox & Friends in the Washington area the morning of June 7th. “At a time when the White House and other anti-LGBTQ politicians are attempting to erase our visibility and rollback our rights, Rich Madaleno is boldly stating he’s proud of his family and will fight for all Marylanders if elected,” said Mayor Annise Parker, President & CEO of LGBTQ Victory Fund. “Not long ago, out LGBTQ people were unable to run for statewide offices such as governor, but voters now recognize there is an authenticity to LGBTQ leaders rarely found in today’s politicians. Rich is on-track to win the Democratic primary because of that authenticity, his deep roots in the state, and his 15 years of legislative experience. And it is great to see him share his love for Mark and the kids with voters too – especially in a political ad airing during the president’s favorite television show.” The 30-second ad emphasizes Madaleno’s

weapons ban. It also highlights his unwavering support for addressing the challenges faced by underserved communities. “At a time when political attacks by Trump and other Republicans are fueling so much hatred and division, we need to stand up for the people we love and to continue to confront harassment and discrimination against women, African Americans, immigrants, LGBT couples and so many more,” said Madaleno. “Having led the charge for marriage equality, achieving true equality and justice for all Marylanders will be my priority as Governor. June is LGBT Pride Month and I couldn’t think of a better time to release this ad. I am proud of my family, proud of my record of standing up for our progressive values and proud to be unflinching in standing up against hate. Love does truly trump hate.” Madaleno is a Victory Fund-endorsed Game Changer candidate. The ad can be viewed at youtu.be/cc9ovvth3sY

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The Best Time to Buy a Home

by Jeff Hammerberg

For some purchases, prices change depending on the time of the year. If you're purchasing items to use outdoors during the warmer months, for example, they're usually cheaper in the winter since fewer people are buying them.

When you're looking at vehicles, the general rule of thumb is to buy later in the month when sales associates are more desperate to make their quota, but does this hold true for homes as well?

There is some interesting data that does suggest home prices are often better in certain months than others, but there are also a number of other factors you must take into consideration when buying a house.

Facts About Home Sales

First, let's look at some data. Information taken from the Census, the Federal Reserve, and housing websites do show that final closing prices do tend to be lower in the winter than in the summer.

In June, for example, the average closing price from the data studied was over \$300,000, while the average cost in January was just a little over \$250,000.

Few people want to move during the winter, especially not right after the holidays when many are very busy with family. This means homebuyers may not face as much competition for great properties. Of course, it also means that there won't be as many new listings on the market.

Overall, the data shows that December is the month with the fewest new listings and the fewest number of homes on the market, while May has almost twice the number of new listings.

In June, many families are looking to move since parents want to get their children settled before the start of school. They don't want to disrupt their children's school year by moving their family while classes are in session.

Consider the "Buying Season"

Real estate professionals generally consider the "buying season" for homes to start in the late spring and end in late August. During this time, you'll find more homes on the market, but you'll also find more competition for those properties. Prices are likely to be higher, and you're more likely to end up in a bidding war. However, this may also be the best time to find the home that meets all of your needs since you'll have more selection.

Buying in the Spring

If you're considering getting a jump on the buying season by finding a property in the spring, you may find that prices aren't as low

as you might think. May and April are right behind June when it comes to high closing prices. There aren't as many new homes on the market as there are in the buying season, either.

Waiting Until the Fall

The fall is the main time to find deals, although don't expect prices to drop more than a few percentage points at most unless the property was on the market for most of the summer. You won't face as much competition, however, so the final closing prices are usually around five percent less.

That can equate to a nice savings, plus you're more likely to get the winning bid on the home you want.

The longer you wait to buy, the more likely you'll be able to save money. Just remember that you'll also have fewer properties to choose from, plus you'll have to move during the winter months.

Time of Year May Not Be a Concern

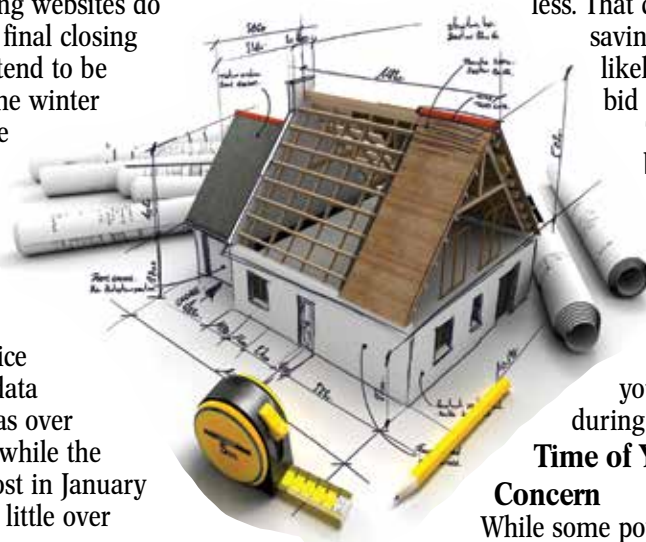
While some potential homebuyers may be able to wait for prices to drop or for less competition, you may not have that luxury. If you have a family, for example, you may very well want to move after school is out if your children will have to change schools. Other factors, including the length of your current lease or a job change, may also dictate when you can move.

Also keep in mind that weather plays much less of a factor in some areas. If you live in the southern part of the U.S., home prices may not necessarily be that much lower in January and February. For those in northern areas, the summer months may not see as much of a decrease. Other factors, including interest rates and your own finances, also need to be taken into account.

Your Agent Is a Factor, Too

Finally, your real estate agent also plays a major part in the home buying process. They may be able to find you the perfect property no matter what time of year it is. Having an experienced agent is often the difference between seeing properties that fit your needs and budget and being shown homes that simply don't match your personality.

For members of the LGBTQ community, having a gay or lesbian real estate agent can be very beneficial in regards to this point. These agents often understand your needs and wants better than others. The top real estate agents at www.GayRealEstate.com have been representing members of the LGBTQ community with home purchases since 1991! Offering free buyer representation.





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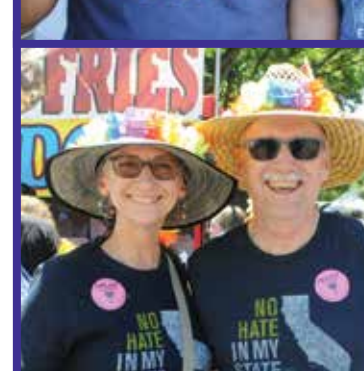
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Out & About



Sacramento Pride 2018 Was Amazing

Sacramento Pride, held Sunday June 10 was one of the best attended Prides in years, with perhaps record setting crowds enjoying a perfect day in the sun. Thank-yous to all the volunteers who made it possible, the Pride Committee, the sponsors, all the Parade marchers and floats and to all of you who attended - You made it a beautiful day. More photos from Parade and Festival are online at outwordoutabout.shutterfly.com where you can download them for free - hope we got you in one of them.



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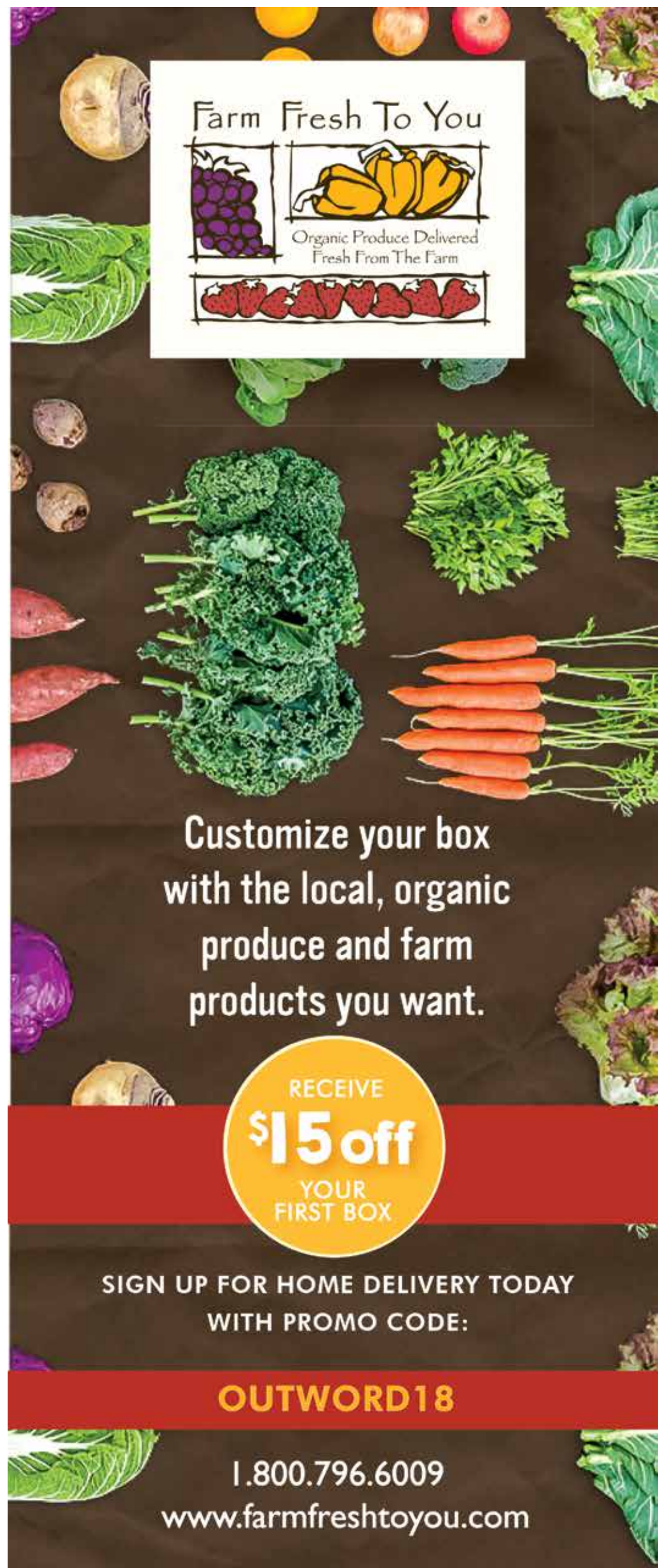
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Out & About With Matt

by Matthew Burlingame

School's out, gay cakes are under attack and Sacramento Pride is done for another year! Congratulations to everyone who made Sacramento Pride 2018 an amazing success.

If there's one summer event everyone looks forward to every year it's Broadway At Music Circus and this year is no exception! The lineup starts with the beloved classics *Singin' In The Rain* running June 12-17 and *Seven Brides For Seven Brothers* running June 26-July 1. Grab your tickets now at 916-557-1999 or visit Wells Fargo Pavilion Box Office.

Sacramento Rainbow Chamber of Commerce mixers are always fun, but June's gathering seems to be taking it up a notch. Elite HR Logistics, 2331 Capitol Ave., hosts this month's mixer on Tuesday, June 19 at 6 p.m. with food by Fully Dressed-New Orleans Style, drinks by Two Rivers Cider and performances by Obsidian Butterfly, Fire and Mermaids and art by local artists. rainbowchamber.com

Celebrate Equality with the Sacramento #LGBTQ community at the 4th Annual River Cats Equality Night on Friday, June 29 from 6-9 p.m. at Raley Field. Sponsored in part by Badlands, the Sacramento River Cats

Jonesing for next month's event. But if you need a quick Bingo fix in between, Sunday June 17 at the Kennedy Gallery, Empress Misha will host Ball Busting Bingo from 3 to 7 p.m. Funds raised will go to the Jose Sarria International Scholarship Fund. Get your tickets early. KennedyGallery.com

The *Tom of Finland* film is coming to Sacramento! The Verge Center for the Arts at 625 S St. will be hosting a viewing of the film on Thursday, June 21. Verge Center for the Arts is the leading cultural institution in the Sacramento region for contemporary art and ideas. Go to VergeArt.com for more information on the showing.

Award winning chef Jim Austin is back in the kitchen celebrating his retirement and knocking out some new batches of his award-winning jams and jellies. "If I made my own peanut butter, I could do the song and dance!" he was quoted as saying. Look for him to come home with more blue ribbons from this year's State Fair.

Congratulations to another State Fair



Join "Outword" for a special Pride Month Happy Hour at Ernestos!

will take on the Fresno Grizzlies. Tickets are \$30 at RiverCatsEqualityNight.com

If you missed *Outword's* Monthly Happy Hour "Liquid Therapy" this month at Badlands, you're in luck! Join *Outword* for a special Pride Month Happy Hour at Ernestos, 1901 16th St., on Thursday, June 28 at 5:30-7 p.m. and have some of the most amazing Mexican Food and drink specials in town!

For those of us who haven't had the opportunity to see *Hamilton*, but know all the words to all the songs, Runaway Stage Productions is giving Sacramento *Hamiltunes: An American Sing-Along*. Come be a part of the Sacramento premiere at the West Sacramento Community Center Black Box theater. Tickets available at the door.

June's Drag Queen Bingo benefiting Capitol City Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence was a truly divine evening, and we're all

winner: Jammin' Jo Tierney, whose photos qualified for a showing at this year's California State Fair.

After three years with the Sacramento LGBT Community Center as Health Education and Training Coordinator, Chris Packey will leave to begin a new adventure with One Community Health. "I am sad to leave the organization behind, but still excited for what my future holds."

Happy birthday to June Vargas, Brian Bartlett, Jeff Adams, Rob Roberts and other mid-June babies. Congratulations to Myk Ciapsci and John Leggett on their engagement. Also happy anniversary to John Hancock and Juan Ramos.

Got events, birthdays, anniversaries, or did something awesome happen to you recently? Let Matt know at matthew.burlingame@gmail.com. And check out his other work at JustKissTheGuy.com

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Jasmine Bright Is a Light for the Transgender Community

by Bianca Ventura

Jasmine Bright knew exactly who she was beginning at a very young age. “I was eight years old in a counseling session with my mother and my grandmother when I told them that I was gay,” said Bright, a peer counselor at Sacramento’s Gender Health Center.

“I remember we all cried and they said it was okay. They accepted me as being gay, but inside I felt like there was more. The older I got, I realized who I was attracted to and how I felt. It was then that I thought, ‘I feel like a woman, I’m not a guy. I’m definitely not a guy.’”

Jasmine’s personal experience as a transgender woman makes her an exceptional mentor and advocate at the Gender Health Center. It also highlights how relatable she is as a woman, and as a human.

The Gender Health Center, located at 29th & T in Sacramento, greets its visitors with a huge pink, blue, and white transgender flag hanging above the receptionist’s desk. Her office is tucked in the far right corner of the building. A bulletin board near her desk features motivational quotes on manila-colored sticky notes.

A file holder sitting on top of her desk had a section labeled “Triumph Study.”

“I’m currently working on the Triumph Study to get more information on trans people of color and trans people who are taking PrEP,” said Bright.

Jasmine explained that the Triumph Study is aimed towards trans women. “They want to get a better idea of how PrEP works for trans women, if they’re taking alcohol or how it affect their hormones,” she said.

Some of Jasmine’s office work like filling out paperwork and scheduling screenings may sound mundane, but the impact is felt within the community, especially for those of color.

Outside of work Jasmine has collected a wide array of experiences and continues to live a life fueled by passion. She is currently focusing on connecting with her family and is the oldest of five siblings. She was the first transgender of her sibling, and has two younger sisters that are transgender as well.

Although Jasmine’s mother became one of her biggest supporters, the two did not always see eye to eye during Jasmine’s transition.

“She thought it was a phase. She thought it was something she could

change, or she thought it was something that she was doing wrong. She realized that it was something that I was sincere about because I started to run away from home,” said Bright. “At the time I thought, ‘If I can’t be myself then I’m out of here.’”

Eventually her mother’s unconditional love made her want

always wanted to experience being a mom in its entirety. Like having a baby, sharing that experience with my partner and living the American dream. I want my bloodline and I want to see the little part of me in them. That’s my biggest challenge.”

Jasmine explained that her deepest desires are to stay true to



Jasmine Bright

her daughter to come back home and be safe. “My mother always jumped to my defense because she always wanted to protect me,” she said.

Demi Price, Jasmine’s long time friend, described her as an overachiever who is hungry to succeed and make sure those around her do to. She looks up to Jasmine’s unapologetic nature, her authentic sincerity, as well as her bold character.

“She is someone who has the beauty of a fairytale princess,” said Price.

Although Jasmine has faced challenges throughout her life, she advises others who are starting their own transitional journey to be themselves, be strong, focused on their goals and dreams, but most importantly not to become jaded.

“The hardest thing for me, is that I’ve always wanted to be a parent and be a mom,” said Bright. I’ve

who she is and what she wants. When describing what she wanted she said, “I just want to be loved. People seeing me for exactly who I am and just accepting me.”

What’s next for Jasmine is a career in nursing. She hopes to attend nursing school or take a bridge program to become a registered nurse.

“Getting in the field I’m in now and having the most accurate information has helped me serve others,” she said. “I love my organization and just being able to help the community.”

Bianca Ventura is a student journalist at Sacramento State. She prides herself in being bilingual and a first-generation college student. Bianca is dedicated to learning more about media and journalism in order to seek truth and give everyone a voice. She can be reached at venturapbianca@gmail.com

Big Law Laughs through Life at an LGBTQIA Law Firm



Big Law is a collection of six, 4-6 minute minute episodes that follow Pete, a new paralegal, in his first days at Stark Arkob Wilby & Hammerschmidt LLP, a white shoe law firm. The series features two gay actors and two trans actresses in lead roles and can be streamed at www.necessaryoutlet.com

Hearts Beat Loud Is a Heartwarming Story about a Father-Daughter Growing Up Together and Musical Discovery



Hearts Beat Loud is a remarkably fresh multi-racial film where the lesbian lead character (played by out actress Kiersey Clemons) is not struggling with her sexuality, her love relationship, or her acceptance of her father (Nick Offerman) and friends, and is a romantic comedy set to a queer-love inspired soundtrack of indie electro-pop tracks that Clemons actually performs in the film. Hits theatres June 8th, watch the trailer at www.heartsbeatloudmovie.com/videos/

Paper Boys Is a Diverse, Queer, and Magical San Francisco-Based Dramedy Web Series



Paper Boys tells the story of Cole, who moves to San Francisco under the guise of his straight best friend's Daren's engagement party to escape a dead-end career and the memories of a passionate summer fling with a boy in New York. But when Daren, reveals his engagement was an accident, Cole uses the mysterious powers of a re-discovered sketchbook to try to put their lives back on track, whatever the consequences. Watch the trailer at youtu.be/CqVWcczIZ2s

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Gay-Friendly Films At Sacramento's French Film Fest

by Chris Narloch

The Sacramento French Film Festival (SFFF) returns for its 17th year this month as the historic Crest Theatre hosts the finest movies from Paris and beyond – including two gay-friendly films – this June 15-24.



Director Robin Campillo's *BPM* (Beats Per Minute)

Director Robin Campillo's *BPM* (*Beats Per Minute*) takes place in the early 1990s, when a group of activists goes to battle for those stricken with HIV/AIDS and ignites a spark that ultimately creates France's chapter of ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), an international direct action advocacy group founded in the United States in 1987 to positively impact the lives of people with AIDS.

Many of the members of ACT UP were themselves gay and HIV+, and they embraced their mission with a literal life-or-death urgency, taking on sluggish government agencies and major pharmaceutical companies with bold, invasive tactics.

BPM is set in Paris during the early 1990s. Amid rallies, protests, fierce debates and ecstatic dance parties, newcomer Nathan (Arnaud Valois) falls in love with Sean (Nahuel Pérez Biscayart), the group's radical firebrand, and their passion plays out against the shadow of mortality, as the activists fight for a breakthrough.

BPM was nominated for no less than thirteen César Awards and won six of them: Best Film, Best Supporting Actor (Antoine Reinartz), Most Promising Actor (Nahuel Pérez Biscayart), Best Original Screenplay, Best Editing and Best Original Music.

This deeply affecting drama is both a

beautiful love story and a portrait of the beginnings of ACT UP in France. *BPM* will screen one time only, on the evening of Friday, June 22, at the Crest.

On the other end of the movie spectrum, *Kiss Me!* is an irreverent lesbian comedy, in which everyone is out and happy, and the only worry is "Will she love me back?"

French sensation Ocean plays Oceanrosemarie, a very charismatic and sociable osteopath who falls for a beautiful but much more reserved photographer named Cecile (Alice Pol).

The screening of *Kiss Me!* will be followed by a Q&A with its director and star, Ocean. Opposites attract in this engaging laugh-fest of lesbian love, which also receives one showing only, on Sunday morning, June 17.

Major titles by famous directors are always a part of the Festival, and this year's classic offerings include Claude Lelouch's ultimate date movie, *A Man and a Woman*, and Jean Luc Godard's *Contempt*, starring the beautiful Brigitte Bardot.

There will also be two late-night Saturday screenings during the Festival, including – for the first time ever at SFFF – zombies! (*The Night Eats the World* has been described as "a minimalist art-house zombie movie.")

For a complete list of the other Festival titles and show times, visit www.sacramentofrenchfilmfestival.org.



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RiverCatsEqualityNight.com

Don't Miss Ryan Murphy's *Pose* On FX

by Chris Narloch

If you aren't watching *Pose*, which recently began airing Sunday evenings on FX, you should be. The latest TV triumph from mega-producer, writer, and director Ryan Murphy (*Glee*, *American Horror Story*) tackles the New York City subculture of drag balls during the 1980s that inspired the world of *RuPaul's Drag Race*.

I have only seen the first episode of *Pose*, but I am already hooked on this eye-catching, eight-episode series, which

something beautiful.

MJ Rodriguez, Indya Moore, and Dominique Jackson are especially fine



A still from Ryan Murphy's new FX series about drag ball culture, *Pose*

features the largest transgender cast ever assembled for a scripted series.

Pose hopes to include more than 50 transgender characters over the sum of its first season, and real-life trans titans Janet Mock and Our Lady J were involved in writing and producing the show.

That "realness" is what drag balls were all about, and the key to the fabulousness of *Pose* is how unvarnished its depiction of the inhabitants of ball culture is, even as the balls themselves are absolutely eye-popping on the show.

One group of queens is shown stealing elaborate costumes from a museum exhibit near the beginning of the show's first episode, for example, and the "ballers" also worry about HIV and how to pay for expensive reassignment surgery.

That contrast – of gritty storylines with glamorous scenes of queens strutting and voguing – works in the show's favor, because the drag ball culture was always about society's queer castaways making their sometimes-ugly lives over into

among the trans actors, and cisgender actors including the great Billy Porter, Evan Peters, Kate Mara, and James Van Der Beek also have prominent roles on *Pose*.

The pilot episode I saw looked as though it was filmed on location in New York City, and no expense has been spared in recreating the wild world of the balls. (That initial episode, for example, includes classic hits from the likes of Chaka Khan, Donna Summer, Whitney Houston, and even Kate Bush that probably didn't come cheap.)

Ryan Murphy himself directed the first two episodes of *Pose*, and his skill with the camera, and with the actors, glides right over the show's one weakness – a subplot involving Reagan-era, Trump Tower greed that may prove to be heavy-handed over the course of the season.

Either way, I will be glued to my television set for the next several months each Sunday evening rooting for the upstart House Evangelista and its "mother" to dethrone the reigning House Abundance. Let the balls begin.

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Two Tribute CDs For Sir Elton John

by Chris Narloch

Just before Pride Month, two CDs were released in tribute to my favorite gay singer, the one and only Elton John, a 71-year-old superstar who is currently on his farewell world tour.

The discs' 26 tracks, 13 on each album, feature other artists performing the classic songs made famous by John and his great lyricist, Bernie Taupin. Both CDs are reviewed below.

Revamp

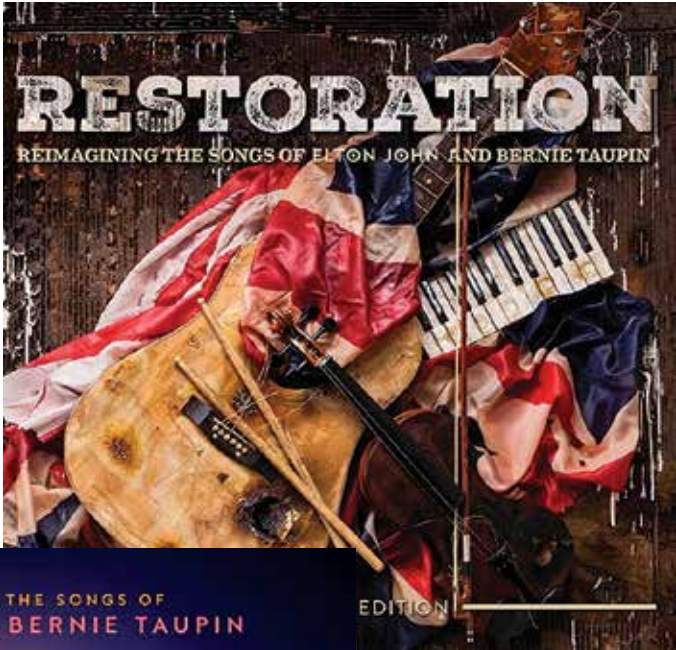
This is the pop flavored CD, which gets off to a fun start with an energetic cover of "Bennie and the Jets" by Pink, who nails her vocal with a little help from Logic and Sir Elton himself.

After that, John does not appear on either disc, and as with most tribute CDs some of the vocalists chosen to interpret his material are inspired while others fail miserably.

The worst track here is a head-scratching remake of "Don't Go Breaking My Heart," featuring a game Demi Lovato, that is totally ruined by her unfortunate duet partner, Q-Tip.

The good news is somebody had the brilliant idea to tap Sam Smith to sing "Daniel," a song he was born to record.

Also terrific are Coldplay's gorgeous version of "We All Fall In Love Sometimes," Alessia Cara's soulful rendition of "I Guess That's Why They Call It The Blues," and Florence + the Machine's subtle take on "Tiny Dancer."



Less successful is Ed Sheeran's updated "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road." (Not Sheeran's fault, really, but nobody needed another version of that song, which John himself had already rerecorded.)

Elsewhere on *Revamp*, covers by Lady Gaga ("Your Song") and Mary J. Blige ("Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word") can't touch Elton's originals.

Restoration

Bernie Taupin was more involved than Elton John as curator of this disc, which has a country flavor and features many of the finest singers Nashville has to offer, including Miranda Lambert ("My Father's Gun"), Chris Stapleton ("I Want Love"), Lee Ann Womack ("Honky Cat"), and Kacey Musgraves ("Roy Rogers").

The only outright bummer is a remake of "Sad Songs (Say So Much)" which even Dierks Bentley can't save. (One of Taupin's rare duds, that song was never any good even when John sang it.)

Brothers Osborne rock out very nicely on "Take Me To The Pilot" as does Miley Cyrus, John's good buddy and the only artist who contributes to both discs, successfully

covering "The Bitch Is Back" on *Restoration* and "Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me" on *Revamp*.

Other fine cuts on *Restoration* include a futuristic-sounding take on "Rocket Man" by Little Big Town and moving renditions of "Border Song" by Willie Nelson, "This Train Don't Stop There Anymore" by Roseanne Cash with Emmylou Harris, and "Mona Lisas And Mad Hatters" by Maren Morris.

As good as many of these performances are – and both CDs are must-haves

for diehard Elton John fans like myself – what's missing from the project is an entire disc of R & B covers in tribute to Elton, one of the great "blue-eyed" soul singers in all of popular music.

Chris Stapleton, Mary J. Blige and Alessia Cara do bring some soul, but was nobody brave enough to tackle "Friends," "Levon" or "I'm Still Standing"?

Pictorial representation of the treatment of SF police officers by San Francisco's Castrocreepersociety



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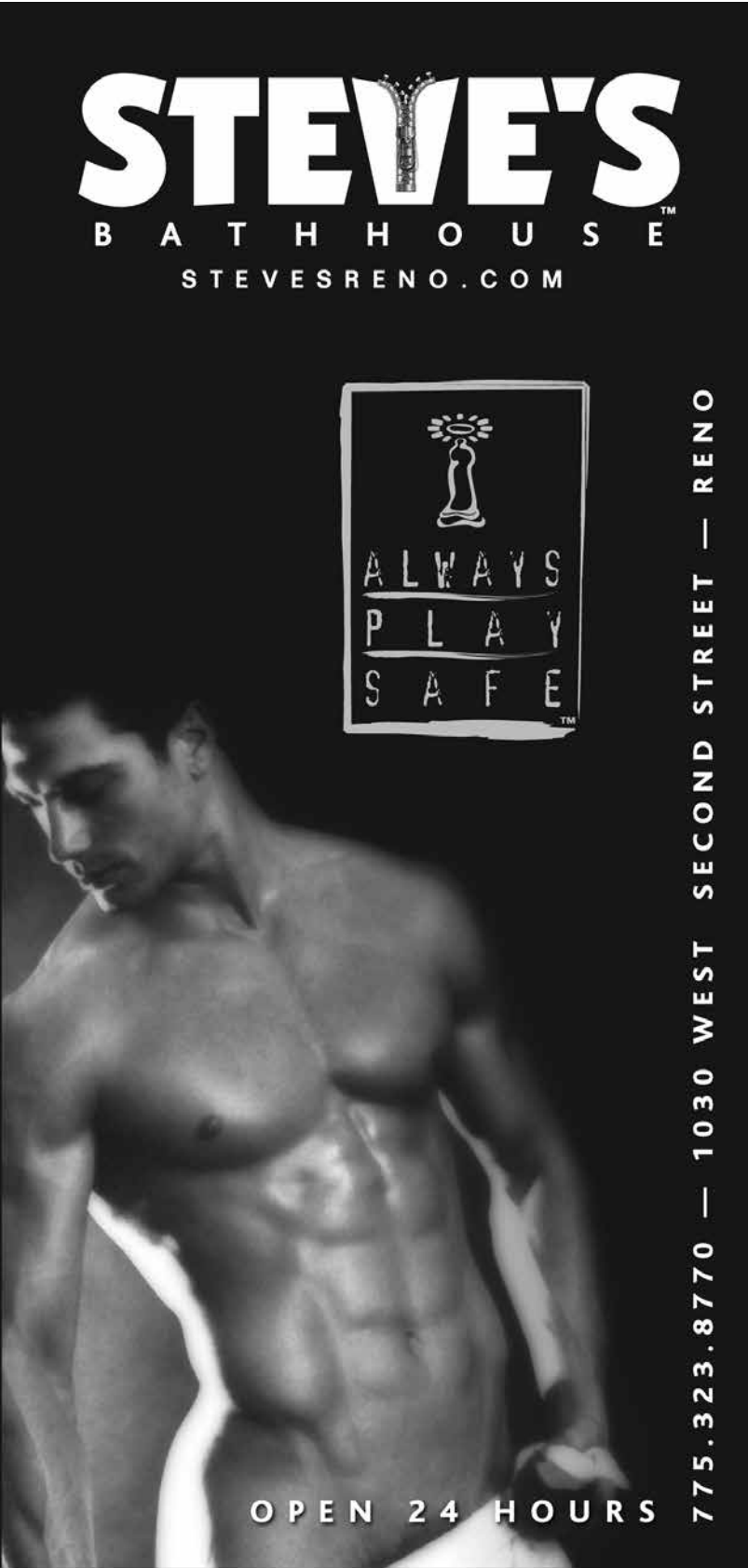
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As California STD Rates Skyrocket, AHF Highlights New ‘Gonorrhea Alert’ Billboards



AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) has launched its latest national outdoor advertising and awareness campaign with new billboards raising an alarm and offering a ‘Gonorrhea Alert’ about drug-resistant strains of the sexually transmitted disease — including a case of what has been referred to as ‘super gonorrhea’. The Gonorrhea Alert billboards come on the heels of an alarming new report out by the California Department of Public Health showing all-time high numbers of STDs in California. The billboards in California are located in Oakland and Los Angeles.

Two Dynamite LGBTQ DVDs & A Great New Queer Doc

by Chris Narloch

Just in time for Pride Month, two highly acclaimed movies recently “came out” and are now available for home viewing. If you missed them in theaters, do not make that mistake again.

Both are well worth purchasing on DVD. I also spotlight a terrific new gay-friendly documentary that

It's just that the movie is so well made that its story – of the indignities visited upon the

bigotry and discrimination, which keeps many LGBTQ athletes in the closet and living in silence.

The AT&T original feature-length documentary follows a group of athletes and sports figures from the biggest stages in American sports, including the NFL, NBA, MLS, and NCAA, among others, to explore the ongoing struggles LGBTQ athletes are facing at the professional, collegiate and Olympic levels.

Viewers will hear the personal stories of LGBTQ athletes who deal with living their authentic life or hiding in fear that their sports careers will come to a crashing end if the truth comes out.

Among those interviewed for *Alone In The Game* are NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, Former ESPN President John Skipper, Former NBA center Jason Collins, Former NFL lineman Ryan O'Callaghan, MLS Cup champion Robbie Rogers, and Olympic medalists Megan Rapinoe and Gus Kenworthy.

If you want to see *Alone In The Game* on the big screen, you can



MLS Cup champion Robbie Rogers in *Alone In The Game*

includes interviews with LGBTQ athletes.

Love, Simon

At least one of my friends was disappointed in this sweet gay romantic dramedy, but I loved it. Yes, it's formulaic and the blackmail subplot feels contrived, but those conventions come with the rom-com territory.

What is revolutionary about *Love, Simon* isn't the script so much as the fact that it is the first successful teen comedy centered on a gay high school student (played by the adorable Nick Robinson) to be released in hundreds of theaters on the same day by a major Hollywood studio.

Simon's story is very relatable for anyone who has ever been in the closet, but *Love, Simon* isn't only a coming out film. The movie is also about the hero's search for romantic love, in addition to the unconditional love of his family and friends.

The movie's supporting cast, which includes Jennifer Garner, Josh Duhamel, Alexandra Shipp, Katherine Langford, and Keiynan Lonsdale, adds immeasurably to the film's charm.

A Fantastic Woman

If you want to have a queer double feature, watch this movie first and then end with the much more upbeat *Love, Simon*. Don't get me wrong – I love *A Fantastic Woman*, which won the Oscar this year for Best Foreign Language Film.

transgendered heroine after her older boyfriend dies unexpectedly – is sometimes hard to watch.

The lovely Daniela Vega is heartbreaking in the title role – the actress has large, expressive eyes and projects enormous strength and intelligence as Marina, a trans singer who refuses to be treated



Trans actress Daniela Vega stars in *A Fantastic Woman*

like a second-class citizen.

The immensely talented Sebastian Lelio (*Disobedience*) directed *A Fantastic Woman*, and it is the first Chilean movie ever to win the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film.

Alone In The Game

Alone In The Game is a fascinating new documentary that shines a light on the stark reality of the big business of sports and exposes a culture of exclusion,

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