

outwOrd

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Supreme Court Declines to Review Ruling in Favor of Transgender Patient

The U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear a challenge to a California court decision in favor of a patient who was turned away from a hospital for being transgender.

Evan Minton was scheduled to undergo a medical procedure in 2016 at Mercy San Juan Medical Center, a Sacramento hospital in the Dignity Health chain. Two days prior to the appointment, a nurse called to discuss the surgery and Minton mentioned that he is transgender. The next day, the hospital canceled the procedure. Minton sued claiming unlawful discrimination under California's Unruh Civil Rights Act. The ACLU and Covington & Burling LLP represent him.

In 2019, the California Court of Appeal held that Minton could pursue a claim for discrimination based on the hospital's cancellation of his surgery. The court also said that Dignity Health does not have a constitutional right to violate California's nondiscrimination law. Today, the Supreme Court declined to uproot this ruling, stopping further attempts to authorize discrimination against trans people under the guise of religious liberty. In June, the court issued a unanimous decision in *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia* in which the court refused to create a license to discriminate against LGBTQ people.

Elizabeth Gill, senior staff attorney with the ACLU LGBTQ & HIV Project, had the following response:

"Dignity Health is trying to claim it's an LGBTQ-friendly organization but when Evan needed care he was turned away because he is transgender. It's wrong that anyone would

be turned away from health care because of who they are, and when a health care provider denies care to a population they claim to serve, that's hypocrisy.

"Our work does not stop with this case. Trans people belong everywhere and we will continue to fight alongside the trans community for health care access."

Evan Minton had the following response:

"Since Dignity Health turned me away for being transgender, I've had multiple medical emergencies and I can't stand to go to my neighboring Dignity Hospital because of the discrimination I was put through. In one instance, I called my doctor and had them talk me through a procedure I performed on myself to avoid having to go into one of their hospitals. I hope Dignity Health will finally take responsibility for what they did to me and what they continue to do. I applaud transgender Californians and people across the country who are sharing their denial of care experiences. This should not be our private pain and shame. We deserve health care, we deserve restroom access, we deserve to play on sports teams, we deserve better. With my community by my side, I look forward to carrying on in this fight for justice."

<https://www.aclu.org/news/lgbt-rights/a-hospital-refused-to-provide-medically-necessary-surgery-because-i-am-transgender>

US State Department Issues Passport With X Gender Marker

The US State Department issued a US Passport with an X gender marker today, marking the first time a gender neutral passport is issued in the country and sending a strong message in support of the rights of trans, intersex and non binary persons.

Fifteen countries currently recognize some form of third gender marker in some way - Austria, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Germany, India, Iceland, The Netherlands, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Uruguay and the US.

Jessica Stern, US Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons and former Executive Director of OutRight Action International, announced the news during a press call on Tuesday, October 26, fulfilling a

commitment made by President Biden during his election campaign.

Maria Sjödin, Acting Executive Director of OutRight Action International, comments:

"Trans, intersex and

non-binary people face a myriad of discrimination and access barriers, as well as harassment and degrading treatment, when the gender marker in their documentation does not correspond with the norms associated with their gender expression. Offering a non-binary gender marker is not revolutionary - it is simply a reflection of reality which will enable people who do not identify as male or female to be recognized as their true selves. We welcome this step from the US State Department, urge authorities to ensure swift roll-out of the provision, and encourage other countries to follow suit."

While only one passport was issued today, a routine roll out of the X gender marker is expected in early 2022 after necessary administrative changes are made to relevant forms and systems. Thereafter people in the US will be able to self-identify as M, F or X in their passports.



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SMF Brings You Closer To Some Of The Country's Best Ski Destinations

by Mark Haneke

Sacramento finally had its first major rainstorm of 2021, which means winter is just around the corner. Tahoe's spectacular ski slopes are a short drive away, but for those ready for an adventure beyond the Sierra, SMF brings you closer to some of the country's best ski destinations.



The Rocky Mountains stretch from British Columbia south to New Mexico, with dramatic mountain vistas, breathtaking ski terrain and as much as 33-feet of snow a year. SMF has nonstop flights to Denver (DEN) on United Airlines, Southwest Airlines and Frontier Airlines, getting you to the gateway to some of the Rockies' best ski resorts.

Aspen is a spectacular year-round destination, but it best known for its world-class ski resorts. In January, the oldest annual, week-long gay ski event in the nation, Aspen Gay Ski Week, is celebrating its 45th anniversary. The event is open to all level of skiers, with a full schedule of fun including daily après ski events. If you aren't into downhill but still want to play in the snow, the resort town's four mountains offer cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and winter hiking trails. Off the slopes, Aspen has a vibrant dining scene (it is home to the annual Aspen Food & Wine Classic, after all!)

with diverse culinary options both off and on the mountain.

A bit further south, the old west vibe of downtown Telluride compliments the glamour of Aspen. Tucked in a canyon surrounded by 14,000-foot peaks, the town was designated a National Historic Landmark District in 1964 preserving the feel of Colorado in during the 1870s silver rush. Telluride's Gay Ski Week takes place in February 2022 where skiers and boarders will experience the place Condé Nast called the #1 Ski Resort in North America. Since 2002, Telluride Gay Ski Week has been bringing parties, après ski, dining experiences and their signature White Party to the Rockies. Telluride is also home to a vibrant arts district, with galleries, performance spaces and architecture.

Salt Lake City (SLC) is a short hop from SMF on both Delta Airlines and Southwest Airlines. Mother Nature delivers an average of 500 inches of snow to Utah's mountains

every year and many of the best resorts are within an hour's drive from the airport. In February, Elevation Utah comes to Park City, home of the Sundance Film Festival in January, bringing dancing, karaoke, cocktails, wine tastings and after-hours parties when guests aren't swooshing down the mountain. Park City's historic Main Street has fabulous shopping and dining options as well as snow biking, snowshoeing, tubing, ice skating and sleigh rides nearby. Down the hill in Salt Lake City, the diverse and friendly Capitol Hill Neighborhood boasts bars, museums, gardens, and restaurants.

Travel to Canada is getting easier just in time for Whistler Pride and Ski in January. Snow bunnies can take one of the several nonstop flights to Seattle (SEA) on Alaska Airlines, Southwest and Delta and drive into beautiful British Columbia. Celebrating its 29th year in 2022, the weeklong event is packed with après ski, pool parties, parades and guided ski and board events. Whistler is one of the largest ski resorts in North America but is also known for its visual and performing arts. In December, the Whistler Film Festival rolls into town with special screenings and guest appearances. If cinema isn't for you, sample Whistler's nightlife - live music, distillery tastings, great dining - or take some time to unwind at the many day spas or yoga studios in town. (p.s. we're hopeful that our daily nonstop flight to Vancouver will be restored in spring 2022.)

If you are looking forward to holiday travel, SMF has multiple daily flights to major U.S. hubs across the country like Chicago and Las Vegas, making it easy to visit anyone, anywhere from coast to coast.

Thank you for flying from SMF! Please make sure you ARRIVE EARLY!

For more information, visit sacramento.aero.

Mark Haneke is the Director of Air Service Development Marketing for Sacramento International Airport as well as a seasoned expert in air service development and a savvy world traveler. His travel column appears monthly in Outword to share news on new destinations from Sacramento International Airport, peppered with some of his own personal stories and travel recommendations.

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“Mayor Pete” Doc Premieres on Amazon Prime

by Chris Narloch



Does ‘squeaky clean’ Pete use profanity? Are there sex scenes with Chasten? (I certainly hope so!) Those questions crossed my mind upon learning that Pete Buttigieg’s new Amazon documentary is rated ‘R’. I can hardly wait. Directed by San Francisco filmmaker Jesse Moss, “Mayor Pete” is subtitled “A Campaign Love Story” and brings viewers inside Pete’s campaign attempt to be the youngest U.S. President, providing an unprecedented intimacy with the candidate, his husband Chasten, and their ambitious team. From the earliest days of the campaign, to his unlikely, triumphant victory in Iowa and beyond, the film reveals what really goes on inside a campaign for the highest office in the land – and the myriad ways it changes the lives of those at its center. Recently appointed to U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Buttigieg serves as the first openly LGBTQ Cabinet member in U.S. history. Clocking in at 96 minutes long, “Mayor Pete” will begin streaming globally on Amazon Prime Video on Friday, Nov. 12th.



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Annual WEAVE Toy Drive Returns and Takes Place at Outword Happy Hour and Drag Queen Bingo

The Annual WEAVE Toy Drive is back this year and collections will be held at both the Sacramento Rainbow Chamber's Drag Queen Bingo Event at Mango's on Thursday, December 2nd, and the Outword/Badlands Liquid Therapy Happy Hour on Friday, December 10th. The following is a list of ideas/requests from WEAVE to help fill the stockings of the less fortunate this year (they ask that toys and games not involve weapons, including guns, knives, and swords).



Wish List



Toddlers:

- Stuffed Animals
- Board Books
- Puzzles
- Socks/Underwear
- Crayons/Markers
- Coloring Books
- Interactive Toys

- Socks/Underwear (teens pick these for themselves)
- Hats: beanies, ball caps, etc.
- Young Adult Novels
- Puzzles
- Blankets
- Jewelry

Children:

- Stuffed Animals
- Books (diverse characters & relationships especially showing Black, Brown & Indigenous children & families & that don't assume all families have a mom & dad)
- Puzzles (all sizes)
- Board games
- Underwear, socks, etc.
- T-shirts
- Sweatshirts
- Legos
- Sports Balls

- Nail Polish & Makeup: new and unopened
- Bath gel

Adults

- Clothing
- Socks/Underwear
- Gift cards for groceries, Target, etc.
- Winter hats
- Bath Gel
- Nail Polish & Makeup: new and unopened

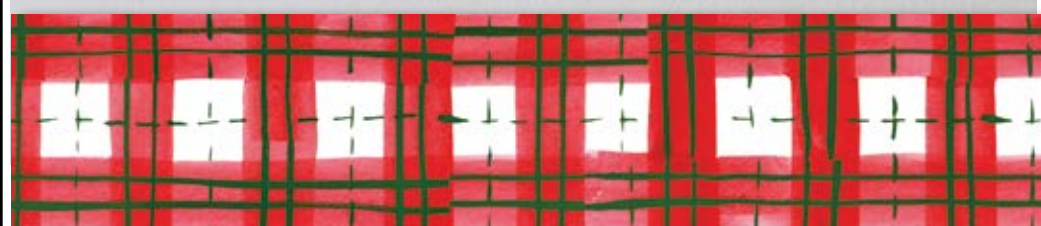
Teens (Always our Biggest Need)

- Gift cards for fast food, movies, etc.
- Journals
- T-shirts/clothing - sports teams are great or something related to California/Sacramento

DRAG QUEEN BINGO! Thursday Dec. 2nd

Liquid Therapy Friday Dec. 10th

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Doritos Mexico Has the Internet Buzzing with Its Queer Commercial



Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) may be over for 2021, but the internet is still buzzing over Doritos Mexico's latest queer commercial, a heartwarming clip that reminded us of the classic Pixar movie "Coco" but with a gay twist.

In the Spanish language ad, a Mexican family approaches Uncle Alberto's grave, which is covered with traditional offerings including a bowl of Doritos snack chips.

When the deceased man's sister says that she misses him, a ghostly version of Uncle Alberto appears in a spooky cloud of blue vapor and says, "Hello family."

"How is everyone?" he continues, as another man appears behind Uncle Alberto. When he is asked who the newcomer is, the uncle's ghost says, "He's Mario. My partner." The men hold hands and look into each other's eyes as the family gasps.

But his sister's response is what has made the short spot go viral worldwide. She starts clapping with happiness for Uncle Alberto. "What a miracle," she says. "I thought you'd

be alone forever."

The tagline at the end of the spot is "It's never too late to be who you are."

"In Mexico, the Day of the Dead is a celebration of life. It's a moment to share our respect, love, and unity for all the people we cherish, even if they are gone," the company said. "And it's an opportunity for Doritos Mexico to celebrate love and our commitment to the LGBTQ+ community every day."

"With the commercial 'It's never late to be who you are,' we want to say that it's never too late to share your true self, and when you are ready, we will support you," said Doritos Mexico.

To watch the cute clip, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJ_RSP_EK0E

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City Theatre Presents "Home for the Holidays... Welcome Back!"

City Theatre at Sacramento City College continues its 2021-22 season with the return of a seasonal themed festival of all new plays called "Home for the Holidays... Welcome Back!"



Last year's pivot to online performances inspired the idea of a festival of short new plays called "Zoom for the Holidays." Due to its success, the festival will return for 2021 with nine more short plays in "Home for the Holidays... Welcome Back!"

Luther Hanson will return to direct the new, short plays by nine playwrights, who include Jes Gonzales, Joy Hall Gee, David Martin, Mike Poe, Michael Pollock, John Paul Pressburg-Nevans, Roberta Ramirez Sanchez, Tim Sapunor, and Donya Wicken.

In addition to the new plays, new monologues will be presented between each play, and the online performance will

be a collaboration between the theatre and film faculty at Sacramento City College.

The live online streaming production will open Thursday, November 18 and will continue through Sunday, December 5, but with no performances Thanksgiving week. Performances are live at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays and at 2:00 p.m. on Sundays.

Tickets prices are \$15 for general admission and \$10 for students and are available online at <https://citytheatre.net>

For more theatre and other local arts events, please visit www.sacramento365.com

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“Annie: Live!” To Air On NBC by Chris Narloch

The sun’ll come out...tomorrow (or rather this December) for fans of the popular family musical “Annie,” when NBC continues its holiday tradition of presenting a live musical broadcast featuring big stars.



Mark your calendars for this Dec. 2, when Harry Connick Jr. and Taraji P. Henson will take on the iconic roles of Daddy Warbucks and Miss Hannigan, while the starring role of Annie will be played by an unknown named Celina Smith, who was cast after a nationwide audition.

Connick Jr. and Henson wouldn’t have been my first choices to play those parts, but maybe this time Hollywood will get “Annie” right, after two previous big screen versions fell notoriously flat.

The 1982 film at least had a great cast in Albert Finney, Carol Burnett, Tim Curry, Ann Reinking and Bernadette Peters, but the late, great John Huston was not an appropriate choice to direct a musical. That “Annie” isn’t an awful movie, but it should have been much better, given the top-notch talent involved.

The 1976 Broadway musical “Annie” is based on the comic strip “Little Orphan Annie” by Harold Gray. “Annie: Live!” will also star Tituss Burgess, Nicole Scherzinger and Jane Krakowski.

The Sacramento Gay Men’s Chorus is back!

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Finally, A Series for Mature Gay Men By Chris Narloch

Hollywood’s obsession with youth sometimes leaves older folks out in the cold, so it’s refreshing to see a new web series about three middle-aged gay friends trying to figure out how to live their best lives.



That’s the description for “The Disappointments,” a darkly comic YouTube series that follows a group of close buddies in their 50s who, rocked by the suicide of one of their friends, are forced to face the failures and disappointments in their own lives.

Based in part on actual events, this series looks at a pivotal issue people face as they navigate their 50s: What do you do when you realize that time is running short, the road behind you is longer than the road ahead, and your job, your marriage, and your

relationship with your kids have not turned out at all the way you had hoped and planned when you were young?

This web series aims to be unique by featuring gay men in their 50s dealing with the fallout from faltering careers and empty bank accounts and generally scrambling to figure out how to set themselves up to survive in the decades yet to come.

The first three episodes of “The Disappointments” began streaming Nov. 8th and additional episodes will be released each subsequent Monday.



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Tahoe Blue Vodka Cocktail Recipe Cinnamon Spritzer

With Thanksgiving just around the corner, Tahoe Blue Vodka hopes everyone is able to spend time with loved ones while sharing gratitude for all that you have. And for adults who want to do a special toast at the holiday feast, here's a fan favorite Cinnamon Spritzer cocktail recipe perfect for your gathering. Cheers!

Cinnamon Spritzer

Ingredients

- 1.5 oz Tahoe Blue Vodka (Cinnamon Infused*)
- 0.5 oz Vanilla Simple Syrup
- 2 Dashes Chocolate Bitters
- Sparkling Water (or Vanilla Soda)
- Cinnamon Stick and/or Star Anise

Directions

- Shake Tahoe Blue Vodka (Cinnamon Infused*), Vanilla Simple Syrup (omit if using Vanilla Soda), and Chocolate Bitters with Ice
- Strain into Highball Glass filled with ice
- Top with Sparkling Water (or use Vanilla Soda to simplify)
- Garnish with Cinnamon Stick and/or star anise, as desired

*To infuse Tahoe Blue Vodka with cinnamon, simply add 2-3 cinnamon sticks to a full bottle. Let sit for 48-72 hours and enjoy!

Please drink responsibly.



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Wes Anderson & Lady Di in Theaters Plus “Eternals” & “Antlers” Reviewed

by Chris Narloch

As November and December approach, Hollywood begins to dream of Oscar gold, and the movies in theaters begin to get darker and more ‘serious’. Here’s a grab bag of new releases, including yet another Marvel movie to review.

The French Dispatch

Any Wes Anderson movie is worth seeing, if only for his obsessive attention to detail and his love of actors. “The French Dispatch” certainly isn’t the director’s worst, but it isn’t his best either. Aside from the amazing production design and the killer cast, it didn’t wow me as much as my favorite Anderson films, “The Grand Budapest Hotel” and “The Royal Tenenbaums.”

A lovely-looking period piece, the movie brings to life a collection of stories from the final issue of an American magazine published in a fictional 20th-century French city. Unfortunately, Anderson flutters from scene to scene like a hummingbird, never landing long enough to develop the cardboard characters or the paper-thin plots.

Still, any picture that stars Bill Murray, Frances McDormand, Timothee Chalamet, Owen Wilson, Tilda Swinton, Jeffrey Wright, Adrien Brody, Henry Winkler, Lea Seydoux, Benicio del Toro, Willem Dafoe, Saoirse Ronan, Christoph Waltz, Elisabeth Moss, Edward Norton and Liev Schreiber is a must-see, if only for star gazing.

“The French Dispatch” opened at Sacramento’s Tower Theatre on Nov. 5.

Antlers

Produced but not directed by one of my favorite filmmakers, Guillermo del Toro, “Antlers” embraces del Toro’s love of movie monsters, with a very strange tale of a sad young boy whose mother is dead and whose father and brother have been taken over by a cannibalistic spirit.

That’s a very heavy starting point for a movie, and although this film is well-directed (by Scott Cooper) and very well-acted (by Keri Russell, Jesse Plemons and others), I can’t recommend it for the average moviegoer.

However, if you are in the mood for a disturbingly dark horror flick that doubles as an allegory about opioid addiction, “Antlers” is the film for you.

Eternals

Even with the autumnal shift towards heavier subject matter in cinemas, it seems like there’s always a new Marvel movie to contend with, at least once a month or so.

This month’s entry in the MCU sweepstakes is a 2½ hour, all-star dud, aptly entitled “Eternals.” I hate to make cheap jokes around a film’s title, and I have tried hard not to be one of those snooty, Marvel-hating movie critics, but sitting through this one felt like an eternity.

A quick run-down of the plot: The Eternals, a race of immortal beings with superhuman powers who have secretly lived on Earth for thousands of years, reunite to battle the evil Deviants.

The sad thing is how the new movie fails to take advantage of that potentially promising premise in the way that “The Old Guard” did -- a much better (non-MCU) superhero film starring Charlize Theron, with a similar plot.

What the movie has going for it is a talented (and very diverse) cast that includes Caucasian, Asian, Black, and Latinx actors, plus the Pakistani funnyman Kumail Nanjiani. There’s even an Eternal who turns out to be gay, but I’m not going to tell you who it is.

I especially enjoyed Salma Hayek’s soulful performance as the leader of the superhero family and watching Angelina Jolie vamp and pose and wield a spear, a shield, and a sword.

But beyond the appealing cast and some fun CGI monsters, there’s not much pleasure to be found in a script that jumps around incoherently from location to location and time-period to time-period. I also grew weary very quickly of all the leaden dialogue about whether the superheroes should save humanity or not.

How can a viewer get invested in the ‘plight’ of immortals whose fates seem so random? There’s no logic and no suspense when characters can die and then suddenly come back to life or go bad and then magically turn good again.

“Eternals” is so bloated and boring that I started rooting for the deviants to wipe us out so the movie would be over. I began to think how wonderful it would be to have a superpower that would allow me to climb the walls of the theater -- to get out.

Spencer

I was unable to preview this one before our deadline, but Kristen Stewart is already getting Oscar buzz for her lead performance as Diana Spencer in this intimate look at Princess Di’s troubled marriage to Prince Charles and her close relationship with her beloved boys.

Pablo Larrain (“Jackie”) directs this unauthorized imagining of Diana’s discontent during Christmas festivities at the Queen’s estate. “Spencer” opened at the Tower Theatre on Nov. 5th.





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Because of the continuing trauma being caused by COVID, many of our advertisers are doing everything they can to stay afloat - that includes Outword Magazine. At the onset of the pandemic we changed our distribution model to an online-only affair. That helped us weather the storm, but we have since returned to both online as well traditional, printed copies. Thankfully, the response we have received after returning to print has been fantastic!

Once again we are asking that you, our readers and advertisers help us with a contribution that will be used to help keep the presses rolling. This money will assist with publishing costs, both in print and online, and help pay our staff, distribution costs and a few of our writers, among other things.

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Mickey Guyton & Yola Break the Country Color Barrier Plus A New CD From Country Queen Kacey Musgraves

by Chris Narloch

Three of my favorite newer country queens released CDs recently, and they are all essential discs if you're a fan of good country music. Read on for my reviews.



Mickey Guyton

Mickey Guyton -- Remember Her Name

Although Mickey Guyton has been knocking on Nashville's door for years, and has released numerous singles and EPs, "Remember Her Name" is the singer's first official, full-length, major-label CD.

Since Guyton is both very beautiful and very talented, the reason for the delay -- if we're being honest -- was that she is also Black, in a musical genre that has been notoriously White for decades.

In the last 50 years, country music has only produced three Black male stars: the late, great Charley Pride, and the current chart-toppers Darius Rucker and Jimmie Allen. For Black women in country music, the situation has been even more depressing.

Until very recently, there were zero famous Black females in country, until Mickey Guyton and Yola showed up and were too talented to ignore.

Guyton has a big, soulful voice and a country pop sound that reminds me of Carrie Underwood. Her new disc contains slick production and one terrific song after another, including "All American," "Black Like Me," "Rose" and the CD's title track.



Yola

Yola -- Stand for Myself

This multi-talented performer hails from Bristol, England, but she has obviously soaked up the sounds of American country and soul music. "Stand For Myself" is Yola's second full-length CD, and it features a dozen dynamite songs and a great producer (Dan Auerbach of the Black Keys). I especially enjoyed the triumphant title track, as well as "Break the Bough" and "Barely Alive."

Kacey Musgraves -- Star-Crossed

One of the brightest young lights in country music, Kacey Musgraves is a very gifted singer-songwriter who recently went through a divorce. Naturally, as any smart country queen would do, she has turned her heartbreak in to a hit record.

Star-Crossed charts the ups and downs of her split with Ruston Kelly, also a country performer, and while it isn't as fun to listen to as her last CD, the Grammy-winning "Golden Hour," the disc is a must for fans of country-pop music that isn't shallow or cliched.

Anyone who has endured a break-up can relate to Star-Crossed. Musgraves blames herself and then blames her 'ex,' and her emotions run the gamut from anger ("breadwinner") to self-pity ("star-crossed") to a kind of peace with the past ("there is a light"). Through it all, Musgraves' placid, pure vocals sound as beautiful as ever.



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The U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree Visits Sacramento

Photo and words by Christina Allan

The holidays will be here before we know it! Last week, the 84-foot white fir nicknamed “Sugar Bear” made a stop downtown on its cross-country trip to the nation’s capital.

This was only the fifth time since the tradition began in 1954 that the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree has come from a California forest, in this case Six Rivers. The tree was harvested from the Mad River Ranger District in Trinity County, where a little over 50 percent of the total district was destroyed in last year’s Complex Fire.

Sacramento was the tour’s eighth stop, arriving on the west side of the State Capitol around 10:00 a.m. on a specially wrapped, elongated, climate-controlled trailer.

Except for the back clear section where the decorated tip of the tree was visible, the sides of the trailer were wrapped with signs that convey information about the host communities, the map of its journey, sponsors and more. The project is a collaboration between the Architect of the Capitol in Washington and the U.S. Forest Service.

Visitors wandered around it in the crisp autumn air, posed for selfies, and wrote their signatures and messages on the trailer’s banners. Santa Claus and Woodsy the Owl were also on hand for holiday cheer and photo ops.

Two hours later, on the nearby grassy mall, California State Senator Mike

McGuire hosted a ceremony for Sugar Bear. John Elgin, Chairman of the Lassic Band gave an opening blessing after he talked about the process of finding and then felling the great tree.

“We are thankful for being able to offer something after the 2020 August fire of 1.6 million acres of burned land, to be able to find a tree that wasn’t burned, and (for it) to be able to stand as a sign of the ability to endure...” Elgin said.

The CSUS Vocal Jazz ensembles performed their version of “Jingle Bells,” followed by speeches from California Secretary of Natural Resources Wade Crowfoot and Regional Forester Jennifer Eberlien.

McGuire then called two North Coast students forward to present their handmade ornaments. Traditionally, the U.S. Capitol Christmas tree’s decorations are all handmade by students from the host state, hence the nickname “The People’s Tree.”

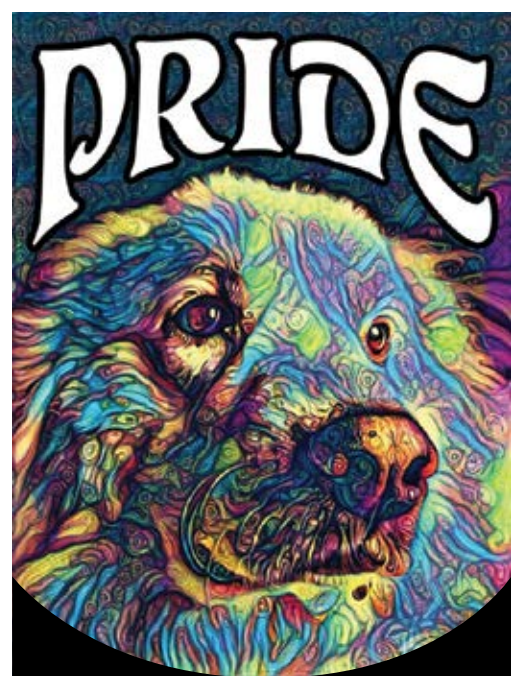
California students made a record-breaking 15,000 ornaments this year, and Toddy Thomas Middle School’s eighth-grader Jackie Gonzalez was one of the two young people chosen to present their ornaments. Gonzalez’ box contained two beautiful rainbow-striped fish.



A window washer inside the red and green, climate-controlled, Christmas tree trailer.

“Jackie presented some wonderful fish that obviously represent the North Coast,” commented Eberlien, “beautiful, multi-colored, showing all unity together in color.” The massive fir will arrive in Washington

D.C. on Nov.19th. Once unwrapped, Sugar Bear will rise over the West Front Lawn of Capitol Hill. Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, will light “The People’s Tree” in early December.



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Tahoe Blue Vodka is Now the Official Vodka of the Sacramento Rainbow Chamber of Commerce

Cheers are in order... Tahoe Blue Vodka is now the official vodka of the Sacramento Rainbow Chamber of Commerce, an organization that serves LGBTQ+ business owners in the seven county Greater Sacramento region with networking, advocacy, business development, community support and more.



Founded in 2012 by Matt Levitt, Tahoe Blue is the only vodka in the world inspired by and crafted from waters of Lake Tahoe. Additionally, Tahoe Blue is currently the fastest growing vodka brand in Northern California and Northern Nevada among the Top 20 brands (as measured by IRI market research company) and has distribution facilities in South Lake Tahoe and Rancho Cordova.

“Tahoe Blue is proud to support the great work of the Sacramento Rainbow Chamber,” says Tahoe Blue Vodka Founder Matt Levitt. “Now, as our businesses and nonprofits push through the coronavirus pandemic and remain on the road to recovery, we must ensure we are all looking out for one another.”

As part of the new partnership, Tahoe Blue Vodka will be featured at various upcoming Rainbow Chamber events, a couple of which includes the following:

- Networking Mixer on 11/16 at Mango’s in Midtown (1930 K Street)
- Naughty or Nice Holiday Gala on 12/16 at the Hilton (Sacramento Arden West)

“I’m thrilled to partner with Tahoe Blue Vodka at a pivotal time as we resume our longstanding tradition of presenting fun and spirited events while also working to meet our lofty fundraising goals,” said Fred Palmer, Executive Director and one of the original founding members of the Sacramento Rainbow Chamber of Commerce. “We are especially proud to collaborate with stellar companies like Tahoe Blue Vodka that step up and give back to the communities they serve.”

For more information about upcoming Rainbow Chamber events, please visit www.rainbowchamber.com and for more information about Tahoe Blue Vodka, please visit www.tahoebluevodka.com.



Resident Host and Infamous Drag Queen, DoMe Moore with a bottle of her fave at Drag Queen Bingo!



Art Exhibits for Days in Sac and San Francisco

by Chris Narloch

Since it reopened earlier this year, Sacramento's Crocker Art Museum continues to amaze with its world-class shows, and the current "Monet to Matisse" exhibition is no exception.

After you visit that must-see survey of French Impressionism, your appetite for art-gazing might move you to spend a day (or a weekend) in the Bay Area, where three other intriguing displays of fine art are also drawing crowds.

Monet to Matisse

Do not let January 9, 2022 come and go without seeing this superb new exhibition at our local treasure, the Crocker Art Museum. That is the final day you can attend "Monet to Matisse" in Sacramento.

The exhibit's subtitle is "Masterworks of French Impressionism from the Dixon Gallery and Gardens," and they're not kidding. As you tour the large space for temporary exhibitions on the Crocker's third floor, you will be treated to one masterpiece after another by almost every big name associated with French Impressionism.

I had not done my homework before attending the show and mistakenly thought it was limited to the two artists in the exhibition's title, so I was very pleasantly surprised to find works on display by other famous French Impressionists including Renoir, Gauguin, Cezanne, Courbet, Corot, Sisley, and many more.

Henri Matisse is one of my favorite painters, and by my count, there are only two of his paintings included, but both artworks are such gorgeous efforts by that genius artist that I couldn't be disappointed, especially considering all the other riches on display in this extensive exhibition.

The Crocker has hit a home run with "Monet to Matisse," and you can learn more at www.crockerart.org

The Art of Banksy

The elusive, mysterious street artist known as Banksy receives his largest touring exhibition of authentic artworks sourced from private collectors around the world, beginning this Nov. 22 at San Francisco's iconic Palace of Fine Arts.

"The Art of Banksy" will feature more than 80 works by the artist, including many of his most recognizable images such as "Flower Thrower," "Rude Copper" and "Girl with Balloon," as well as many lesser known but equally provocative pieces.

Banksy's works are seen on city walls, bridges, and streets throughout the world, but "The Art of Banksy" offers a rare chance to see a multitude of works in one location. For more information, visit www.banksyexhibit.com/sanfrancisco

TeamLab: Continuity

Immersive art is all the rage in fine art circles, and a friend of mine raved about this interactive, digital art exhibit featuring a wondrous ecosystem of lush imagery drawn from nature and East Asian art that dynamically evolves around viewers.

At "teamLab: Continuity," you will find yourself immersed in sumptuous images of inky crows and fluorescent flowers, fluttering butterflies and darting fish that propel you to wander, to pause, and to marvel.

Tokyo-based international collective teamLab is renowned for its interconnected digital artworks that dissolve boundaries between artwork and viewer. You can check out "Continuity" at San Francisco's Asian Art Museum through at least Feb. 14, 2022. Go to <https://asianart.org>

The Art of the Brick

This fascinating new exhibition featuring unique works of art by the renowned contemporary artist Nathan Sawaya opens Dec. 4 at San Francisco's historic 1 Grant Avenue.

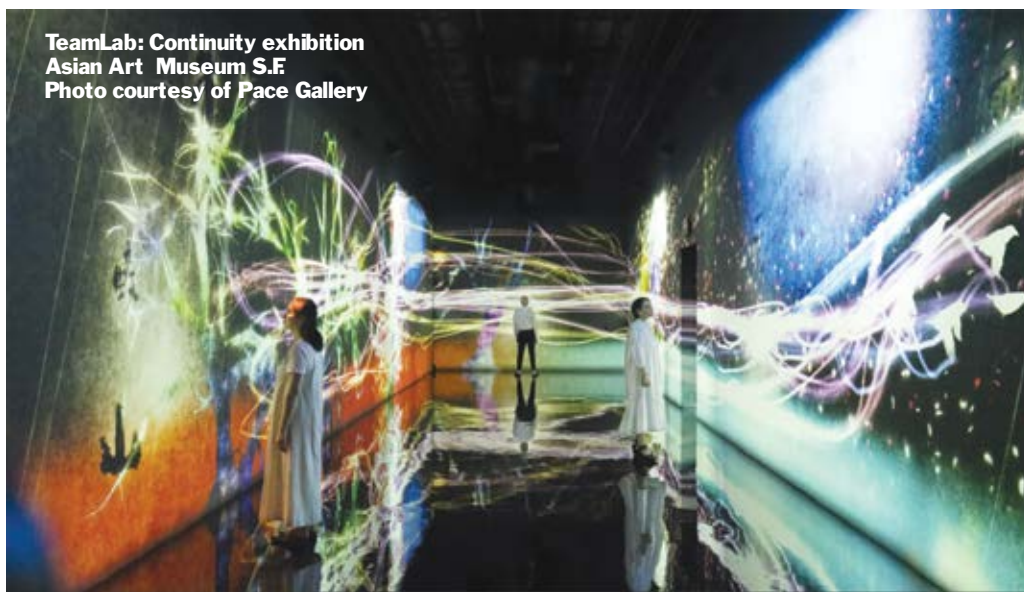
The critically acclaimed collection features over 70 works of art made exclusively from one of the most recognizable toys in the world -- the LEGO® brick. Tickets are available now online at www.artofthebrickexhibit.com



"Intermission, OnStage" from 1879 by Jean-Louis Forain is currently on display at Sacramento's Crocker Art Museum.



The Art of Banksy Exhibition
Photo courtesy of The Art of Banksy



TeamLab: Continuity exhibition
Asian Art Museum S.F.
Photo courtesy of Pace Gallery



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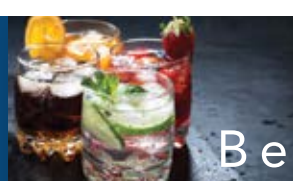
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My Gay Life, Prelude: Meeting Guys in the Boonies Wasn't Easy

A Tale By John Daniel

A bouncer herded us out the back door and down an alley. The bar was closing for the night. I couldn't believe it. Fifty years old and I'd stayed awake long enough to close down the bar. Someone must have been spiking my Bailey's Irish Cream with Ensure.

As we passed the obligatory trash bins, feral cats, and grumbling homeless people, my friend ducked behind an abandoned car to light a cigarette.

"Do you know what all this reminds me of?" he asked.

I know I should have kept my mouth shut, but I couldn't resist, "Your first time?" I retorted.

The old-timers around us laughed hysterically, but the 20-somethings? OMG: They threw so much glare my way, I thought I'd suddenly stumbled into a mirror ball factory.

"So sad," one guy whispered to himself, "no wonder the Straights think we're all pervs."

"What a pathetic way to live," opined another.

How I wished that these youngsters had cut me a little slack. They obviously didn't get the point behind my gallows humor: Back in our day, it was extremely difficult to meet people and even harder to find any privacy.

I came of age in a rural town in the early '80s. I had no idea who was gay and who wasn't. The odds of meeting a random partner on the street were astronomical. You had to meet the right guy at the right time, at the right place, under the right circumstances, and drop the right hints. (Yes, there was a pre-Internet version of Grindr available, but deciphering enigmatic messages scratched into truck stop walls just wasn't my thing.)

If I was lucky enough to meet someone, the next step was to figure out where to go. Back then, few venues were available,

so "date night" for me inevitably involved parked cars, lonely country roads, cornfields, barns, and – in one instance – a very amused highway patrol officer.

I know, I know. Your high-tech, modern-day online trysts don't always end on a high note either, but at least y'all get a two-minute warning before the computer battery goes dead. Back in my day, cops didn't afford us such a courtesy: They liked to wait until the last second before flipping on the klieg lights.

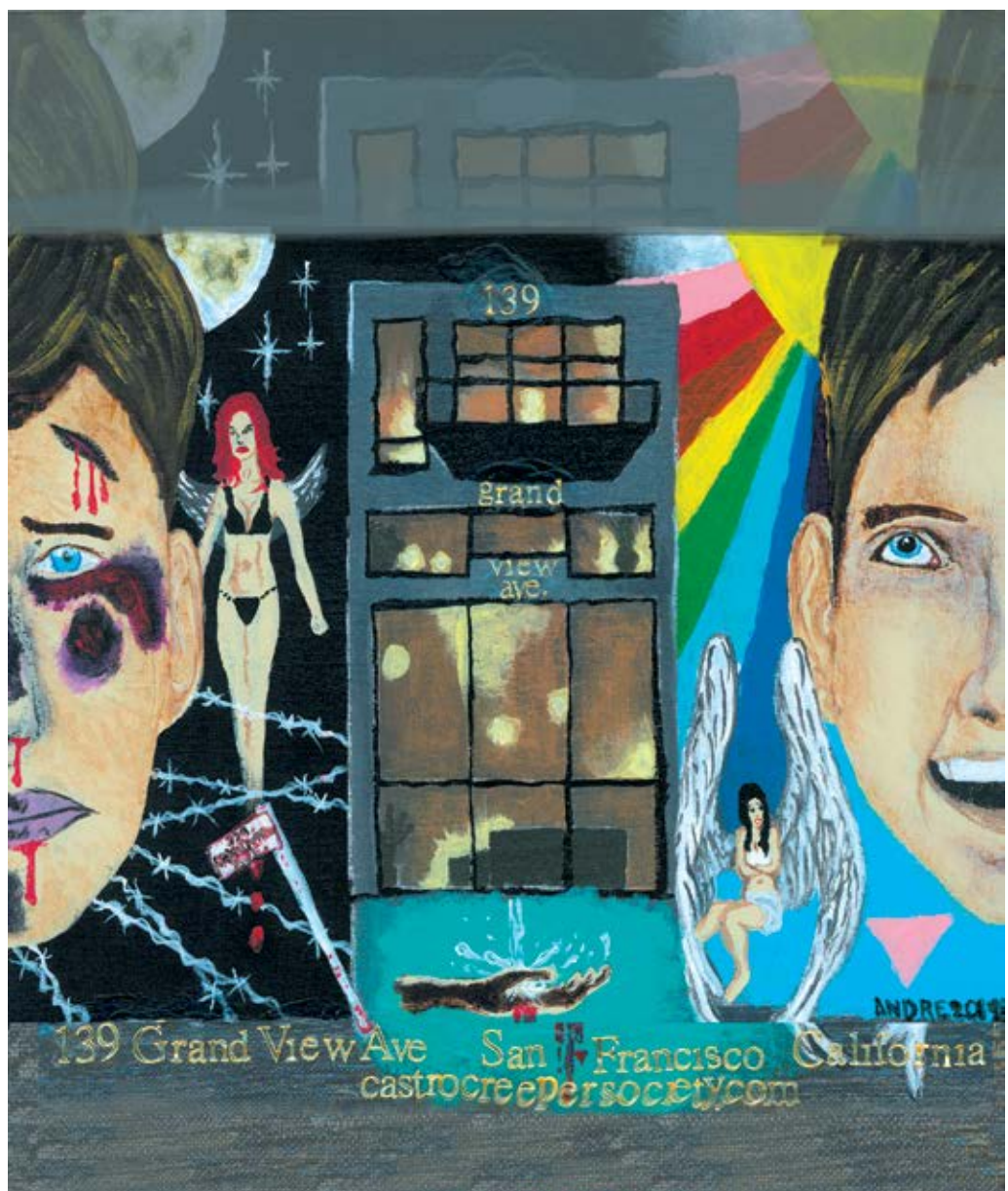
"Why not just hang out at a gay bar," you ask?

I had no idea where the gay bars were. You couldn't just Google their location back then. I searched the highways and byways for years but with no luck.

Then came the breakthrough. During my sophomore year in college, the local TV news reported that a shooting had taken place at a certain downtown drinking establishment. While my dorm mates mocked and lampooned the drag queens and other patrons who were being interviewed, I quietly jotted down the bar's address. A few days later, I stepped into my first gay club. I was 23.

Nowadays you can simply ask your smartphone for directions to the bar. Or print out a Google map. Or call a married Republican senator.

Indeed, when it comes to connecting with other gay people, you young guns have it made, and that's why I'd like to ask y'all a favor: Show us older guys a little empathy. We were young once too, and we did the best we could given the limitations of the day.



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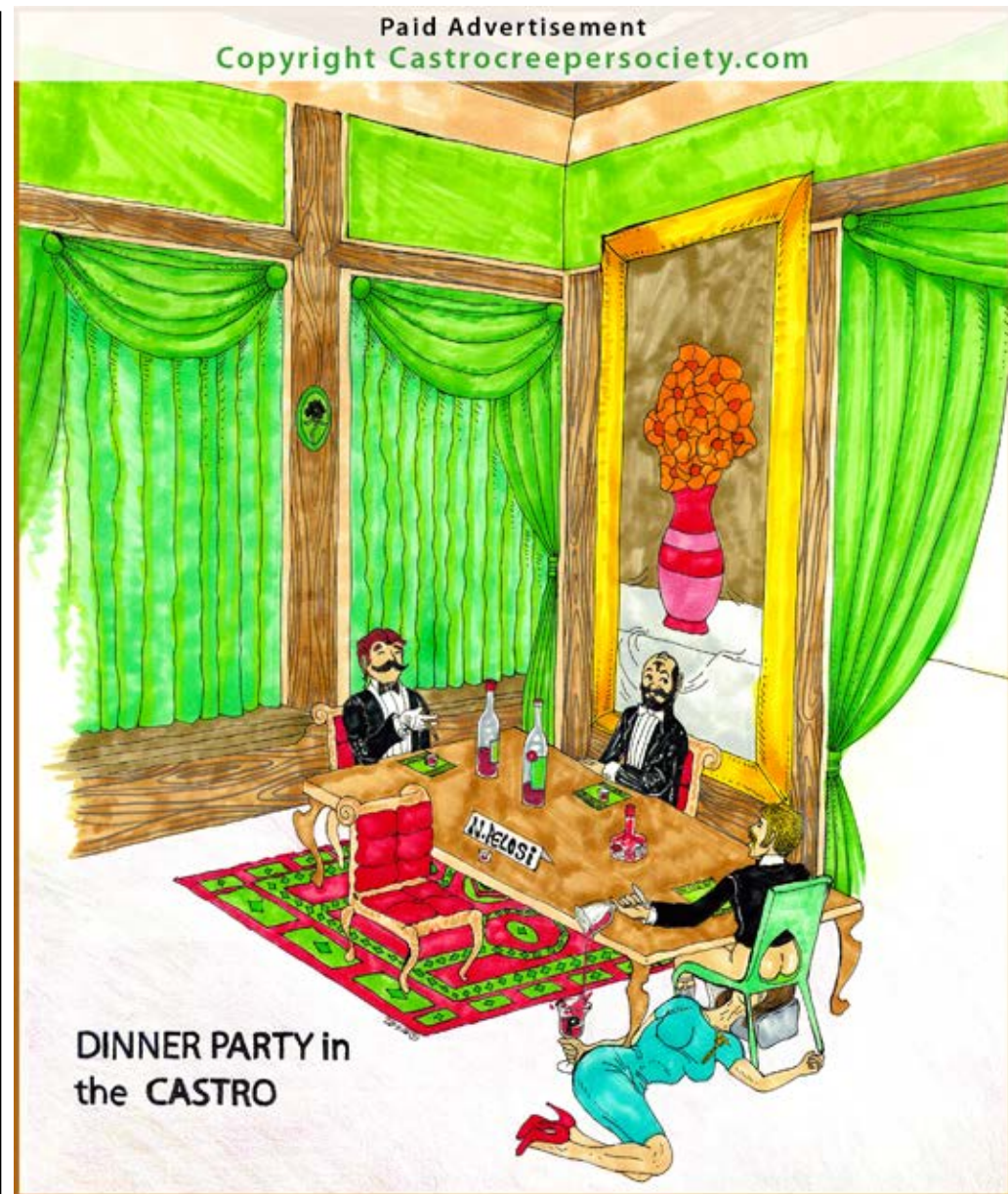
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TOGETHER WE CAN END HIV

There are more options than ever to prevent and treat HIV.

The medications used to treat people with HIV can reduce the amount of virus to **undetectable** levels. When the virus is undetectable, HIV is not passed through sex.

And for people who don't have HIV, **PrEP** is a once a day pill that prevents HIV infection.

Come and see us at One Community Health for **HIV testing** or to get on **PrEP**. Call **916 443-3299** to schedule an appointment or get more information.

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