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Outword



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Gavin Newsom Pledges to Continue His Fight For Democracy and Inclusion

photos by Chris Allan
words by Chris Narloch

On January 6, 2023, Gavin Newsom turned his second inauguration as Governor of California into a March for Democracy, to stand in peaceful contrast to the violent insurrection and assault on U.S. freedom that occurred two years ago.

The event was specifically planned for the two-year anniversary of January 6th, when supporters of former President Donald Trump stormed the U.S. Capitol. About 1,000 people were expected to attend the event, including Governor Newsom, his family, and a large group of ticketed supporters that marched across the Tower Bridge.

The group included a drum line and Mexican-American civil rights leader Dolores Huerta, with music for the ceremony

provided by the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir. Newsom's four children led the Pledge of Allegiance, and First Partner Jennifer Siebel-Newsom recited the poem "Together We Go, California" (by Juan Felipe Herrera & Lee Herrick).

Gov. Newsom's address touched on his personal background as a descendent of Irish immigrants, the history of diversity and inclusion in California, and the mistakes made in the past with various groups,

including Native, Queer and Asian-Americans.

The Governor spoke of recent threats to democracy, stating that "...there are still forces in America that want to take the nation backward. We saw that two years ago, on this day, when the unthinkable happened at a place most Americans assumed was invincible. An insurrectionist mob ransacking a sacred pillar of our democracy, violently clashing with sworn officers upholding the rule of law," Newsom said.

The Governor also reaffirmed his commitment to diversity, inclusion, and LGBTQ rights in the face of increasing efforts to roll back those rights. "When we started issuing same-sex marriage licenses in San Francisco in 2004, it felt like history was

moving at light-speed," he said. "But it was snatched away by the backlash in 2008," when California passed Proposition 8, a same-sex marriage ban that was eventually ruled unconstitutional by the federal courts.

Barbara Brass (the wife of Col. Pat Thompson, of "Surviving the Silence" fame), brought a rainbow flag and her close friend Ellen Debach-Riley to the ceremony and expressed their gratitude for the Governor's commitment to the queer community.

"He let us get married in '04 - that was our first wedding - so I feel great about him for sentimental reasons and for all the things he's done for our state over the years," Brass said. "So I'm thrilled that he's staying in office."





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What's Coming With Housing Laws In 2023

by Steven Yoder

The numbers on California's housing crisis keep trending the wrong way. The percentage of the state's homebuyers who can afford to buy a median-priced, single-family home slid from 24% in first quarter 2022 to 16% in the second. Homelessness in Sacramento spiked 67% between 2019 and 2022, a June count found. In an April poll, Californians ranked housing affordability and homelessness No. 1 and No. 2 as the state's most urgent issues.

Still, state legislative experts didn't expect much of 2022 for housing after a breakthrough 2021. Last year, the legislature passed major laws – especially Senate Bills 9, 10 and 478 – that mostly eliminated single-family zoning and limited rules that had stymied housing production. "Everyone thought this [2022] would be a quiet year," says Muhammad Alameldin, a policy associate at the Turner Center for Housing Innovation at UC Berkeley.

Instead, the legislature passed three marquee housing bills – two opening up commercial zones for residential housing development and one eliminating parking requirements for new developments near transit – that had died the previous year. In the end it was, says Alameldin, an "amazing housing legislative year."

The state's housing disaster may have continued unabated in 2022, but legislators responded with another raft of laws to get more built. Here's what housing experts say were the most important bills passed this year and what's coming as a result.

Assembly Bill 2011 and Senate Bill 6

In the search for land on which to erect housing, policy experts say commercial areas now zoned for strip malls and retail could catalyze economic growth. That's especially true with more sales shifting from brick and mortar to e-commerce, a trend accelerated by the pandemic. Commercial zones are ideal because they're often closer to jobs, amenities and transit. But 41 percent of commercial zones in the state's largest cities forbid residential development.

In 2021, two bills to fix that stalled: AB 115 and SB 6 – in part because of opposition from construction labor unions over a lack of requirements that developers pay prevailing wages and hire mostly unionized workers. This year's versions, AB 2011 and SB 6, also looked set to die in late August. The two bills split labor groups, with carpenters' unions

supporting AB 2011 because it would provide workers affordable housing and the State Building and Construction Trades Council of California supporting SB 6 because of its stricter labor requirements.

Rather than pick one or the other, legislators passed both.

AB 2011, introduced by Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, creates a streamlined approval process for developers but contains strict affordability requirements. Specifically, it allows two kinds of multifamily unit development: projects in which every unit is affordable and projects in which people of mixed-incomes are eligible. The affordable projects will be subject to 45- to 55-year deed restrictions that guarantee that they can't be converted to market rate properties during those periods. And the mixed-income units require that 13% to 15% of their units be set aside for lower-income, very low-income and extremely low-income households.

In return, these projects will be approved "by right" – with approval decisions mostly taken out of the hands of local governments – a provision that cuts the time required to build by about 30%, says Alameldin. They'll also be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act, which housing proponents say has sometimes been abused to stop worthy projects.

AB 2011 found widespread support among YIMBY groups.

Like AB 2011, SB 6 also establishes residential housing as an allowable use on land now zoned for office and retail. Unlike AB 2011, it has no affordability requirements, though projects must comply with existing state and local affordability laws. Also unlike AB 2011, it requires developers to comply with local parking, design, and other requirements and makes their projects subject to CEQA.

Both bills take effect on July 1, 2023.

Assembly Bill 2097

Parking is a huge issue in getting more housing built. Requiring developers to provide a minimum amount of off-street parking with each new affordable unit significantly drives up their cost – by \$36,000 per apartment unit on average, according to one Turner Center analysis. AB 2097, a version of which failed in 2021, tries to fix that by prohibiting local governments from imposing minimum parking requirements on specified residential, commercial and other developments located within a half-mile of public transit.

Except in specific circumstances, cities and counties can still impose parking requirements on developments in these zones by showing specific need, such as that not imposing parking minimums would

negatively affect their ability to meet any special housing needs of elderly residents or people with disabilities. The law has no affordable housing requirement.

"We think it was a tough bill to pass, but it was a breakthrough for parking reform," says Michael Lane, state policy director at the San Francisco Bay Area Planning and Urban Research Association, or SPUR.

Assembly Bill 2334

The state's density bonus law was enacted in 1979 to encourage developers to produce affordable housing at below-market rates. In return for including a certain percentage of affordable units for low-income households and other special populations like veterans with disabilities, developers could build additional units above the jurisdiction's allowable zoned density.

To promote affordable infill housing, in 2019 the legislature passed AB 1763, which allowed for an enhanced density bonus—unlimited density and a height increase. It applied to affordable housing projects located within a half-mile of transit and in which 80% of units were set aside for lower-income households.

But many urbanized parts of the state didn't qualify because they didn't have the necessary level of public transit.

To fix that, among other provisions AB 2334 extends AB 1763's density bonus to new housing developments in 17 specified urban counties, including Sacramento County, if the planned project is located in an urban area where residents drive less than average – a metric called "vehicle miles traveled." It's a move toward "smart growth," says Lane. "It allows us to get that additional density, help with project feasibility, and provide more housing in the right places."

Senate Bill 897

Since 2016 accessory dwelling units (second units added to existing properties) have been permitted by right in California. Local governments must approve permit applications for ADUs within 60 days in areas zoned residential or mixed-use, as long as they meet certain exterior access, size and setback requirements. The laws passed in 2016 supercharged their construction: ADU permits grew from 1,300 in 2016 to almost 15,000 in 2019.

Still their share of the overall housing stock remains tiny. So SB 897 (which takes effect Jan. 1) makes numerous changes to make their construction easier. Among other things, it raises minimum heights that local governments can impose on ADUs, under certain circumstances, to make two-story construction feasible. It clarifies that

Housing in 2023
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Sexual Health - Know Your HIV/STD Status

by Chey Mongeon, Education, Outreach & Prevention Coordinator for Sunburst Projects

Safe sex is a concept that most of us are familiar with. But our education on the topic isn't always comprehensive. Wear condoms, use birth control, limit your partners, or abstain altogether. While none of this is bad advice, it tends to ignore a very important facet of prevention: STI testing.

Many of us probably don't think that we need to get tested. Maybe we always use condoms or have been with the same partner for a long time. Unfortunately, that's not always the case. The CDC recommends that anyone who is sexually active get tested at least every six months for STIs or every three months for people with multiple partners.

Testing is the key to prevention. Many STDs are asymptomatic and you might not know that you have them. Even though you might know the signs of chlamydia or syphilis, your body might not show any of them. You can't tell if you or a partner has an STD just by looking. In some cases, you can have an STD for months or years before you start to feel sick.

Most STDs are easy to treat and cure, but the longer they go undiagnosed the more serious the complications can become. The infections can cause infertility, chronic inflammation, organ damage, birth defects, and neurological complications. You also have a higher risk of contracting further infections if you're living with an undiagnosed STI.

The truth is that STDs are far more prevalent than most people would think. There's a stigma surrounding them that says only certain people can catch STDs. That you have to be slutty or dirty or risky or gay in order to contract an STI. This simply is not the case: 2018 data shows that roughly 1 in 5 people in America currently have an STI. The COVID-19 pandemic only increased these numbers with so many testing sites being closed and in-person appointments being restricted. Sacramento has shown a sharp increase in syphilis and gonorrhea infections since the start of the pandemic, as well as a rise in HIV.

HIV, while no longer the death sentence it was thirty years ago, is still a serious chronic

condition that will impact the rest of your life. It is critical that sexually active people add HIV testing to their healthcare to-do list. Sacramento continues to be a hot-spot for HIV infections with a rise in heterosexual cis-women becoming infected. In many cases, HIV testing is still an opt-in STI screening, meaning that unless you ask for it, you may not be tested for it. The good news is that it's very easy to protect yourself from HIV.

If you haven't already heard about PrEP, here's the lowdown. PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) is a medication you can take that makes you 99.9% less likely to contract HIV. It is approved for use by every gender, cis or trans. It can be taken daily in pill form (Truvada or Descovy) or via bi-monthly injection (Apretude). Every California resident is eligible for free or low-cost PrEP and health insurance is required to cover some form of the medication. Even if you don't have insurance, there are programs that will allow you to access PrEP so that you can know that you're doing everything possible to keep yourself safe and healthy.

Bottom line: testing is just as critical to STI protection as condoms. We want you to have a safe, healthy sex life and part of that is getting tested regularly. If you're worried about the cost: we got you. A quick Google search can show you multiple sites where you can get tested for HIV and STIs for free. You can visit us at Sunburst Clinic where we offer free, confidential, walk-in testing from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. While you're here, you can pick up free condoms and lube and talk to us about PrEP. We offer free PrEP starter packs and we can connect you with PrEP navigators to help you get your meds. You can find us at 2143 Hurley Way, Suite 240 or visit: www.SunburstClinic.org for more information



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A Glimmer of Health Hope Amidst A Viral 'Triple-Demic'

by Joyce Mitchell

As hospitals and college campuses throughout northern California feel the strain from COVID, flu and RSV, many businesses are installing condom dispensers to curb new HIV and STD infections. Capital City AIDS Fund (CCAF) just donated dispensers to the Sacramento LGBT Center and to Student Health and Counseling Services at UC Davis.



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UC Davis Health Promotion Specialist Blake Flaughter, MPH, CHES said that the college has been partnering with CCAF for more than a decade. "Safer sex product distribution programs are a backbone of any sexual health initiative, and have been established as an effective, evidence-based way to reduce STIs/HIV and unintended pregnancy for decades," said Flaughter. "They not only improve access to health resources, but also reduce stigma."

CCAF's dispensers are an effective way to distribute condoms. They are sturdy, locked containers that allow for distribution of only a few condoms at a time so people don't grab handfuls.

Health messaging often is placed on the front of the plexiglass containers that can be easily mounted on walls. Flaughter said that the dispensers provide quick and easy access to safer sex products including condoms, dental dams and lube. The messaging on each dispenser also provides links to sexual health resources and information.

At the LGBT Center, dispensers are debuting this new year at about ten locations throughout the Sacramento area. They've been installed in a variety of businesses and organizations including Sac Buddies, Valley Hi-North Laguna Library, and a Sacramento

barbershop. "In my opinion, condom distribution, through the partnerships we've made, is important because it gives folks access who may not have had it before," said Aaron Armer, lead sexual health counselor/case manager at the center.

Armer continued, "We can discreetly send condoms, lube and other barriers out to clients who request them through saccenter.org/sexual-health for FREE. This is important because it's a key resource in the effort to reduce STI transmissions in the greater Sacramento area."

CCAF donates the innovative dispensers to promote sexual health in the Sacramento region. Funds received from selling them nationwide to public health departments, non-profit agencies and college campuses are invested back into the area via the donations.

"The dispensers are education and prevention rolled into one," said CCAF Board Member Ted Ross. "We know we're saving lives given the high volume of condoms given away annually. The fact that more and more, businesses are wanting to protect the sexual health of their patrons is very encouraging."

A glimmer of health hope - for the New Year.

River Bend Can Assist with Healthy Choices for 2023

by Kristian Borofka D.O.

I'm sitting here in front of my computer and the New Year's upon us; a whole 12 months of change, growth, and change in health. Not only did I continue to take care of my ever-growing child, but I redefined what health means to me. I went from health being pure physical, to remembering health is a combination of mental, spiritual, and physical wellbeing. To take care of this new personal definition of health, I, like so many people around this time of year, want to start the year off right—with a resolution.



Doctor Borofka and Family

It's easy to make broad, general resolutions of "I will eat healthier," "I will be in the gym EVERY day (Rona be damned)," and while the intention behind these statements is good, they are nearly impossible to keep up with in daily life. Instead, a practice of making small specific goals can be more realistic and more obtainable to achieve visions of continued health and happiness.

In the past several decades, researchers continued to expand our understanding on the best ways of making goals and obtaining them. The most common system has a delightful acronym called SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time sensitive.

Specific: clearly defined or identified goal. No grand idea, just one object or activity at a time. So, going to the gym becomes using the treadmill, stair master, or rowing machine.

Measurable: how many times you will do something (not too little that you forget, not too much to be overwhelming). Usually for most people that number is more than once, but less than four. Take that with a grain of salt...

Achievable: You can do it, but it's a stretch! Not a brand-new skill but something you know how to do and build upon. You know how to walk, but you need to do more of it

during the week or trying to jog.

Relevant: You are not already doing your goal. (AKA no cheating! if you are already walking, pick something else: running, squatting, weightlifting, etc).

Time Sensitive: give yourself a REASONABLE deadline. Meaning goals take time. Build up to it.

Common examples I hear from my coworkers this time of year are: "I am going to do 50 squats on my lunch during the work week over the next month." "I am going to bring a chicken salad twice a week for the next 2 months." Much better than going to the gym daily or eating healthier—ill-defined and unhelpful to making actual changes.

Does this work for everyone? No. But does this give you some tools to work up to obtaining wide reaching goals? Yes. Give it time, make your goals small, reasonable, something you want to build up to, and something you are not already doing. As the cliché goes, Rome was not built in a day, and neither is health. One small change over the course of weeks and months creates sustainable improvement in health. For me, my goal is to get back on my bike twice a week the next six weeks. I will check in with y'all in February.

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Yolo Food Bank Provides Disaster-Relief Grocery Cards to Vulnerable Residents Experiencing Power Outages During Winter Storms

Yolo Food Bank and its partner agencies are coordinating the distribution of 925 disaster relief grocery cards valued at \$40 each for residents impacted by power outages due to the atmospheric river storm impacting California. Designed to supply households with emergency and replacement food, the cards will be distributed by local partner agencies, made possible with financial support from PG&E.

Yolo Food Bank has identified partner agencies located in the affected zip codes (provided by PG&E), who are consistently serving residents with access and functional needs facing food insecurity. If you live in the cities of Clarksburg, Davis, Knights Landing, West Sacramento, Woodland, Yolo, or Zamora and have been affected by the recent power outages, please contact the partner agency listed in your city below. Gift cards are available on a first come, first served basis.

The atmospheric river storm has left many residents of Yolo County with extended power outages following last week's severe wind and rain. With support from PG&E, Yolo Food Bank and its local partner agencies will provide gift cards to local grocery stores located in the vicinity of affected households including Raley's (Woodland, Knights Landing, Yolo, Zamora), Walmart (Clarksburg), Nugget Markets (Woodland, Davis), and Grocery Outlet (West

Sacramento).
If you or a friend or family member are experiencing these difficulties, please contact the organization listed in your city below to obtain a disaster relief grocery card, while supplies last. If you need additional food assistance please call 2-1-1 - this resource is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Or visit yolofodbank.org/findfood.

- To be eligible for a disaster relief grocery card, individuals must:
- Be a resident of any city listed below that has been affected by the power outage.
 - Disaster relief grocery cards are available while supplies last

Grocery Gift Card Distribution Locations

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- Knights Landing**
- Empower Yolo | 9596 Mill St, Knights Landing, CA | (530) 661-6336
- West Sacramento**
- Yolo County Children's Alliance | 1200 Anna St, West Sacramento, CA | (916) 572-0560
 - Mercy Coalition | 3605 Gregory Ave, West Sacramento, CA | (916) 509-3566
- Woodland**
- Yolo Food Bank | 233 Harter Ave Woodland, CA | (530) 668-0690
 - Woodland Volunteer Food Closet | 40 N East St Suite C, Woodland, CA | (530) 662-7020

- Meals on Wheels | 40 N East St Suite C, Woodland, CA | (530) 662-7035
 - Kentucky Avenue Church of Christ | 470 Kentucky Ave, Woodland, CA | (530) 661-7488
 - Holy Rosary | 575 California St, Woodland, CA | (530) 662-2805
 - Renuvo Food Closet | 240 N West St, Woodland, CA | (530) 662-7020
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- Yolo Branch Library | 37750 Sacramento St, Yolo, CA | (530) 662-2363

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Yolo Food Bank partners with Feeding America, a national non-profit with a network of more than 200 food banks, and annually serves the nutritional needs of tens of thousands Yolo County residents. Working with a network of passionate volunteers, committed donors, grocers, retailers, farmers, processors and food distributors, Yolo Food Bank recovers, collects and stores more than eleven million pounds of food each year. It distributes that food each month through direct distributions and more than 75 local partner agencies, including senior meal delivery programs, homeless and domestic violence shelters, migrant centers, college campuses, mental health facilities, recovery centers and more. To learn more about Yolo Food Bank please visit: <https://yolofoodbank.org/>

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Out & About with Matt Burlingame

So apparently there was a little rain the past couple weeks that has everyone buzzing. Many of us dealt with the aftermath including power and internet outages, flooding and repairs. This is shaping up to be one of the worst storm seasons in Northern California ever. But no global warming, right? Hopefully, you are all safe and sound. Barring more wild weather, there are some great events coming up to, hopefully, help you de-stress.

The best event each month is the *Outword's* Liquid Therapy Happy Hour on Friday, Jan. 13 at 5:30 p.m. at Badlands Sacramento, 2003 K St. Celebrate the New Year with your old friends, drink specials, giveaways and community.

The very next night on Saturday, Jan. 14 at 10 p.m. Badlands busts out the Man Candy with hot featured Go-gos, lit music and a night of non-stop fun. badlandssac.com

On Monday, Jan. 16 at 7:30 p.m. the amazing Macy Gray takes the stage at the Crest Theatre, 1013 K St. Having sung backup for artists including Al Green, Michael Jackson, David Bowie and Prince, she is known for her unique vocal styling. Crestsacramento.com

The 2023 Rainbow Chamber networking mixers are off to a fabulous start on Tuesday, Jan. 17 at 6 p.m. as Brite Ideas, 5675 Power Inn Rd. plays host for the evening's festivities. The business specializes in furnishings and home accents. There will be hosted appetizers and wine. The event is free for members and \$10 for non-members.

The Colonial Theatre will slay you Saturday, Jan. 21 at 1 p.m. as Bloody Beth plays host to the 16th edition of the Sacramento Horror Film Festival and the Love Horror Short Film Festival. Blood soaked celluloid returns to the local big screen! Come and go as you please or enjoy a full day of big screen terror with a carefully curated line-up of the best independent horror films from across the globe. Sachorrorfilmfest.com

It's a look at one of the most influential figures of the 20th century. Martin Media presents Churchill at the Harris Center, 10 College Pkwy in Folsom on Saturday, Jan. 21, 2023 at 2 p.m. A funny, touching and engaging one-man-show, veteran British actor David Payne brings to life Churchill's exploits during the Boer War, battles with politicians, and his relationships with both his wife Clementine and Queen Elizabeth. Harriscenter.net

Experience the thrill of fashion week with this haute couture edition of ArtMix Thursday, Jan. 12 at 6 p.m. at the Crocker



Photo courtesy of David Garibaldi.

Museum, 216 O St. Inspired by the iconic runway creations and behind-the-scenes photography on view in Lee Alexander McQueen & Ann Ray: Rendez-Vous. Models strut the catwalk with live fashion shows while DJs battle for the best beats. A glamorous make-over bar, pop-up shops, and experiential digital art are just a few of the surprises that await at this one-night only celebration of design, fashion, and virtual reality! crockerart.org

Punk and ska collide Friday, Jan. 13 at 8 p.m. when L.A.'s Goldfinger, La Habra's Zebrahead, and Montreal's The Planet Smashers come together for a night of ear-splitting fun at The UC Theatre, 2036 University in Berkeley. Theucetheatre.org
The Lavender Library, 1414 21st St.

presents a queer comedy show featuring BIPOC and trans comics on Wednesday, Jan. 18 at 7 p.m. Lavenderlibrary.com

Performance painter David Garibaldi will be in Stockton for a one-night show to benefit the Stockton Animal Protection League. The collision of music and color live on stage while splashing paint together to create large-scale portraits in minutes through his body movement and brushes while communicating via music to an amazed audience. These performances are both mesmerizing and engaging and there is nothing like it in the world. Garibaldi's show will be at the Bob Hope Theatre, 242 E Main St. in Stockton on Saturday, Jan. 28 at 6 p.m.

Events, birthdays, announcements? Send them to matthew@hengemedia.com.

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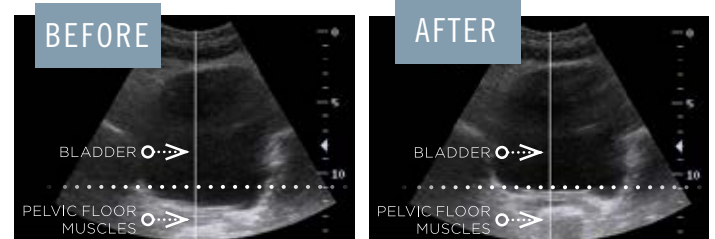
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FRIDAY | FEB 03



SATURDAY | FEB 04



FRIDAY | FEB 10



SATURDAY | FEB 11



THURSDAY | FEB 16



FRIDAY | FEB 17

Crest CLASSIC MOVIES

THE THING (1982)
THURSDAY, JAN 12, 7:00PM

DOUBLE FEATURE

TOP GUN (1986)
SATURDAY, JAN 14, 5:00PM

TOP GUN: MAVERICK (2022)
SATURDAY, JAN 14, 7:15PM

A KNIGHT'S TALE (2001)
SUNDAY, JAN 15, 3:00PM

AMERICAN UTOPIA (2020)
THURSDAY, JAN 19, 7:00PM

SUSPIRIA (1977)
FRIDAY, JAN 20, 7:00PM

MUSICAL MONDAYS SINGIN' IN THE RAIN (1952)
MONDAY, JAN 23, 6:00PM

VHCREST PRESENTS FIRE AND ICE (1986)
THURSDAY, JAN 26, 7:00PM

THE BIG LEBOWSKI (1998)
SATURDAY, JAN 28, 7:00PM

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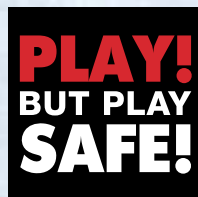
An important safer sex practice is to get tested regularly. STDs are at very high levels. Make it a habit to get tested every 3-6 months.

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- SunburstClinic.org**
- SacCenter.org/sexual-health**
- SacGRS.org**

* New California law for 2022, requires all insurance to cover the cost of at-home STD testing.



Tom Cruise Times Two at the Crest Plus, Brendan Fraser at the Tower

by Chris Narloch

There are so many exciting film events coming down the pike, that it's hard to keep up with them all. Lucky for you, Outword is here to break it all down.

Two of today's most popular pop acts, BTS and Billie Eilish, have separate big-screen concert events coming soon to a theater near you. "BTS: Yet to Come in Cinemas" will begin screening globally on Feb. 1st. Go to www.btsyettocomeincinemas.com

"Billie Eilish Live at The O2 (Extended Cut)" will be screened in movie theaters worldwide for one night only, on January 27th. Visit: www.billieattheo2.com

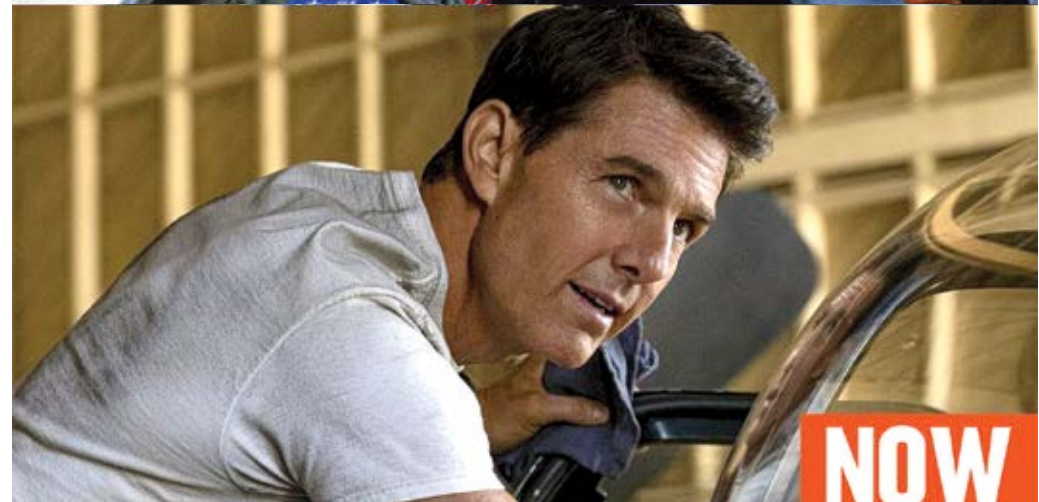
Over in Oakland, at the Grand Lake Theatre, this Jan. 20-29, you can check out the 20th Anniversary edition of the amazing "Noir City" film festival, featuring a ten-day-and-night schedule of classic films, all from one year, 1948, meaning every movie will be celebrating its 75th anniversary. Visit www.NoirCity.com

Closer to home, two of Sacramento's historic movie theatres also have fine films to offer, and you can read more about that below.

Crest Theatre

You can get a double dose of Mr. Hollywood himself, Tom Cruise, this month, when Sacramento's Crest Theatre presents a back-to-back "Top Gun" doubleheader. Much has been written about how Cruise saved movie theaters last year, thanks to the phenomenal box-office success of his sequel to the 1986 original "Top Gun."

It was more than baby boomer nostalgia that made the new movie a hit, however. "Top Gun: Maverick" has better direction and a better script than the first movie. You can compare the two films and decide for yourself - and marvel at how well Mr. Cruise has aged - the evening of Jan. 14th, beginning at 5:00 p.m. To purchase tickets, go to <https://crestsacramento.com>



Tower Theatre

Brendan Fraser, who is six years younger than Tom Cruise, doesn't look as tasty as Tom, especially in Fraser's new movie, "The Whale," which finds the formerly hunky actor from "The Mummy" franchise and "George of the Jungle" sporting a very realistic-looking fat suit to play a dying man who is morbidly obese.

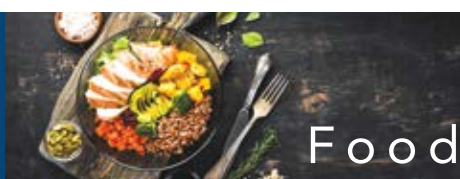
In my 59 years on this planet, I don't believe I have ever seen a more depressing movie than "The Whale," which takes place, almost entirely, inside one dark, dingy domicile, where Fraser's sad, sedentary shut-in binge-eats pizza, watches porn, and teaches classes online to students who cannot see what he looks like because his camera is turned off.

The director of "The Whale," Darren Aronofsky, specializes in dark, disturbing subject matter, but he has made fine films ("Black Swan," "Pi," "Requiem for a Dream") and movies that are almost unwatchable ("Mother!"). Sadly, "The Whale" is the latter.

The film's saving grace is Brendan Fraser, who is such a likable presence onscreen, in almost every one of his films, that he somehow rises above this contrived script and offers a powerful, complex, even award-worthy portrait of a severely damaged human being. That takes talent.

Also at the Tower, if it's still playing when you read this, don't miss "Corsage," a surprisingly hip historical drama about how women are too often judged by their looks, featuring a fascinating Vicky Krieps as a fictionalized version of Empress Elisabeth of Austria. Visit:

www.angelikafilmcenter.com/tower



Sacramento's Exclusive Dining Experience "Dine Downtown" Returns In January With New Restaurants

Downtown Sacramento Partnership's highly anticipated annual restaurant promotion, Dine Downtown, will return for its 18th year, January 13 through January 22, 2023. Welcoming seven new restaurants to the program, the 31 restaurants (and counting!) will have the option to serve Dine Downtown's popular three-course, prix fixe menus for dinner for a flat \$45. Plus, several participating restaurants will host special guest chefs and menus only offered during those two weeks, solidifying Dine Downtown as an exclusive and coveted experience that is uniquely Sacramento. As an added value to restaurant goers, the first 2,000 diners will receive limited edition SWAG.

In addition, Downtown Sacramento Partnership is partnering with the Food Literacy Center as the official charity partner of Dine Downtown. \$1 from every meal sold from a Dine Downtown menu will be donated to the Food Literacy Center, which teaches children in low-income elementary schools cooking, nutrition, gardening, and active play to improve their health, environment, and economy.

"Now more than ever is the time to support your community," said Michael Ault, Executive Director of the Downtown Sacramento Partnership. "Sacramento is home to some of the best restaurants in the country, including two newly rated Michelin restaurants. The post-holiday lull is the perfect time to opt-in to an exclusive experience that celebrates the best that the area has to offer."

Launched in 2005, Dine Downtown provides support to local restaurants during a critically important (and usually slower) period for the industry. In its nearly two decade run to-date, Dine Downtown has generated more than \$6 million in restaurant sales for central city restaurants.

Dine Downtown menus are now available online at GoDowntownSac.com/DineDowntown. Dine Downtown is produced by the Downtown Sacramento Partnership with support from USA Multifamily, Visit Sacramento & Sacramento365, FOX40, SacRT, *Outword Magazine* and Yelp Sacramento.



2023 participating restaurants include:

- Grange Restaurant & Bar
- The Pilothouse Restaurant at the Delta King
- Hawks Public House
- Hook and Ladder Manufacturing Company
- Tequila Museo Mayahuel
- Nash & Proper
- La Cosecha by Mayahuel
- Frank Fat's
- Foundation Restaurant & Bar
- Maggie Café
- Kasbah Lounge
- MidiCi Neapolitan Pizza
- Station 16 Seafood Restaurant & Bar
- Revolution Winery
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Scan to see the menus





ROBERT ALVIS

ELLIOT PRESTWICH

The Empress is back open. This message went out yesterday, and along with it, many questions. Allow me a few minutes to answer some of those. When GD Theatres Inc took over the operations of the Crest in late 2019, we didn't have any plans to operate a restaurant one day. The pandemic hit the area around us extremely hard. Most of the former restaurant spaces remain closed and empty. As 2021 ended and 2022 started, it became clear that these spaces would likely remain shuttered for a long time. Like many of you, we love the Empress; it's a beautiful space, but walking by the darkened stairs and seeing the looks on patrons' faces when they would ask about it and telling them there was no re-opening date got us thinking, "Hey, why not us?" So, we spent the last six months putting what we believe are the right pieces to re-open and re-imagine the Empress. We often hear that Empress is incredible and the Crest is excellent, but they fit together like puzzle pieces from two different puzzles. We want to change that. We are focused on offering sharable plates and entrees that concert and moviegoers will love (Seriously, try the risotto with mushrooms). The style is considerably less formal by design, but the backbones of thoughtful food and drinks will never go away. So, who is on the team? Well, there's me (Robert Alvis, the guy in the A's hat). I spent nearly 15 years at Harlow's before coming to the Crest. While at Harlow's, I met Elliot Prestwich, who often gets mistaken for me and vice versa. Together we make up GD Theatres. We are Sacramento kids who love the city, want to see it live up to its full potential, and are willing to jump into the pool with both feet to see that happen. We have also been very fortunate to find great young talent in our bar manager (Evan Erickson) and chef (Jackson Wade). Together with our dedicated staff, we are working tirelessly to see the successful return of the Empress. We hope you can make it in.

Our hours are Thurs-Sat from 4-10 pm.

We will also be open two hours before doors for any shows at the Crest, so if you're coming on Tuesday for Richard Marx, we'll see you starting at 5:30 pm.

Cheers,

Robert Alvis

General Manager for GD Theatres Inc

Experience the "Butterfly Dreamscape" at the Kennedy Gallery Exhibit

"Butterfly Dreamscape" by Judith Monroe showing at Kennedy Gallery.



One of the most majestic and fantasy inducing creatures in existence flies into the spotlight in artist Judith Monroe's "Butterfly Dreamscape" exhibit showing from Noon - 6 p.m., Jan 12. - Feb. 5 at Kennedy Gallery, 1931 L St. The gallery features work from over 18 resident artists inside three floors of open studios in the heart of Midtown's entertainment district. The gallery will be open Jan. 12 - Feb. 5, Noon - 6 p.m. Thursday - Sunday, open 10 a.m.-10 p.m. on Second Saturday.

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“M3GAN” & “Matilda the Musical” on Screens Plus, Will Smith & Whitney Houston Reviewed

by Chris Narloch

I recently enjoyed the latest Addams Family offshoot, “Wednesday,” which was most notable for a terrific lead performance by Jenna Ortega, a talented young actress who has done several horror films, including the next “Scream” movie, and has the skillset to take over Jamie Lee Curtis’s scream queen throne if she wants it.

I love good horror films, which are rare, and my first review below is for a rollercoaster ride of fun jump scares that is just out in theaters. I also write about a new movie musical, and a historical drama about slavery, plus a musical biopic of one of the greatest pop singers of all time.

M3GAN

The latest “devil doll” horror movie is a humdinger about a big company whose next big toy is used as a test companion by its creator to help her grieving niece, after the girl’s parents are killed in a car accident. Named Megan, the doll turns out to be “not ready for market,” and that’s putting it mildly.

Megan takes out anyone who threatens her young playmate, in clever kill scenes that are funny-scary and not overly gory, thanks to the film’s PG-13 rating. My favorite sequence in the movie has Megan performing a wacky interpretive dance before she rubs out the main villain.

The murderous doll was voiced by one actress and performed by another, although Megan’s eyes and skin were digitally altered to look both fake and very, very creepy. I already can’t wait for the sequel to this film. Megan is one badass bitch. Only in theaters at this point.

Emancipation

What can I say about the inflated ego of Will Smith that hasn’t already been said? I don’t know if Chris Rock would agree, but I believe in second chances, and the crazy irony is that Mr. Smith is recently doing the best acting of his long career, despite the actor’s shameful behavior at last year’s Academy Awards ceremony.

Smith was dynamite in “King Richard,” and he is also excellent in this slavery drama inspired by the true story of an escaped slave named Gordon, who became known as “Whipped Peter” after photos of his horrendously scarred back went “viral” in the 1860s and helped educate the public about the brutality of slavery.

The actual historical record of Gordon/Peter is sketchy so the filmmakers can’t really be faulted for making up some of the details in their film. The bottom line is this is a very important story, and Will Smith and director Antoine Fuqua can be proud of “Emancipation,” even with the occasional Hollywood liberties taken by the movie’s script. Available via Apple TV.

I Wanna Dance with Somebody

I was extremely skeptical when I learned that the family and estate of Whitney Houston had approved this biopic of her rocky life story because I was afraid that the results would be watered down and dumbed down.

So, I am happy to report that “Whitney Houston: I Wanna Dance with Somebody” does not blame Bobby Brown for the singer’s drug use, offers an unflinching portrait of the painful relationship she had with her father, and makes it completely clear that Whitney was bisexual and had a lengthy romantic and sexual relationship (with another woman) that was rumored about but never confirmed during her too-short life.

In addition to being more hard-hitting than I expected, the new film is also a very entertaining reminder of her career highlights, includes all her biggest hits, and features a remarkable performance by a British actress, Naomi Ackie, who isn’t a dead ringer for Houston but has her gestures, speaking voice, and performance style down pat. Currently in theaters.

Matilda the Musical

Finally, a movie that pre-teen girls and gay men can agree on! If you missed “Matilda the Musical” on stage – or if you saw it and loved it as much as I did – do not miss the sensational movie version, which is currently available on Netflix.

A fully realized film (as opposed to a filmed play), this “Matilda” soars and sings (and dances!) thanks to superb work by the great theater director Matthew Warchus and a top-notch cast.

Alisha Weir is perfectly plucky as the title character, and Lashana Lynch makes a divine Miss Honey, but it’s the great Emma Thompson who steals the film as Miss Trunchbull, a repulsive-looking and hilariously vile villainess.





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For 27 years, we have been Sacramento's resource for LGBTQ+ information, politics, entertainment and we have helped connect and maintain our community.

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 recieved after returning to print has been fantastic!

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

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“The Music of Elton John” in Auburn this February

Elton John is still wrapping up rescheduled overseas dates on his “Farewell Yellow Brick Road” tour, but he played his last U.S. show at Dodgers Stadium in November.



The show will feature Los Angeles-based pianist, Michael Sobie.

Going forward, the only way to hear Sir Elton's music live in this country will be via tribute shows by other musicians, and the Auburn State Theatre has an exciting upcoming concert featuring the multi-talented Michael Sobie, an acclaimed Los Angeles-based pianist and composer who will present Elton John's classic hits on a majestic Steinway concert grand piano.

Enjoy songs such as “Goodbye Yellow Brick Road,” “Rocket Man,” “Bennie & The Jets,” “Your Song” and many more, with renowned violinist Molly Rogers and premier percussionist Davey Chegwiddden joining Mr. Sobie on stage. All ticket sales will go directly to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) to continue fighting all forms of blood cancers around the world.

“The Music of Elton John” will perform on Sunday evening, Feb. 5, in Auburn. For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit: www.auburnstatetheatre.org

Ace of Spades Hosts Fitz and the Tantrums



After 45 years as a touring band, the Athens, GA. new wave pioneers the B-52s are retiring from touring, passing the torch to wonderful new bands like Fitz and the Tantrums, who are poised to fill the void left by the iconic band that scored massive hits such as “Roam” and “Love Shack.” Both acts are super-fun party bands that demand to be seen live, and Sacramento will get the chance to check out Fitz and the Tantrums when they headline Ace of Spades this Jan. 24th. You can expect to hear catchy songs such as “Handclap,” “Livin’ for the Weekend” and the band’s new single, “Moneymaker.” For tickets, go to: www.livenation.com/venue/KovZpZAJ6lvA/ace-of-spades-events

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Once again we would like to thank those that have become sponsors of Outword Magazine! Your contribution will help us keep the lights on and the closet doors wide open. Here are a list of our Sponsors at the level they participated, so far. We will continue to run this page, with any updates, for the next several issues.

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Housing in 2023

continued from page 4

standards imposed on ADUs must be objective and that agencies must approve or deny ADU applications within 60 days. And it limits the situations in which local agencies can deny permits for already-built but unpermitted ADUs constructed before Jan. 1, 2018, subject to certain conditions.

Senate Bill 948

This law, as Alamedin puts it, “saves something like \$500,000 to \$2.2 million by just changing one little thing in state law to allow affordable housing developers to pool reserves.” Under current law, the state’s Department of Housing and Community Development, or HCD, runs a number of programs to make housing more affordable. Those include, for example, the Multifamily Housing Program, which gives loans to local governments and developers for new construction, rehab and preservation of rental homes for lower-income households.

MHP and several other programs require developments to hold “transition reserves” to mitigate risk in case a government affordable-housing operating subsidy or voucher program expires. The reserves are meant to let the project continue rental assistance to tenants for a year while the project transitions to higher rents. But those reserves have almost never been needed.

The new law eliminates the requirement for specified individual developments to hold transition reserves – instead it authorizes the HCD to create a pooled transition reserve. That, according to bill author State Sen. Josh Becker, will free up the money to build more affordable housing and broaden its availability to people at the lowest income levels.

Assembly Bill 2094

The households in California that are most at risk of homelessness, or already are homeless, are extremely low-income (ELI) – those whose incomes are at 30% or less of the area median. In the past decade, developers have built about 20,000 housing units for this group, a fraction of the more than 300,000 units needed.

Current law requires that each city and county’s legislative body adopt a land use plan that details the need for new housing in the jurisdiction and its strategy for addressing the need. Each year, the local government’s planning agency must submit an annual progress report to the state that documents its progress toward meeting the plan’s housing goals. That report must cover progress in four income categories: very low income, low income, moderate income and above moderate income.

Now, AB 2094 requires that these reports also provide information on progress toward housing goals for ELI households.

“Paying attention to the housing supply for ELI households is central to addressing California’s homelessness challenges,” says Sara Kimberlin, senior policy fellow at the Sacramento-based California Budget & Policy Center.

Assembly Bill 2295

California’s 1,000 or so local education agencies together own more than 150,000 acres of land. About half of that land is potentially developable. At 30 residential units per acre, those properties could hold 2.3 million units of housing – more than enough to house the state’s 300,000 teachers and 350,000 other staff, an analysis of the law noted. But under existing law, housing isn’t a permissible use of that land.

AB 2295 changes that, authorizing housing as an allowable use on any property owned by education agencies. Among other requirements, qualifying sites must be in infill locations; the majority of units have to be affordable for moderate-income households, with at least 30% affordable for lower-income households; and priority must go to employees of education agencies, whether they work for the local agency or one directly adjacent. The bill doesn’t take effect till Jan. 1, 2024.

What’s the outlook?

Coupled with previous laws and others passed this year, will these make a dent? “I’ve never seen so many bills over the past few years introduced on the housing topic,” says Lane. “I think you’re going to see tens of thousands of units built that but for this legislation would have not gone forward.” But he also has worries: “There’s still significant neighborhood opposition to new development, no matter what, and the abuse of CEQA continues.”

This year’s package won’t get the state anywhere near to fixing its housing and homelessness crisis, says Christopher Martin, policy director at Sacramento-based Housing California. “AB 2011 is big in a lot of ways, but land use alone is not going to get us out of this crisis,” he says. Doing so would take about \$17.9 billion annually, according to the group’s analysis – a bit more than the \$13 billion that the state spends on its prisons, not counting local jail spending.

“We’re not getting anywhere near that,” Martin says. “We’re just doing drops in the bucket here.”

This story is part of the Solving Sacramento journalism collaborative. In 2022, we are focusing on finding solutions to the lack of affordable housing in the Sacramento region. Solving Sacramento is a project of the Local Media Foundation with support from the Solutions Journalism Network. Our partners include California Groundbreakers, Capital Public Radio, Outword, Russian America Media, Sacramento Business Journal, Sacramento News & Review, Sacramento Observer and Univision 19.

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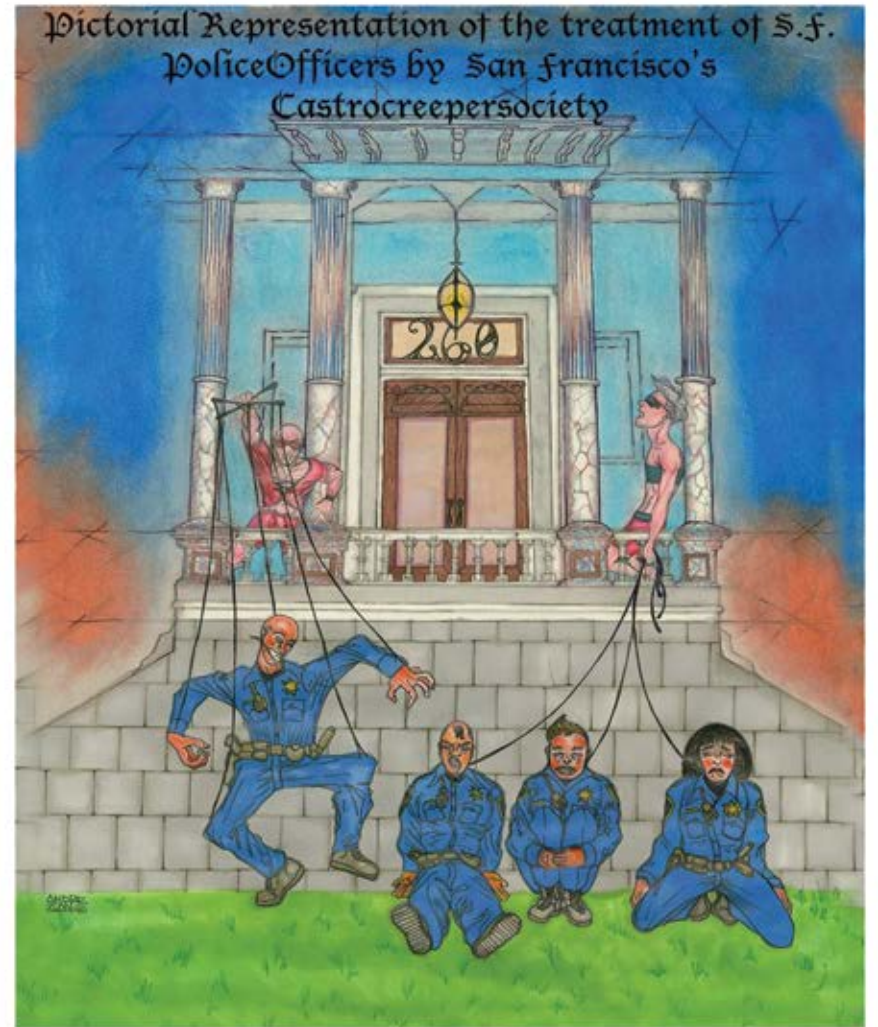
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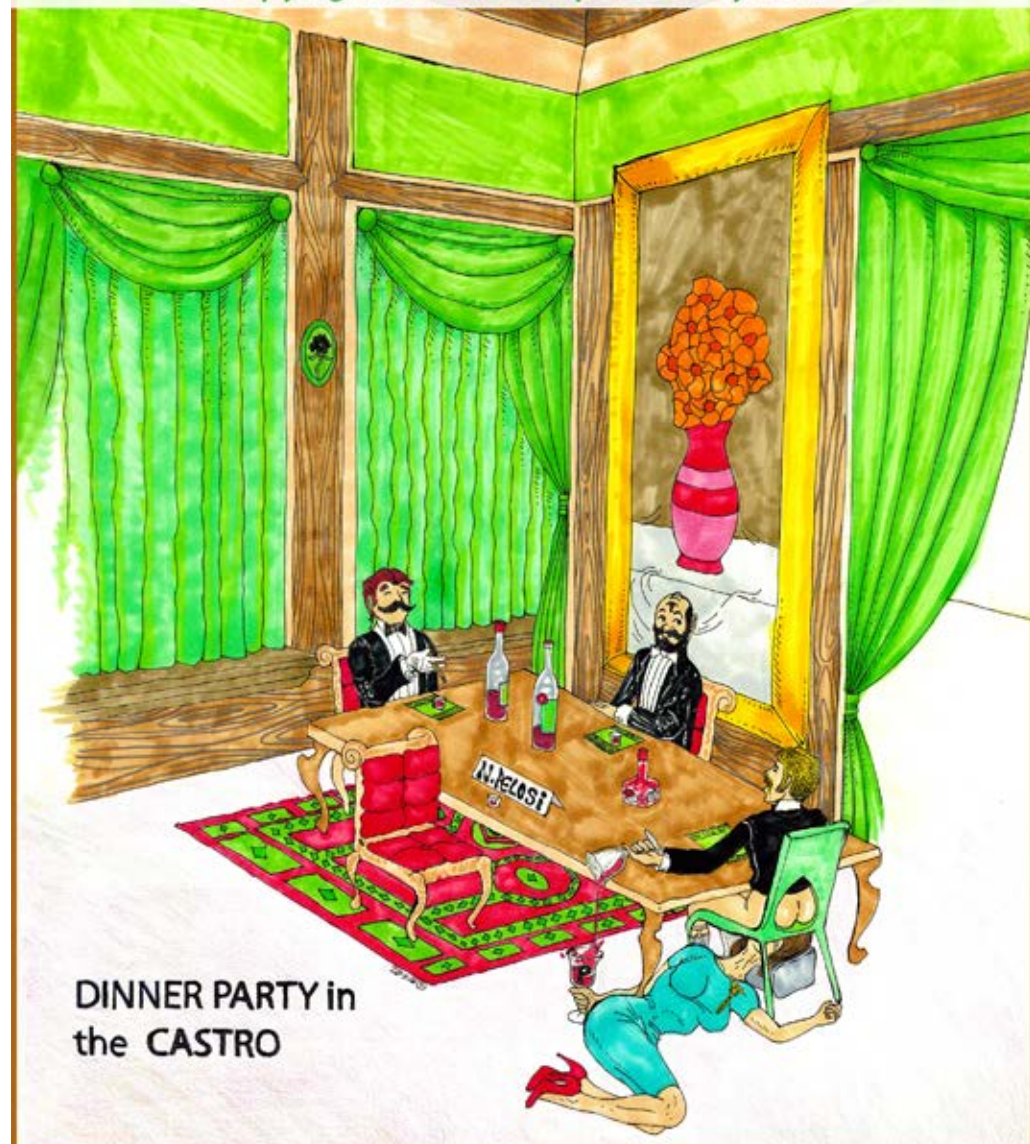
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