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Holiday SHOPPING GUIDE

Photo Contest Aims to End the Stigma of HIV/AIDS

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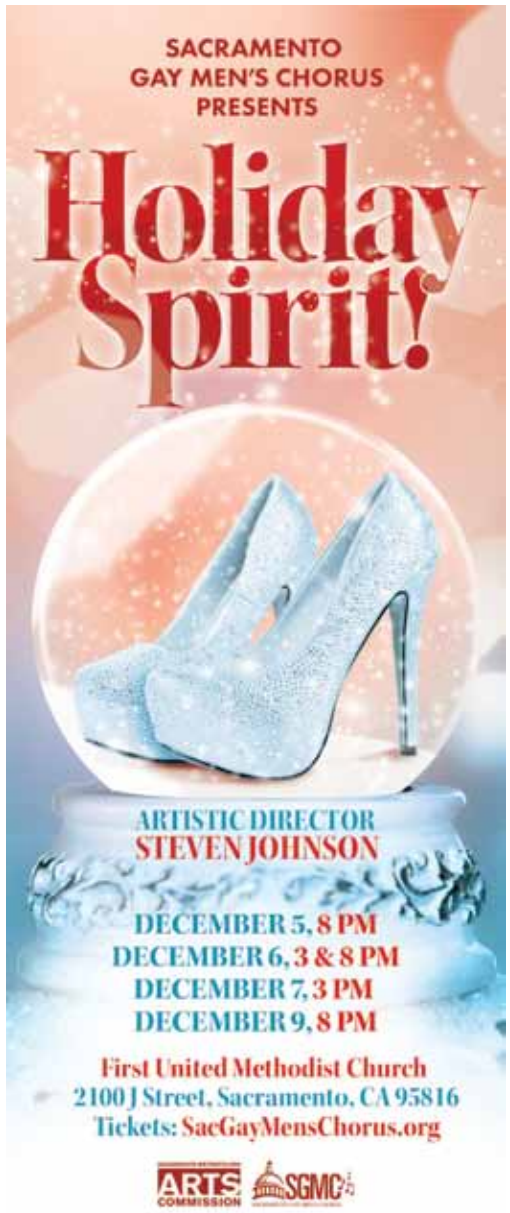

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Sac LGBT Center Has a New Health Programs Coordinator

The Sacramento LGBT Community Center has enlisted Elena Costa as their new Health Programs Coordinator.

She will be overseeing all health and wellness programs at the Center, working towards improving the health of our community with a specific focus on HIV prevention, improving access to culturally competent health resources and increasing health insurance coverage rates.

Costa is nearing completion of her Health Science degree at CSUS, with a concentration in Community Health Education. She has five years experience assisting individuals in crisis, reducing stigma around mental health issues, and teaching the Applied Suicide Intervention Training (ASIST) model.

She believes in empowering individuals to become informed advocates for their own health through the sharing of information, resources, and working collaboratively toward real and attainable solutions.

Costa is committed to reducing new HIV infections in our community by helping people know their status and making them feel comfortable having an open and affirming dialogue on sexual health.

Sacramento LGBT Center Seeks Board Applicants

The Sacramento LGBT Community Center is currently seeking individuals to join its board of directors who are culturally and linguistically diverse and represent a variety of professional disciplines including accountancy, HIV/AIDS, mental health, commercial real estate, communications/ public relations, law, faith communities, youth and senior services.

Board members are ambassadors, advocates, and fundraisers for the organization that help ensure mission delivery.

"Three short years ago, the Center was on the brink of closure – struggling with identity and mission delivery," said the Center's Board President David Heitstuman. "Today, we are stronger than ever – accessible and welcoming to the whole community, financially stable, and changing lives every day. We are looking for innovative committed people to help lead the organization through our next phase of development to build capacity and meet the changing needs of our community."

For more information on the application process go to SacCenter.org/board. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis for appointments that will be made in December. New board member terms would begin January 1, 2015.

Catholic Church Synod an LGBT Slap in the Face?

Commentary by Mark Segal, Philadelphia Gay News

For the LGBT community to simply ignore what happened at the Vatican a couple of weeks ago when Pope Francis convened a synod on issues facing the Catholic Church would be a major mistake.

Even those of us who are not Catholic are affected by a church that has an estimated 1.2 billion members worldwide. Here in the United States, the Church's influence impacts the way some elected officials vote and some judges rule.

And then there are the issues that affect our brother and sister believers and their families. We cannot turn our backs on them.

A little history is in order. Pope Francis became pope in a time of scandal in the Church. He has tried to bring about a new openness in the Church. The 2014 Synod of Bishops on the Family called by Pope Francis was an attempt to find ways in which the Church might examine and possibly evolve its past messages on such issues as family, same-sex marriage, Catholics living together without marriage and other related topics.

A draft report from the gathering included language that looked as though the Church would take a giant leap towards healing many rifts within itself, including one such phrase noting the special gifts gays and lesbians have to offer the Church, which gave hope to LGBT believers.

Another suggested that the Church, while still opposed to same-sex marriage, was ready to move towards acceptance of civil unions. This brought about excitement within the LGBT community – only to be dashed when all that positive language was watered down in the final report.

The LGBT community saw the losses at the Synod as a defeat, but the surprise is, it wasn't. Here's how David Gibson of Religious News Service wrote about the issue in the National Catholic Reporter: "The hard-liners won the battle, but the reformers may win the war."

He went on to note that the Church is slow to change, and that, when all the pro-LGBT statements were voted on, they received a strong majority, but not the two-thirds necessary to be accepted.

This is good news since Pope Francis made it clear in his closing remarks that he wants the Church to be open to new ideas, and that will happen as he appoints new, like-minded leaders.

CATHOLIC
continues on page 26

PR Professional Named RCC Business Leader of the Year

Bonnie Osborn, president of Sacramento-based public relations and marketing firm WriteAway Communications Corp., was recently named 2014 Sacramento Rainbow Chamber of Commerce Business Leader of the Year.

The award was presented at the organization's annual casino night gala, held Sept. 19 at the Dante Club in Fair Oaks.

Established in 2011, the Business Leader of the Year Award recognizes an individual who has had leadership success within her business and the business community, as well as leadership success within the Sacramento LGBT community, and who serves as a role model for the entire community.

RCC Presdent Paul Weubbe presenting the Business Leader of the Year Award To Bonnie Osborn

"I'm very proud of our Chamber and all it has achieved," Osborn said upon receiving the award. "It has been an honor and a privilege to have played a small part in its success."

Osborn has been a member of the Chamber since 2006 and served on the Chamber board from 2009 through 2013, including a two-year term as Chamber president.

During her tenure as president, the Chamber worked with other LGBT organizations in a successful effort to have the Sacramento LGBT community declared a "community of interest" for city, county and SMUD board redistricting purposes and in forming an LGBT-friendly Sacramento City Council district.

Two years later, Steve Hansen was elected out of the newly formed district, becoming the city's first openly gay city councilmember.

As Chamber president, Osborn also worked with Assemblymember Roger Dickinson and the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce to pass AB 1960, which requires the state of California to collect, for the first time in history, information about LGBT-owned businesses who contract with the state, similar to data already collected on women- and minority-owned businesses.

Prior to moving to Sacramento in 2005, Osborn worked as a newspaper reporter and editor in Missouri and Los Angeles and in public relations positions with several L.A. organizations. She served as communications director for the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center for three years before launching her company, WriteAway, in 2004.

In the Sacramento community, Osborn has provided communications services to a number of LGBT organizations as a volunteer or in her professional practice, including the Chamber, Sacramento LGBT Community Center, Sacramento Pride, LGBT Wedding Expo, Sacramento Gay Men's Chorus and Capital City Squares. She is also a frequent contributor to *Outword*.

She is a long-time member of the National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association and currently serves as secretary of its NorCal chapter. She serves as Vice President of Records for the American Marketing Association Sacramento Valley chapter.

Osborn and her partner of 21 years, Terri Ely, were legally married in Sacramento County in 2008.

Previous Rainbow Chamber Business Leaders of the Year are Fred Palmer, publisher and owner, Outword Media Marketing Events, 2011; Brian McMartin, Realtor with Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate-Mason McDuffie, 2012; and Stephanie Slagle, Agent, State Farm Insurance, 2013.

For more information, visit www.rainbowchamber.com.

World AIDS Day 2014: Lighting the Way to Saving Lives

by Joyce Mitchell

Looking back is painful for many of us who lived and lost during the early years of HIV/AIDS. There are too many faces that are impossible to forget, like Cara, the two-year-old baby I held in my arms after she died; my good friend Tom who I talked with every morning at 7 a.m.; and Cheech, it was an honor to sit with him in cold silence.

The memories make me cry to this day. However, wiping away the tears, I acknowledge, salute, admire and love people living with HIV/AIDS. They are and have been, and always will be, my heroes. They've pioneered and continue to do so.

The canvas is ever-changing. I'd like to paint an entirely enlightened and advanced scenario, but I cannot. Truth be told, while people infected with HIV are living longer and healthier lives, there's still no cure.

Medications transformed the pandemic two decades ago by increasing life expectancy, but we're faced with yet another era of challenges. As people grow older, HIV and the antiretroviral medications are raising alerts.

Though viral loads can be reduced to undetectable, the virus still lingers and we're learning that the lingering virus coupled with medications often leads to inflammation, early heart disease and cancer.

The unknowns are vast and those of us on the frontlines have been screaming for years from the rooftops that HIV is one-hundred percent preventable. However, an unsettling complacency has taken hold. The misperception that the medications will keep you safe for life has become conventional wisdom. That is dangerous.

The medications have kept people alive, and we're forever grateful for that, but the medications are very expensive, adherence to the medication regimen is often difficult and complications associated with medications – both early in treatment and later in life – can be devastating.

Testing, knowing your status and getting treatment remain imperative. Still, prevention is number one in our arsenal.

Education must be revved up. Cases of HIV among young gay and bisexual men have doubled in the last decade, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Among women and people ages 35 to 44, prevention efforts have dropped the rate of new infections by 33 percent the past ten years. But the twofold increase in young bisexual and gay men ages 13 to 24 means our youth are not getting the message.

This December 1, on World AIDS Day, Capital City AIDS Fund (CCAF) is teaming up with the Sacramento Gay and Lesbian Center and Terry Sidie from FACES to host a commemoration. Sacramento Supervisor Phil Serna will lead a moment of silence while LED candles shine in unity. As a reminder of where we've been and where we are today, a 15-foot Red Ribbon will be on full display outside of FACES on 20th and K Streets. Red Ribbons will also be given out for people to wear.

For youth under 21, CCAF is aligning with students by taking the message of World AIDS Day, free condoms and Red Ribbons to college campuses. CCAF is also mentoring six Sacramento City College Health Education student interns. They possess passion.

Somewhat surprising, the students didn't know about the AIDS Red Ribbon. We shared with them that the Red Ribbon was so well embraced at one time that it inspired the dozens of other colored ribbons we see today. Our students now wear Red Ribbons.

The ravaged faces of human suffering and despair of years past – impossible for many of us to forget – gives us each a responsibility to teach and educate. So this World AIDS Day, we will be Lighting the Way to Saving Lives and – together – re-ignite the fight to educate youth and help prevent new HIV infections.

The free event is at FACES, 2000 K Street and begins at 6 p.m.

Joyce Mitchell is the President of Capital City AIDS Fund.

Folsom Street Events Donates $322,666 to Charities

The Board of Directors of Folsom Street Events announced on Nov. 18, charitable giving in the amount of $322,666 bringing the agency's charitable donations to nearly $5.5 million since it first started, 31 years ago.

"2014 was a year of great change for Folsom Street Events, as the Folsom Street Fair shifted its footprint for the first time in almost 20 years," said Demetri Moshoyannis, Folsom Street Events' Executive Director. "We are so appreciative of our sponsors, beneficiaries, beverage partners, and the leather/fetish community for their ongoing support of our events. The size of our check demonstrates the strength and support of the community. Even though we had lackluster weather at this year's Folsom Street Fair, their donations and financial support continue to amaze us."

Folsom Street Events, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, produces Bay of Pigs, Up Your Alley, Magnitude, Folsom Street Fair, DEVIANTS and more to unite the adult alternative lifestyle community with safe venues for self-expression while raising critical funds for San Francisco-based and national charities.100 percent of gate donations directly benefit local and national charities.

"The largest share of this check supports our major and sSupporting beneficiaries, including Castro Country Club, Frameline, Hospitality House, National AIDS Memorial Grove, San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, and Westside Community Services, amongst others," said Phillip Babock, Folsom Street Events' Board President. "In total, we are supporting over 70 great charities in San Francisco and around the U.S. We are really proud of our philanthropic efforts."

For more information about Folsom Street Events, visit www.folsomstreetfair.org.

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Supreme Court Urged to Review Ohio Marriage Cases

The American Civil Liberties Union, the ACLU of Ohio, Lambda Legal and private firm Gerhardstein & Branch on Nov. 14 filed a petition asking the U.S. Supreme Court to review the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals' aberrant ruling upholding discriminatory bans on marriage rights for same-sex couples in Ohio and three other states.

The Sixth Circuit is the only federal circuit court after the Supreme Court's watershed 2013 *Windsor* ruling to uphold such bans and its decision departs from recent decisions from the Fourth, Seventh, Ninth and Tenth Circuits, which have led to the freedom to marry for same-sex couples in many more states throughout the country.

The joint filing covers two lawsuits filed by Gerhardstein & Branch: *Obergefell v. Hodges*, joined by the ACLU, seeking to order the State to issue accurate death certificates when one member of a married same-sex couple dies and *Henry v. Hodges*, joined by Lambda Legal, seeking to compel the State of Ohio to recognize the legal marriages of same-sex couples and issue accurate birth certificates to the adopted children of married same-sex couples.

In *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the state appealed a federal court ruling that Ohio must respect the marriages of same-sex couples legally performed in other states for the purpose of listing surviving spouses on death certificates.

"It's profoundly unfair for Ohio to tell these couples that their lawful marriages meant nothing and that their spouses are legal strangers. When you're married, you're married, no matter whether you travel or move to another state," said James Esseks, director of the ACLU Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and HIV Project. "The country needs a uniform rule on respect for marriage, and the Supreme Court can and should make that happen."

Henry v. Hodges was filed in February 2014. All plaintiff couples are seeking recognition of their marriages for all purposes, from respect for their parentage of their children to how they must pay their taxes. Most urgently, they seek accurate birth certificates naming both spouses as the parents of their babies. The Ohio Department of Health, the agency charged with issuing birth certificates whose Director is the Defendant in the case, refused to issue or amend birth certificates for same-sex parents.

"We look forward to presenting our arguments on behalf of our plaintiff families and all Ohio same-sex couples in front of the highest court in the land," said Al Gerhardstein, Attorney for Gerhardstein & Branch. "With more than 64 percent of the U.S. population residing in a state where same-sex couples have marriage equality, we must ensure that all those same-sex marriages are recognized when they cross into Ohio."

Both *Henry* and *Hodges* demonstrate the importance of marriage to families from the cradle to the grave, from the birth of their children through the death of a spouse and beyond.

"We have reached a tipping point, and the lives of thousands of same-sex spouses and their families hang in the balance. The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals' ruling shines a spotlight on our divided country, where married same-sex couples are either respected or discriminated against, depending on where they live or even where they travel," said Susan Sommer, Director of Constitutional Litigation for Lambda Legal. "As we have learned from other historic cases like *Loving v. Virginia* and *Lawrence v. Texas*, there comes a time when the U.S. Supreme Court weighs in, and provides the answer -- on the question of marriage for same-sex couples we believe that time has come."

Does SMUD Have Your Uncashed Check?

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) has posted the names of customers and vendors who have not yet cashed checks dated October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011.

The list of names will remain online until December 24, at SMUD.org. Each year SMUD posts this information in an effort to locate the money's rightful owner.

Claims against these uncashed checks should be filed on or before December 24, 2014 with SMUD Unclaimed Monies, 6201 S Street, Mail Stop B302, Sacramento, CA 95817-1818 or by calling 916-732-7440.

Replacement checks will be issued only to the payee whose name is on the list. Checks not claimed by December 24, 2014 become SMUD property under California Code Section 50050-50056.

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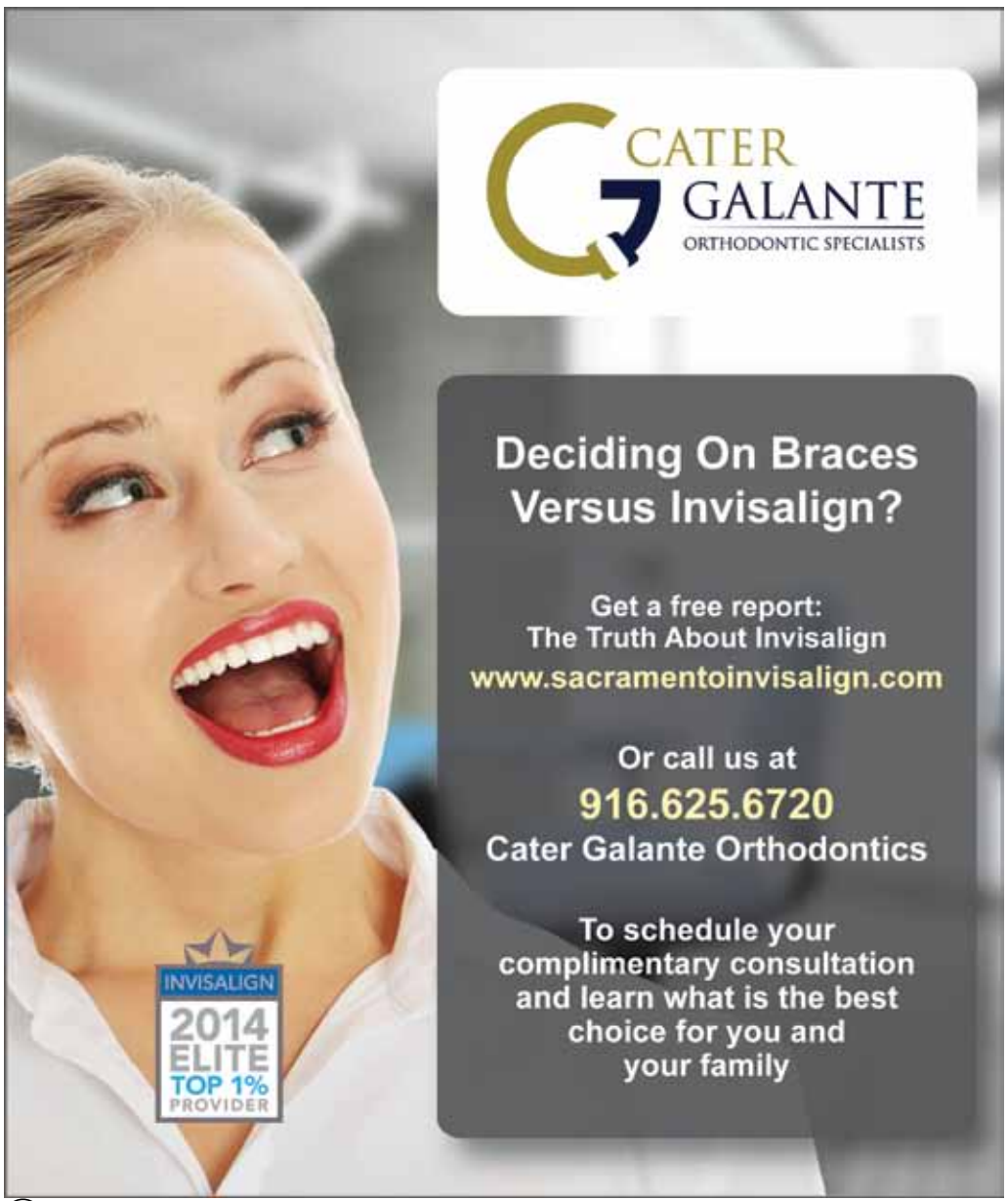

Briefly Put

MI Couple Petitions Supreme Court For Right To Marry

Attorneys for Michigan couple April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse have filed their petition asking the U.S. Supreme Court to hear their case, seeking to overturn the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals' decision prohibiting same-sex marriage in Michigan, Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee.

One of the last remaining cases that could produce a nationwide ruling on marriage equality during the Supreme Court's current term, DeBoer et al v. Snyder was the only case to go to trial among dozens decided or pending nationwide.

sitting in Detroit, struck down Michigan's marriage ban, concluding the state "may no longer impair the rights of their children and the thousands of others now being raised by same-sex couples" and "the guarantee of equal protection must prevail."

On November 6, two of the three-member panel in the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned Judge Bernard A. Freidman, of the District Court's decision and those of courts in Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky, breaking ranks with other courts' decisions.

Pride Foundation Invests Nearly $7.1 million to Support LGBTQ Community in 2014

Pride Foundation has announced that it has invested nearly $7.1 million this year to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) youth, adults, and families throughout the Northwest.

With a focus on eliminating long-standing barriers to equality, the foundation utilizes a variety of different strategies – including a community grants program, scholarship program, donor-advised, and donor-designated funds – to advance lived equality for LGBTQ people throughout the region.

This year, a total of $303,775 was awarded to 56 organizations throughout the Northwest. By directing grant dollars to those who remain most invisible and vulnerable despite recent progress, the foundation is making an important statement about the work that lies ahead and the continued need in the LGBTQ community.

The full list of Pride Foundation grantees and project descriptions is available at www.pridefoundation.org/grantees.

Benchmark Survey Reveals LGBT Youth Regularly Hear Anti-LGBT Remarks and Are Harassed

GLSEN (the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network) has released state-level data from its biennial National School Climate Survey report for 29 states that show that schools remain unsafe for the majority of LGBT students.

The latest edition of GLSEN's National School Climate Survey includes four major findings: schools nationwide are hostile environments for a distressing number of LGBT students; a hostile school climate affects students' academic success and mental health; students with LGBT-related resources and supports report better school experiences and academic success; and school climate for LGBT students has improved somewhat over the years, but remains quite hostile for many.

State snapshots for 29 states can be found at www.glsen.org/statesnapshots. To access a summary video, infographic and both the executive summary and complete GLSEN National School Climate Survey report, visit www.glsen.org/nscs.

Cal/OSHA Commits to Expedite New Porn Safety Regulations

Cal/OSHA has sent a letter to AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) stating that OSHA,"… has committed resources to the development of regulatory language," and that "…final rulemaking documents will be sent to the (OSHA) Standard Board by the end of 2014."

"I am grateful that Cal/OSHA has committed in writing to have documents to their Standards Board by the end of the year that will clarify and strengthen worker safety laws on adult film sets in California, but I am also disappointed that it has taken five years to get here," said Michael Weinstein, President of AIDS Healthcare Foundation. "During those five years, there have been at least four cases of HIV identified in adult film performers found while they were working in the industry – one in 2010, and again last year, during the summer of 2013, when three adult performers were found to have HIV."

Heterosexuals Back Legal Benefits For Same-Sex Couples, but not PDA, and Many L&G Couples Agree

A new study indicates that heterosexuals have predominantly egalitarian views on legal benefits for – but not public displays of affection by – same-sex couples.

"We found that, for the most part, heterosexuals are equally as supportive of legal benefits for same-sex couples as they are for heterosexual couples, but are much less supportive of public displays of affection for same-sex couples than they are for heterosexuals," said Long Doan, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Sociology at Indiana University Bloomington and the lead author of the study.

"Formal Rights and Informal Privileges for Same-Sex Couples: Evidence From a National Survey Experiment," which appears in the December issue of the American Sociological Review, relies on a nationally representative dataset of more than 1,000 people.

Interestingly, the researchers also found that, in some cases, gays and lesbians are less supportive of same-sex couples engaging in PDA than they are of heterosexual couples partaking in the same behavior.

The researchers believe that gay and lesbian people were less likely to approve of certain same-sex public displays of affection due to safety concerns. Indeed, gay and lesbian individuals are all too aware that same-sex individuals are vulnerable to harassment and hate crimes.

Photo Contest Aims to End the Stigma of HIV/AIDS

With World AIDS Day approaching, (December 1st), TheBody.com, a leading information resource on HIV/AIDS, invites patients, caregivers and the general public to do their part in helping to create awareness and change the stigma often associated with the disease.

Red Reminds Me photo contest spokesperson Jack Mackenroth says the campaign underscores his work with Housing Works and the Braking AIDS Ride and the importance of giving back to the HIV community. Photo by Tyler Cheever Gomes at TCGfotography.com

HIV/AIDS affects many more than just the 1.1 Million living with the disease in the U.S., and all to often, those with HIV/AIDS and their families face an irrational stigma that can be demoralizing.

Based on HIV's groundbreaking emblem: the red ribbon, the Red Reminds Me photo contest asks the public to transform the stigma related to HIV through positive and inspirational visuals by sharing a photo that incorporates the color red, while sharing their opinions about the current state of HIV and how it affects them using the hashtag #RedRemindsMe on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Each submission will help demonstrate the vast populations of HIV/AIDS and the overall impact the epidemic has had in our families, in our communities and across society.

To participate, people can simply submit their photos and captions via The Body's World AIDS Day site, Facebook page, or by using the #RedRemindsMe hashtag on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook from through December 12.

Public voting will run from December 13 through 31.

The three most creative photos will be announced the week of Jan. 12. One grand prize winner will be awarded two tickets to the Lifebeat pre-VMA Concert which features popular music artists; past performers include: Sam Smith, Iggy Azalea, Maroon 5, Ke$ha, and many more; and will include the cost of their flight and hotel to get there as well.

TheBody's World AIDS Day site is: www.thebody.com/wad; and the landing page for Red Reminds Me is www.thebody.com/content/75214/red-reminds-me.html

Quote Worth Repeating

"In essence, Christian conservatives in Texas have successfully forced a false historical narrative into public school textbooks that portray Moses as an influence on the Constitution and the Old Testament as the root of democracy."

Read more: http://www.patheos.com/blogs/progressivesecularhumanist/2014/11/texas-approves-textbooks-with-moses-as-founding-father/#ixzz3K0BMxqv2

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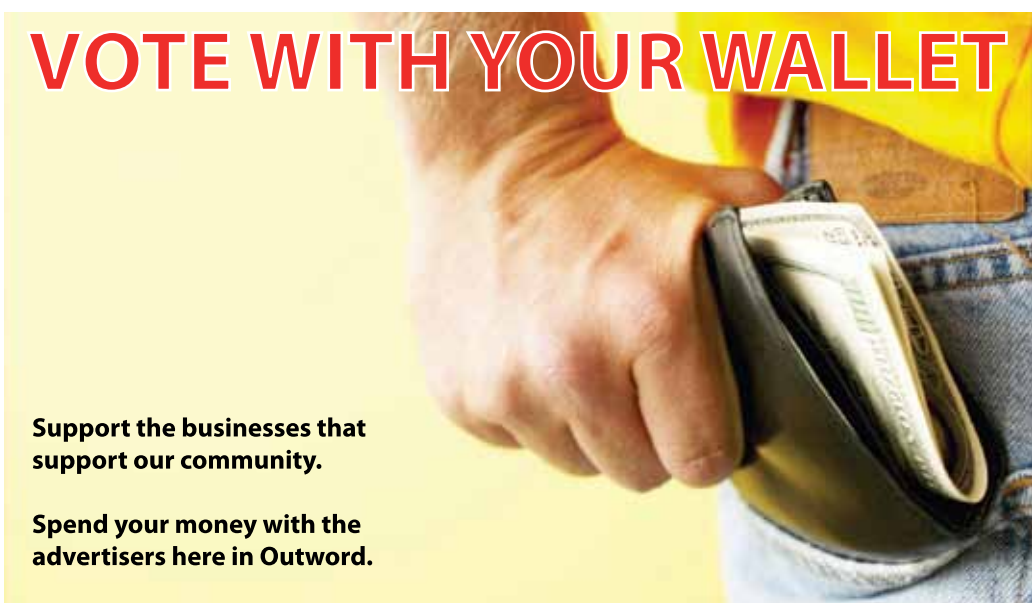

Step Back In Time For Some Holiday Shopping

Everything old is new again as Grass Valley, Nevada City, Placerville, and Old Sacramento usher in the season with nostalgia and plenty of holiday cheer.

Grass Valley shows off its holiday charm with its 47th annual Cornish Christmas, offering roasted chestnuts, carolers, cloggers, lots of handmade arts and crafts, food vendors, and of course Santa Claus.

This beloved tradition takes over Main Street in Grass Valley beginning November 28 and continuing through December 19, Fridays only, from 6-9 p.m.

Visit downtowngrassvalley.com.

Nevada City, which is equally lovely, especially around the holidays, has their 36th annual Victorian Christmas scheduled for December 7-21 this year.

Victorian Christmas will feature wandering minstrels, lamp-lit streets, brass bands, bagpipers, horse drawn carriages, a live Nativity scene, and carolers dressed in Victorian attire.

For specific dates and times, visit www.nevadacitychamber.com.

Hangtown gets in to the holiday spirit as **Placerville** celebrates its Festival of Lights, on Friday, November 28.

Festivities along Placerville's Main Street include music, visits with Santa, stagecoach rides, and a tree-lighting ceremony at the Courthouse.

Visit www.placerville-downtown.org.

Closer to home, **Old Sacramento** again celebrates the season with its popular Theatre of Lights, a free holiday program that features a light show and live-action retelling of Clement Clarke Moore's 1823 poem, "A Visit From St. Nicholas," more widely known as "'Twas the Night Before Christmas."

The sixth annual tradition comes to life from Thanksgiving to New Years on the balconies and facades of Old Sacramento at K Street and Front St.

Visit oldsacramento.com.

Christmas Past in Nevada City

Dancers, Prancers and Vixens at SFGMC Holiday Concert

The SF Gay Men's Chorus presents Dancers, Prancers and Vixens with special guests Well-Strung, the Singing String Quartet and of course the 275 men of the chorus, with appearances by Santa, his elves and reindeer, a 1980s nativity scene and an ugly sweater parade, presenting a festive twist on holiday traditions. December 12 & 13. Info at www.sfgmc.org.

SGMC Begins 30th Year with *Holiday Spirit!* & *Gay-Mation*

The Sacramento Gay Men's Chorus will kick off "30 Years of Singing Our Song" with their *Holiday Spirit!* concerts that will feature a playful take on the classic stop-motion and animated holiday TV specials of the 1960s and '70s entitled *A Gay-Mation Special.*

The Sacramento Gay Men's Chorus in an earlier concert.

The scripted tale will put a new spin on the animated TV specials many of us have watched every year for decades: 1964's stop-motion *Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, based on the song of the same title and narrated by the iconic Burl Ives; 1970's *Santa Claus is Comin' to Town*; 1974's *The Year Without A Santa Claus*, that introduces Snow Miser and Heat Miser (you may remember them as brothers – but not so, according to SGMC), and more. The message to the music: the transformative power of the Holiday Spirit!

Performances will be at 8 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 5; 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 6; 3 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 7; and 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 9, all at First United Methodist Church, 2199 J Street, Sacramento.

The show also will include a variety of traditional and contemporary holiday classics, including a "mash-up" arrangement of "Do You Hear What I Hear?" and "Little Drummer Boy" by acclaimed composer/arranger David Maddux.

"SGMC's *Holiday Spirit* concert will dazzle audience members with a blockbuster line-up of engaging and spirit-filled holiday music," Johnson said. "The chorus is poised to deliver a fantastic performance, surrounded by creative staging, enveloped with state-of-the-art lighting and accompanied by a host of the area's finest musicians. It's the must see holiday show in town!"

The Sacramento Gay Men's Chorus was founded in 1984 as a singing group to foster a sense of community and support for local gay and lesbian people, and performs two major concerts series per year, under the direction of artistic director Steven Johnson, in addition to numerous appearances in conjunction with other community events.

For more information about the Sacramento Gay Men's Chorus, and to order concert tickets online, visit SacGayMensChorus.org.

Support the Arts With Your Plate

Californians have a new, easy and tax-deductible way to support the arts this holiday season, that helps fund arts education while providing your loved ones with a beautiful new license plate for their vehicle, and best of all, it's only $50.

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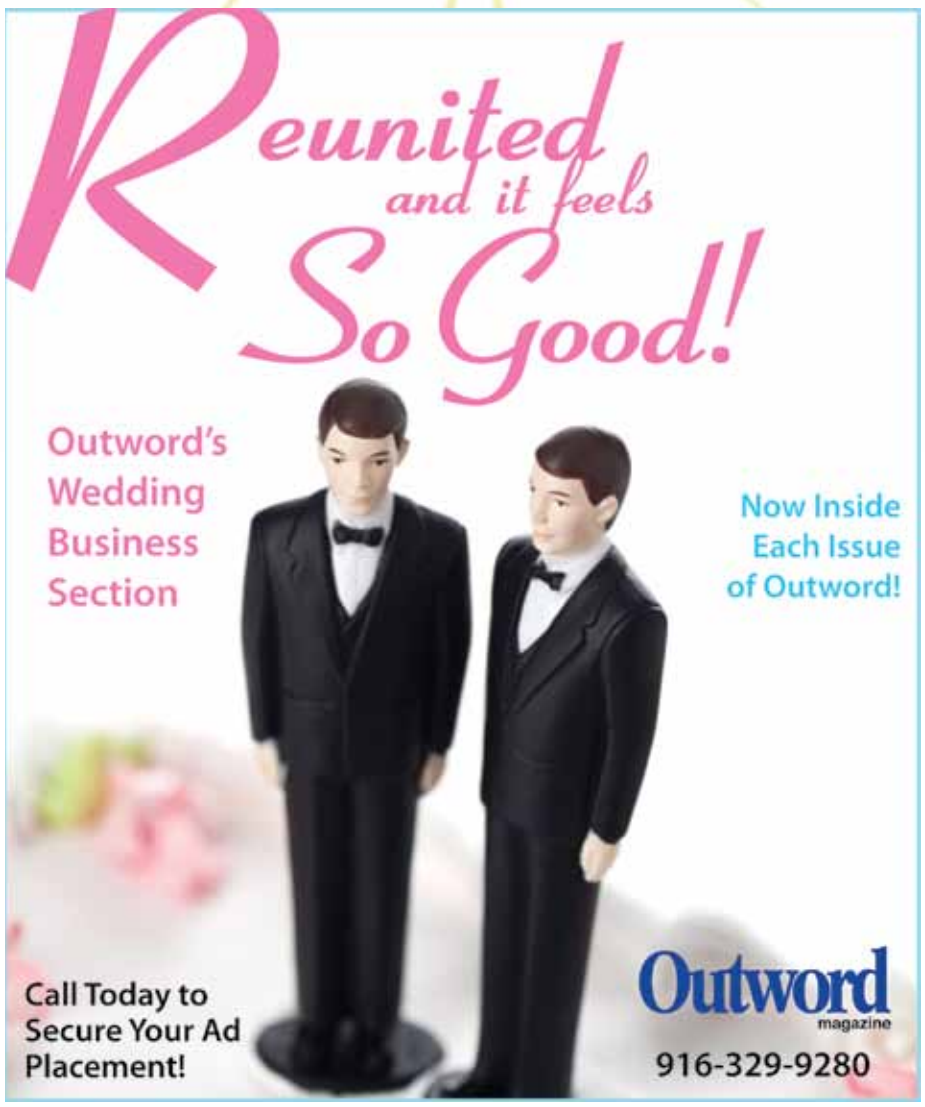

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Carols For A Cure reviewed – Plus Idina Menzel and more

by Chris Narloch

Holiday music is big business, with each Christmas season bringing a variety of new CDs by artists hoping to score a hit with their seasonal sounds.

Read on for my reviews of this year's crop, which includes the first seasonal CD from Idina Menzel, a new collaboration between John Schneider and Tom Wopat, and an all-new installment in the great *Carols For A Cure* series of charity records to benefit BC/EFA (Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS).

Carols For A Cure – Volume 16

Carols For A Cure turns sweet 16 this year with another impeccable collection of newly recorded holiday tunes by the Broadway companies of the 2014 season.

The cast of the current Tony winner for Best Musical, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, kicks things off in high style with "A Very GGLAM Christmas," which is followed by an equally rousing remake of "Soul Cake" from Sting and the company of his first Broadway musical, *The Last Ship*.

Carole King's Tony-winning musical *Beautiful* is also represented here, with the lovely "New Year's Day," and the great company from *Motown The Musical* turns up twice, with "Another Christmas Eve" and "I Am Here."

I could go on and on about how superb this 2-CD set is, but trust me, you won't be disappointed if you purchase *Carols For A Cure.*

The only dud among the twenty-one tracks is a poorly sung attempt at a comedy song by Perez Hilton entitled "My Simple Christmas Wish" that has no business being on this otherwise wonderful charity record.

Visit www.broadwaycares.org.

Idina Menzel – *Holiday Wishes*

The Tony-winning star of *Wicked* and *If/Then* takes advantage of her celebrity status as a newly minted Disney star (courtesy of *Frozen* and its big hit ballad "Let It Go") to release her first holiday disc.

I must apologize to Menzel's fans right off the bat, because I am not a fan of the singer, whose voice I find somewhat nasal and totally lacking in subtlety.

For me, this CD is a dud, revisiting the same tired material that is on every other holiday CD from every other pop star, including ill-advised attempts at soul (Mariah Carey's "All I Want For Christmas Is You") and torchy pop (Joni Mitchell's "River") that do not suit Menzel.

Ms. Menzel is a Broadway belter, and she fares better when she has a big chorus to work with, as on "Do You Hear What I Hear," which leads off the disc.

Fans of Menzel will no doubt devour the disc, but if you are not already one of the devoted, this is not the place to start. (Get her live CD instead.)

I am ordinarily a big fan of Christmas, but after listening to *Holiday Wishes* I couldn't wait for the season to end.

John Schneider & Tom Wopat – *Home For Christmas*

At first glance, this CD sounds like a joke, with the former television stars of the hit '70s show *The Dukes of Hazzard* teaming up to sing (!), but after I actually listened to *Home For Christmas* I have to say I found it pretty charming.

Fans of *The Dukes of Hazzard* know that after the show ended, John Schneider had a successful country music career, while Tom

John Schneider and Tom Wopat

Wopat became a Tony-nominated star of Broadway musicals such as *A Catered Affair* and *Catch Me If You Can.*

Schneider has an especially deep voice, which I find very sexy, and the pair appear to be having a great time with lesser-known holiday material like "Holiday Season," "Christmas Waltz," "On A Quiet Christmas Morn," "The Secret of Christmas" and "Cool Yule."

Home For Christmas has a nice, unforced feel to it, kind of like a jazz record, and gay fans will especially enjoy the first all-male duet that I have ever heard of *Baby, It's Cold Outside*, which here becomes *Johnny It's Cold Outside* and ends with a cute twist.

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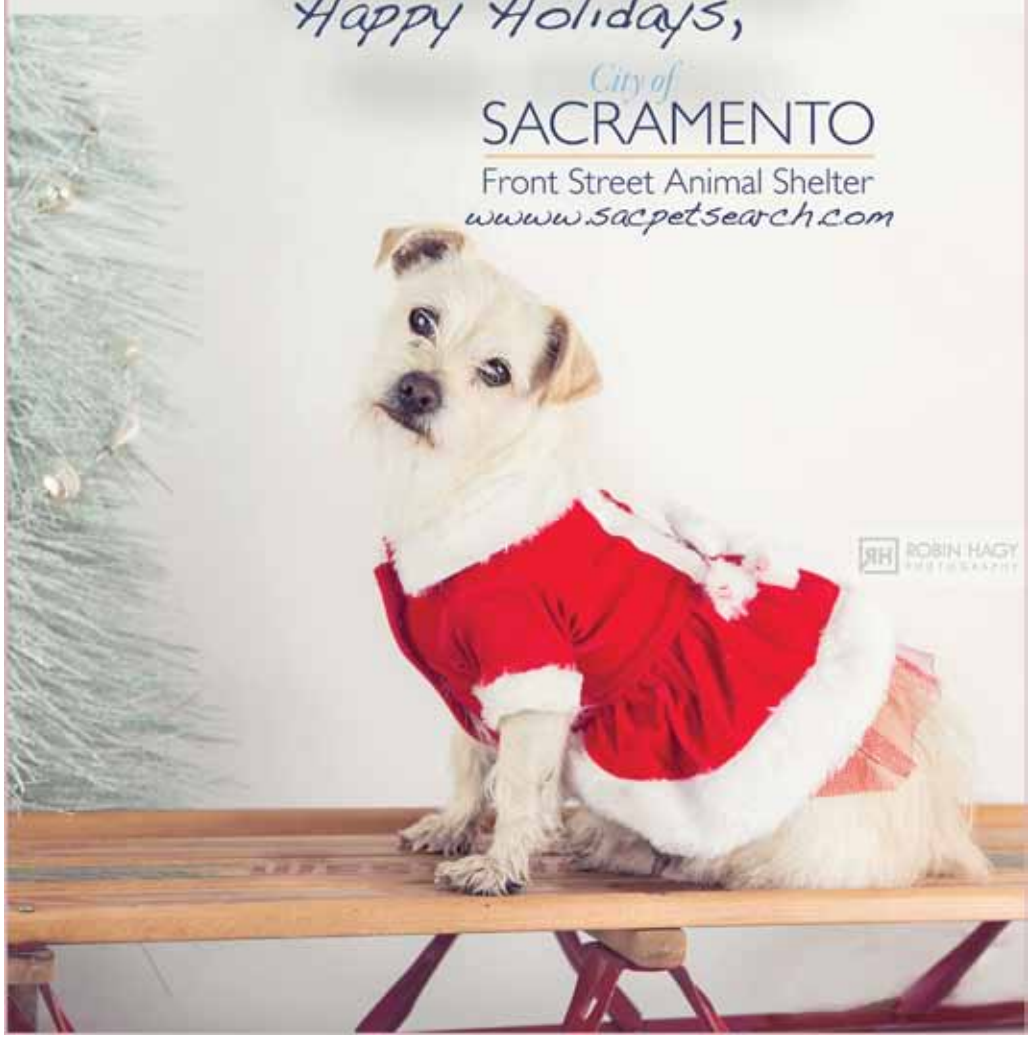

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If The Lifetime Channel Made a Movie of Your Life, What Would It be Titled and Who Would It Star?

Asked at Outword's Happy Hour at Badlands

Renee Gaston

Bitches Be Cray, and it would definitely have to star Lindsay Lohan, if she gets out of rehab

Stefan Estrada

The Anatomy of a Teacher starring Zachary Quinto

Jim Green

Just Do It, and it would star Garth Brooks

Beth Stewart Hassett

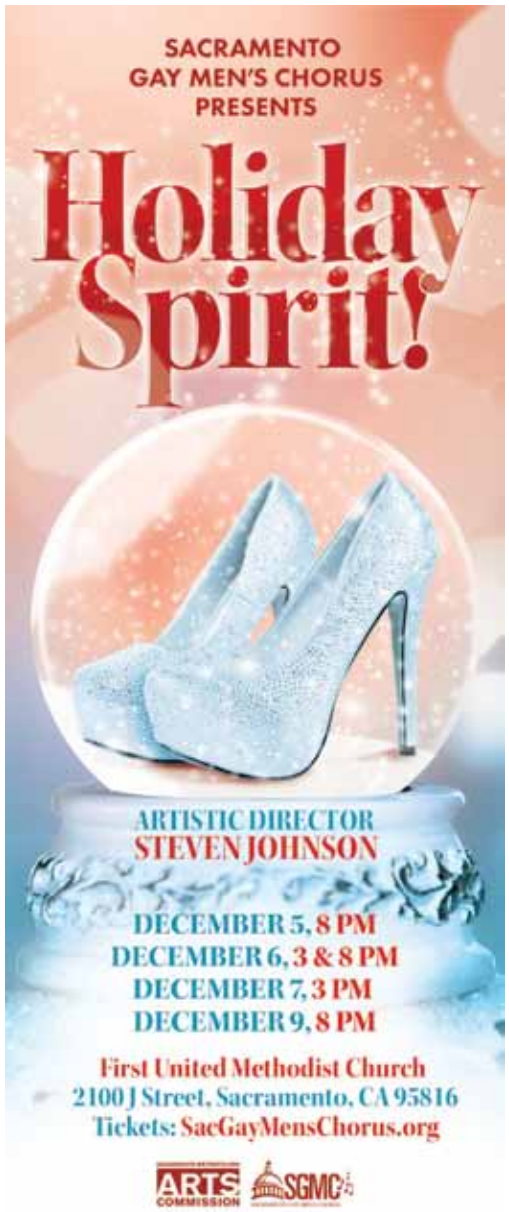
If It's Not Fun, Why Bother? and it would star Kate Hudson

Ashly Black

Don't Look Back, No Regrets, starring Sacramento's own Jessica Chastain

Mark Hinte

Not My Circus, Not My Monkeys and I would want David James Elliot to star in it



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'Tis the Season for Holiday Lighting

Sparkling lights are a holiday tradition. The times they are a changing though, and new LED lights in designs from Frosty the Snowman to nativity scenes are making that tradition even more imagintive and fun.

So let your imagination go wild, and celebrate the Season your way, but do so safely. The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) reminds customers to practice safety and conservation when using lighting to decorate this holiday season.

The following simple electrical safety tips should be observed when decorating with lights:

• Inspect all holiday decorations as you unpack them, looking for broken or cracked sockets and frayed or bare wires. Damaged light sets should never be used.

• Keep ladders away from overhead power lines and electrical service lines to your home when hanging outdoor lights.

• Only use Underwriter's Laboratory (U.L.) or Factory Mutual (F.M.) approved electrical devices, extension cords, and lights. These approvals indicate the product has been tested for electrical safety and reliability when used as advertised.

• Follow the manufacturer's instructions when stringing lights. Most directions allow no more than three sets of lights to be plugged together.

• Use one long extension cord instead of linking several shorter ones together.

• To prevent falls, keep extension cords off of walkways.

• Always unplug lights and electrical cords before stringing and hanging.

• Keep paper and ribbon away from hot lights.

• Unplug or turn off all decorative lights before bedtime or prior to leaving the home.

• Make sure outdoor electrical outlets have shock protecting Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI).

Efforts to conserve energy are important all year long but shouldn't prevent you from enjoying holiday lights. These bright ideas will help conserve energy and save money:

• Use low-wattage LED holiday lights. Vibrant LED lights come in a variety of colors and use 80 percent less energy than conventional lights. LEDs are cool to the touch, fire and shatter proof.

• Put your lights on a timer so they turn on and turn off at a certain time.

• If using incandescent lights, use those that have mini-transformers within each light string's plug. The lights then operate at a much cooler temperature and use less electricity.

Santa, Thank You for Being a Friend

What would the holidays be without a visit from your favorite golden girls from Tranny Shack as they perform live, four new Christmas episodes from the beloved TV show *The Golden Girls*. Performances are Dec. 4 - 22 in SF. For times and tickets, visit wwwTrannyShack.com.

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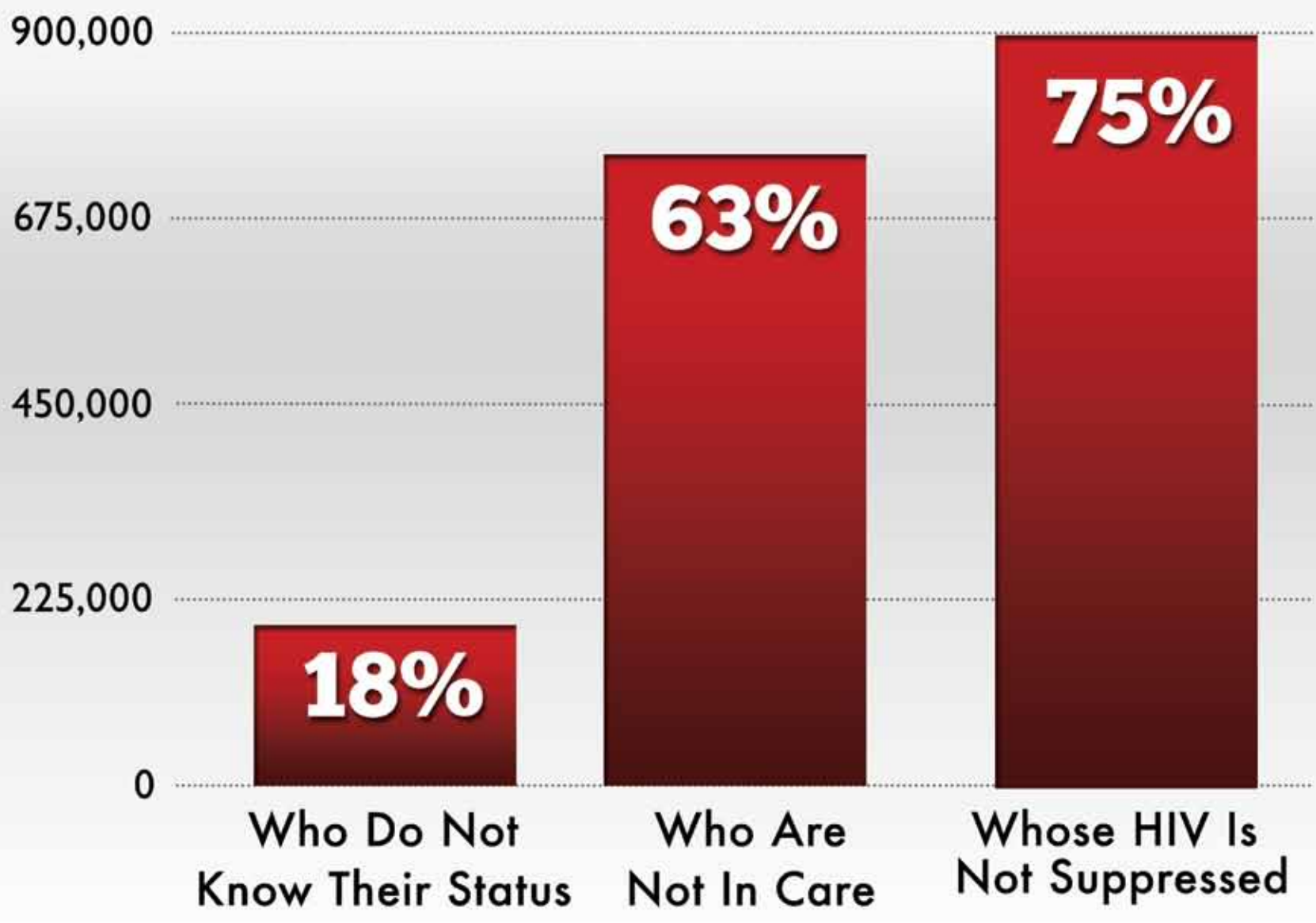

*Source: CDC Fact Sheet - Stages of HIV Care
www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/

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A *Hobbit* Marathon In IMAX

by Chris Narloch

Fans of J.R.R. Tolkien and the movies made from his books will want to purchase tickets in advance for The Hobbit Trilogy Marathon, which allows viewers to watch all three *Hobbit* films back to back in an all-day orgy of cinematic Middle-earth, on the really big screen.

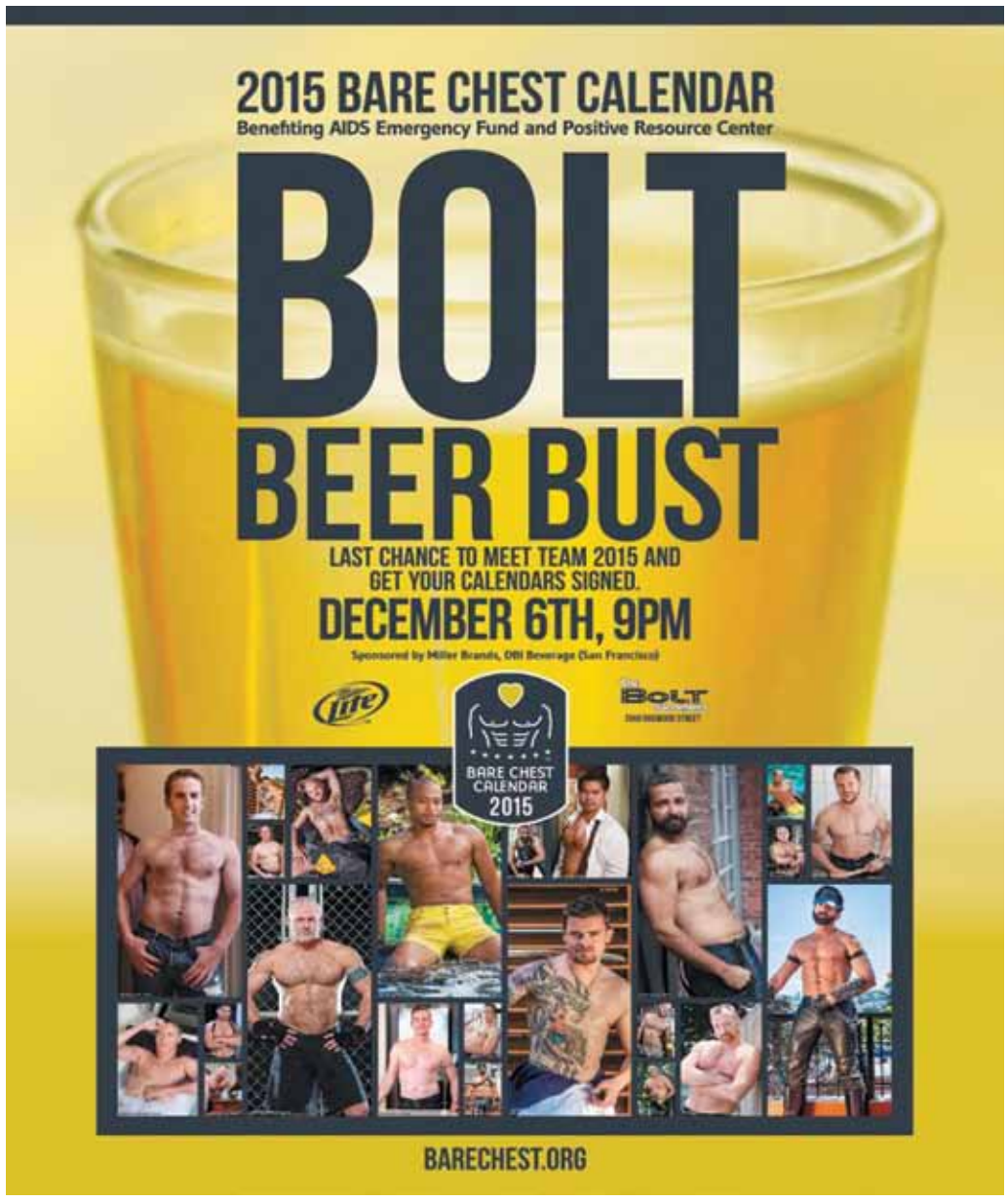
Richard Armitage plays Thorin Oakenshield in The Hobbit 3

The Esquire IMAX on K Street in Sacramento is already selling tickets for this movie event, and it allows you to experience the third and final *Hobbit* film early, in IMAX 3D, on Monday, December 15.

The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies doesn't officially open until December 17, with early screenings the night before that. (The IMAX marathon allows you to see the three films for one special price two days before the "official" opening.)

The Trilogy package is only $30 to see all three films on December 15, culminating in a 7 p.m. screening of *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies,* after *An Unexpected Journey* at 1 p.m. and *The Desolation of Smaug* at 4 p.m.

Visit www.imax.com/oo/esquire-imax/ for more details, and put in your request now to take the day off work – or call in sick – but you better hope you don't run in to your boss at the theater.



Bare Chest Calendar Men Returning

One of the best parts of December in Sacramento is the annual return of the Bare Chest Calendar Men to the Bolt Bar, Sacramento's only real Leather/Cowboy/Bear and Hot Calendar Men Bar.

Team Bare Chest Calendar 2015

After undergoing a rigorous selection process, these 12 men are now representing Team BCC at street fairs, community events and bar greet and meets across the San Francisco Bay area and Northern California for one purpose: to raise vital funds that support the missions of their beneficiaries, the AIDS Emergency Fund and Positive Resource Center.

But all the men pretty much agree on one thing, the trip to Sacramento and The Bolt Bar is one of the highlights of the year, where they are welcomed by hundreds of appreciative fans each year.

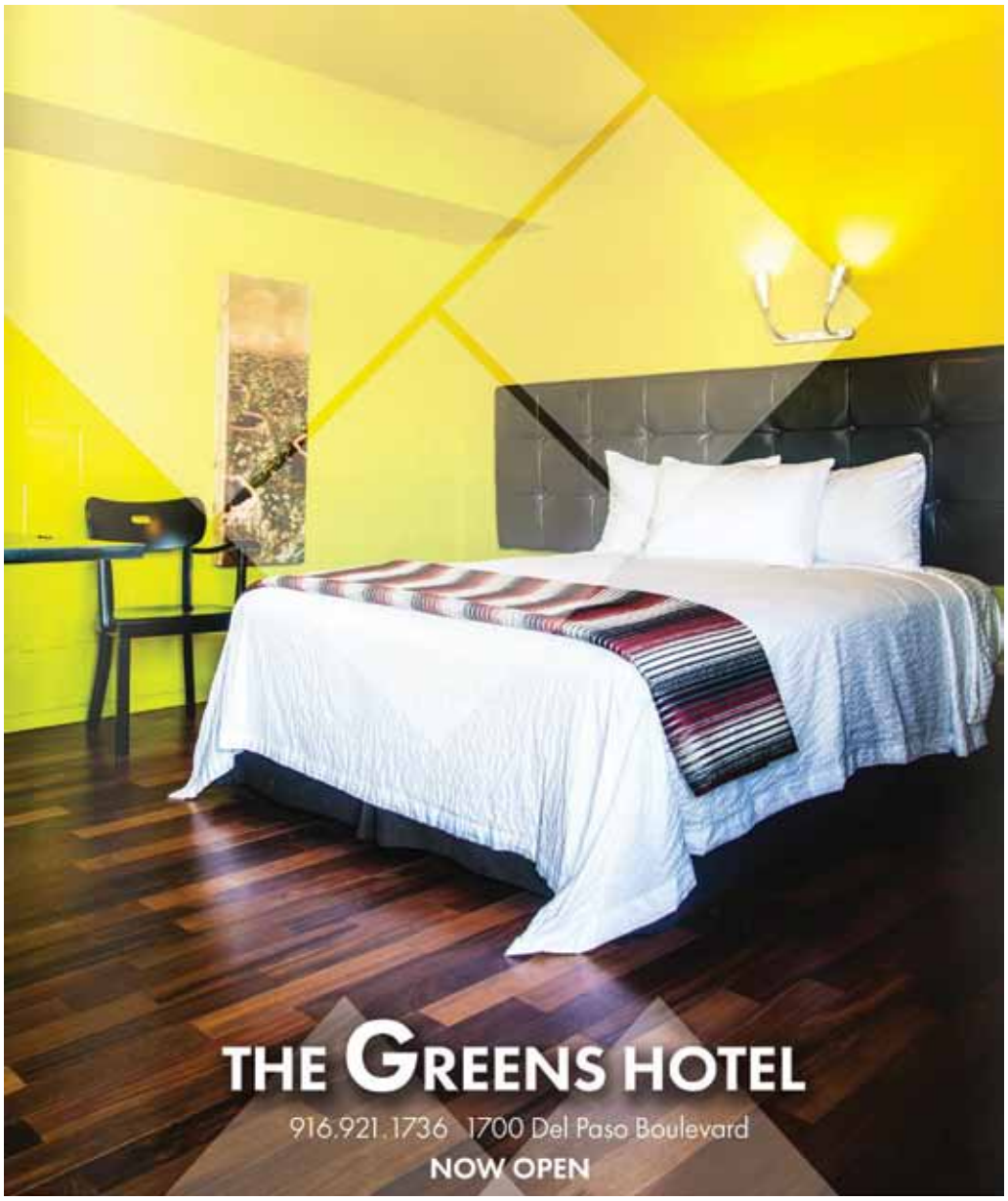
Originally known as the South of Market Bare Chest Calendar Men, Team BCC 2015 is a diverse group of men from the Bay Area, and includes Sean Ryan, Guy Johnson, Matt Johnson, Jacob Juarez, LaGuan Lea Jr., John Marino, Fons Mendoza, Brad Weintraub, Rick Latulippe, Ron Evicimen, Al Saadia and Dane Whitaker.

And while all of the contestants are currently bay area residents, they have come from as far away as Istanbul, Turkey, Fairbanks, Alaska and Cork, Ireland and range in age from 26 to 60. Other vital statistics we will leave up to your imagination.

The Men of 2015 are hoping to build on the success of the 2014 calendar men who raised over $107,000. Since 1985, the Bare Chest Calendar has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the AIDS Emergency Fund and Positive Resource Center.

The last chance to meet the men in 2014 and get your calendars signed is December 6, starting at 9 p.m. at the Bolt Bar, located at 2560 Boxwood St. (916-649-8420). In addition to the Calendar Men, Mr. Bolt Sacramento 2015 and former Mr. Bolts will be on hand and there will be a Beer/Soda Bust and a chance to win raffle prizes. As always, there is never a cover at The Bolt.

For more information, and to preview the Calendar, visit Barechest.org and SacBolt.org.



Sac Ballet and Front St. Animal Shelter Team Up for a Unique *Nutcracker*

Most of the time when you think of ballerinas and their dogs, perfectly coiffed Poodles and Lhasa Apsos probably dance into your mind. But that was yesterday's ballerina, today you're more likely to find them matched up with Pit Bull puppies and adorable shelter dogs.

Sound impossible and absurd? Well that is exactly what the Front Street Animal Shelter and the Sacramento Ballet have done.

For the first time in the 60-year history of the Sacramento Ballet, this year's holiday tradition of the Nutcracker will have a furry and slobbery twist. In a unique and creative partnership, the Ballet and the Shelter have incorporated a real shelter pup into each show.

Lead ballerina, Alexandria Cunningham, in her 9th season with the Sacramento Ballet, has certainly never seen anything quite like this. Despite having performed for 21 years in this Christmas classic, Alexandria was mesmerized at a recent rehearsal by the magical power the pups had over the entire dance troupe.

"Rehearsal with shelter dogs, especially the puppies, certainly changes the climate for even the most stoic and disciplined of performers," said Cunningham.

The Nutcracker, which runs the entire month of December, is sure to bring even greater joy to its audiences, because not only will a different shelter dog make a guest appearance during each performance of the show, but there will be many other adoptable dogs available for belly rubs and wet kisses during intermission. The good news, all of them are hoping to find a home for the holidays. Whose home? Hopefully your home!

This classic Christmas story and fairy tale ballet has been performed since the late 1800s, originally opening in Moscow and premiering in the U.S. in the 1940s. The story centers on a young girl on Christmas Eve and her discovery of love and our big magical world. It's hard not to wonder what Tchaikovsky would say if he knew puppies were now part of his classic.

"True joy and incredible energy resonated throughout the evening as the Sacramento Ballet team prepared for the most important performance of their lives," said Gina E. Knepp, Front Street Shelter's Animal Care Services Manager after a recent rehearsal. "Helping find homes for the lost, stray and abandoned animals that end up at the Front Street Shelter is truly a remarkable partnership and something everyone hopes will encourage anyone looking for a new pet, to consider a shelter pet first."

Find out more about Sacramento Ballet's The Nutcracker at www.sacballet.org/nutcrackermutt/ and see if some of the shelter puppies, kittens, cats and dogs can dance their way into your heart at www.SacPetSearch.com.

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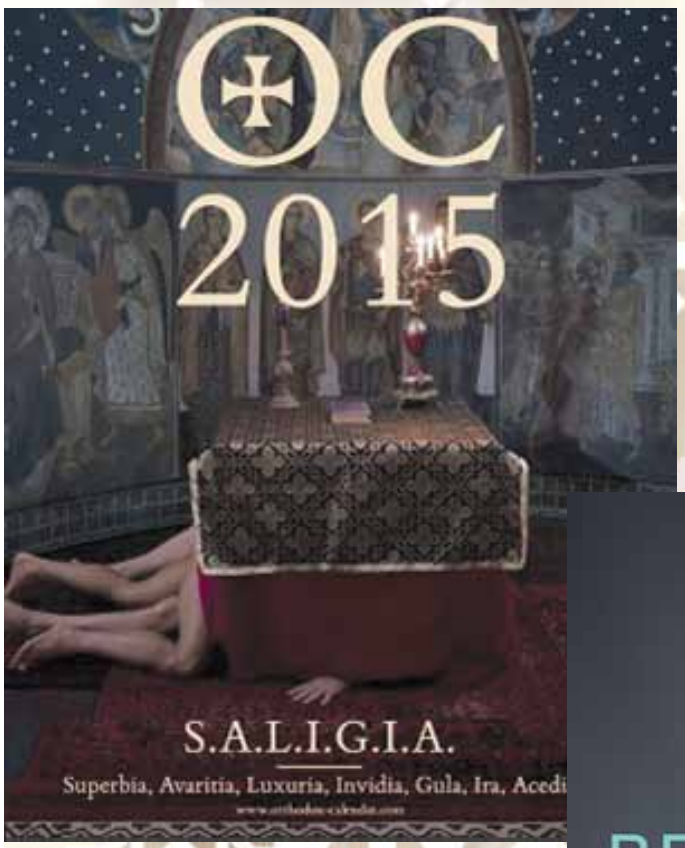
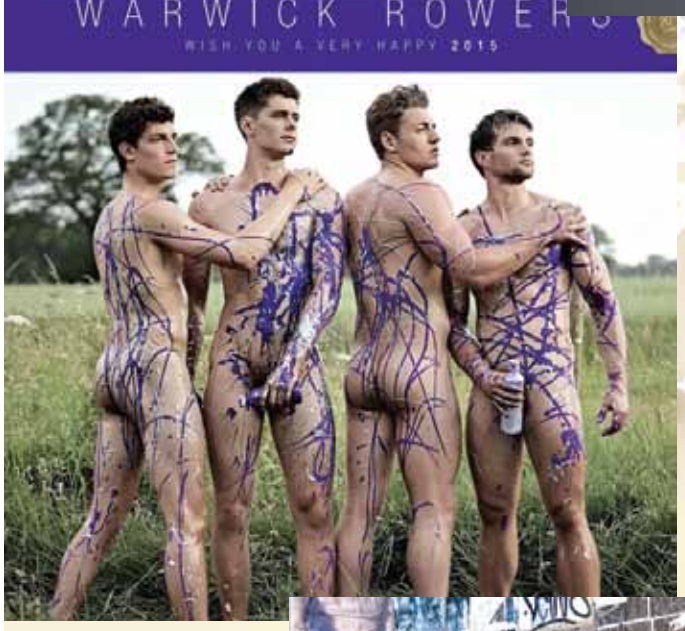


S.A.L.I.G.I.A.
The third in a series of homoerotic Orthodox calendars is called "S.A.L.I.G.I.A." and pays tribute to social tolerance, and takes place on the right bank of the Moskva River south of Moscow. www.orthodox-calendar.com/priests_confess/

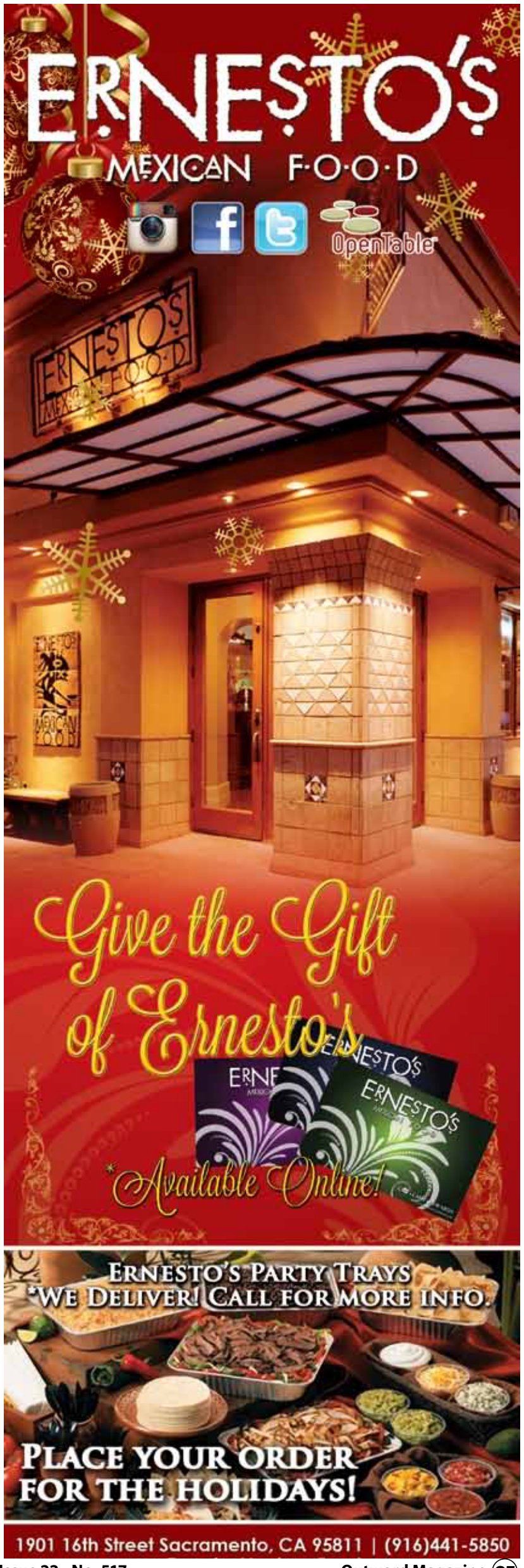
Ben Cohen 2015
Everyone's favorite rugby player is back with a new calendar to benefit his Stand Up Foundation to help fight bullying. www.standupfoundation.com



Warwick Rowers 2015
These humble (and very attractive) straight gents are advocating for the fight against bullying and homophobia in school and sport. www.warwickrowers.org/shop

It's All Butch 2015
A journey full of diverse life experiences is caught in this calendar that benefit building homes for the poor. itsallbutch.com

Barihunks
Baritone and Barihunks model Donovan Singletary is one of the 19 sexiest men singing in opera today. www.barihunks.blogspot.com



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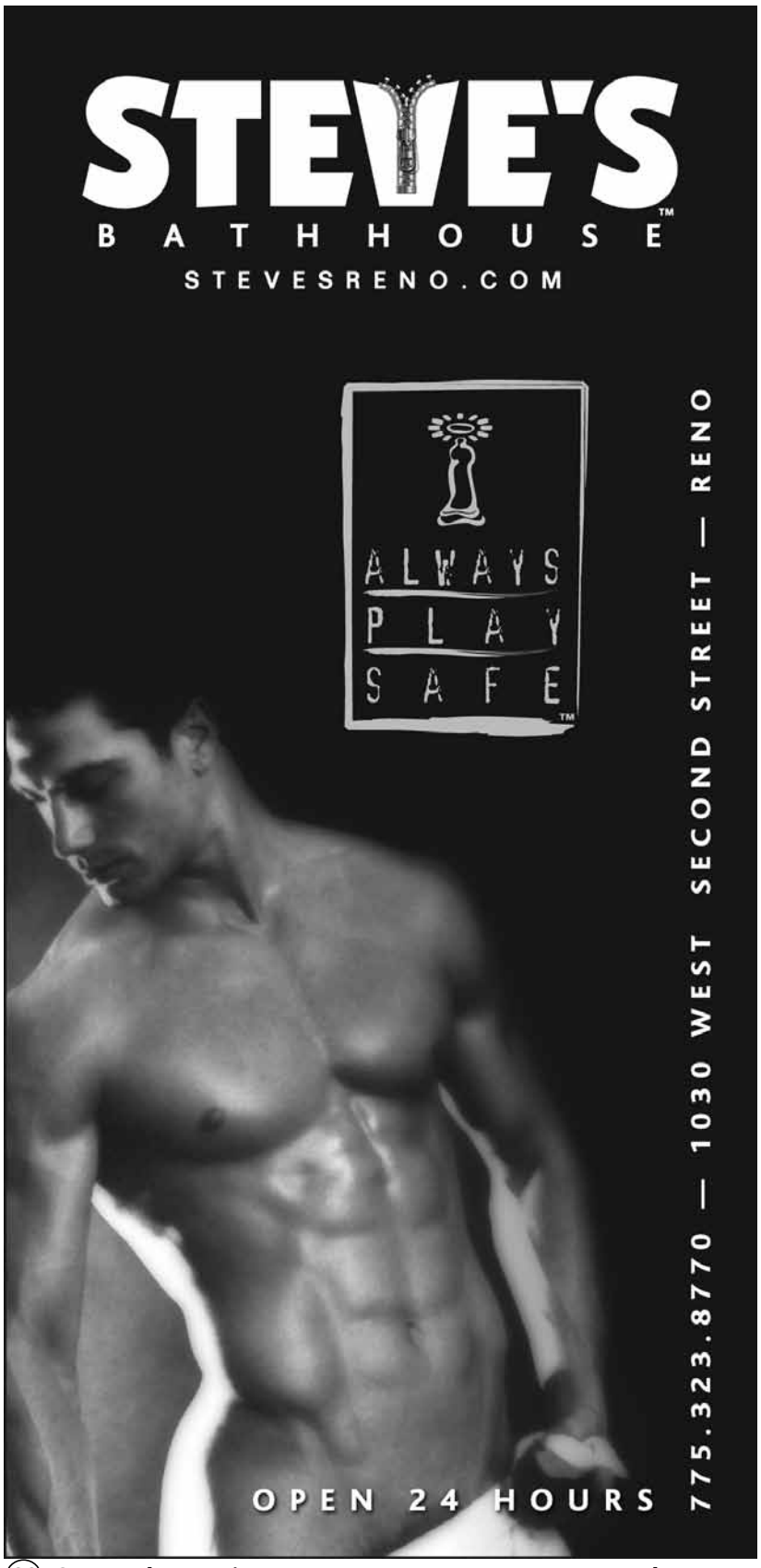

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David Sedaris' Crumpet The Elf Returns to Capital Stage

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Catholic

continued from page 6

New Ways Ministry (www.newwaysministry.org), which has been a leader in the battle within the Catholic Church for reform on LGBT issues, responded to the Synod, categorizing the final draft as a disappointment, but stated it intends to stay in the battle until change is achieved. We need to be supportive of their efforts and of those in our community who are people of faith, and not dismissive.

Mark Segal, PGN publisher, is the nation's most-award-winning commentator in LGBT media. You can follow him on Facebook at www.facebook.com/MarkSegalPGN or Twitter at https://twitter.com/PhilaGayNews.

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