

outword

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EQCA Endorses Hillary Clinton for President in 2016

Equality California, the nation's second largest LGBT membership organization, has endorsed Hillary Rodham Clinton in the 2016 presidential election, becoming the first major LGBT organization in the nation to endorse the former Secretary of State for President.

"We want Hillary Clinton to run and are ready to mobilize our 800,000 members to help her win," said Equality California's Executive Director Rick Zbur. "We're enthusiastic about her candidacy because she has the best record of accomplishment on LGBT issues of any potential candidate. Equality California is ready for Hillary!"

As Secretary of State, Clinton has championed the rights of LGBT people around the world, making LGBT rights and acceptance a global priority. In 2011, former Sec. Clinton gave a historic speech on International Human Rights Day at the United Nations in Geneva, saying: "Gay rights are human rights, and human rights are gay rights."

"Under Sec. Clinton's leadership, the Department of State used its full range of diplomatic and development tools to combat violence and discrimination against LGBT people worldwide," said Zbur. "Thanks to her efforts, LGBT rights became a core principle of U.S. foreign policy in an unprecedented way."

Throughout her career in public service, she has been a champion for LGBT equality and acceptance within the United States. In a video message, Clinton states, "I believe America is at its best when we champion the freedom and

dignity of every human being - that's who we are, it's in our DNA."

As a U.S. Senator, Sec. Clinton had an extremely strong record supporting equality issues. She was a co-sponsor of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. As a Senator, she also was a vocal advocate for HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, voted against a proposed constitutional ban on same-sex marriage and voted to add sexual orientation to the definition of hate crimes.

"Although she has yet to formally announce her candidacy, we unequivocally believe that she is not only the most qualified candidate, but also the best candidate to advance LGBT rights," Zbur said. "With this unequivocal support of her presidential bid, EQCA decided to take the unusual step to extend an early endorsement of Hillary Clinton to urge her to enter the presidential race. Along with our endorsement, we're gearing up to fully support her candidacy for President by activating our members to mobilize around her campaign."

For more information, visit <http://www.eqca.org>.

Ocular Syphilis Cases in Gay Men Prompt Health Warnings

Since December 2014, as many as 15 cases of ocular syphilis – a sexually transmitted disease which has led to blindness in several of the individuals – have been reported in men who have sex with men on the West Coast.

Confirmed cases in Washington State, San Francisco as well as two suspected cases found in Los Angeles that are currently under investigation are raising alarm among public health officials, community care providers and prevention specialists.

In December and January, Washington State health officials reported six people diagnosed with ocular syphilis – including two who have gone blind – according to recent Washington Department of Health public warnings and news articles.

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

On February 20, the San Francisco Department of Public Health issued its own Health Advisory on ocular syphilis. The advisory noted that, "Since December 2014, seven cases of ocular syphilis have been reported in San Francisco. Five of the affected individuals were men who have sex with men and six were HIV-infected."

The San Francisco advisory also noted, "Several of the cases have resulted in a significant and permanent decline in visual acuity."

On March 5, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LAC DPH) issued an advisory on ocular syphilis, noting that, "While no cluster [of cases] has been identified in Los Angeles County, two independent cases of possible ocular syphilis are currently under investigation."

"These new cases of ocular syphilis highlight the importance of ongoing, regular check-ups for sexually-active individuals who feel they may be at risk, particularly men who have sex with men," said AHF President Michael Weinstein.

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

A recent CDC STD surveillance report found that California's syphilis rate was second in the U.S. only to Georgia.

Judy Shepard to Attend Sacramento Commemoration of Hate Crime Act

by Bonnie Osborn

Five years have passed since enactment of the landmark Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act. In addition to providing funding and technical assistance for hate crime prosecutions, the act also added the categories of religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and disability to the federal hate crimes law.

On Thursday, April 2, the office of U.S. Attorney Benjamin Wagner will commemorate this legislative milestone at a free special event at The Well, 2nd floor Terrace Suite, on the California State University Sacramento Campus, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Judy and Dennis Shepard, parents of Matthew Shepard, who was murdered in an anti-gay hate crime in Wyoming in October 1998, and co-founders of the Matthew Shepard Foundation, will be special guests. (Please note: Seating is limited. Please RSVP to Sean.Vassar@usdoj.gov or 916-554-2907 for directions and a free parking pass.)

The anniversary offers an opportunity to both celebrate progress made in combating hate crimes and “to dedicate ourselves to the work necessary to enforce the Act even more effectively going forward,” Wagner said. “We owe a great debt to the Shepard family for their unceasing efforts in support of this cause, and I am particularly grateful for their presence and participation in our efforts in Sacramento.”

Judy Shepard spoke to *Outword* recently about the impact of her son’s death and of the work that still remains to be done.

She believes there is better public and law enforcement awareness of hate crimes today than prior to Matthew’s death in 1998. “We still have a serious problem with reporting,” she said, “and there are still worries that if you report you will be re-victimized by local law enforcement, by their own or organizational bias.”

In rural, isolated areas with small LGBT populations, community and law enforcement support may still lag behind federal law, Shepard said.

“Sometimes it’s easier to go along to get along,” she said. “That’s not to say you can’t do something. Share your own experiences,



Judy Shepard

how this has affected you. This is about protecting all our citizens. I know Sacramento is terrific, I know your outlying areas, not so much. It has a lot to do with the leadership in each community.”

The Foundation website (www.matthewshepard.org) includes a link to “Matthew’s Place,” an online community created by the Foundation to offer LGBT youth, particularly in remote locales, a space to safely share their stories and find peer support.

Seventeen years after Matthew’s death, Shepard continues to hear often from people who remember and were affected by the 1998 tragedy. “The people of Matt’s age ... are now running for office, running companies; they are people of influence now,” she said. “I hear them say, gay or straight, how much that incident awakened their awareness and changed their views. Now a new generation is doing The Laramie Project, a play about Matthew Shepard’s murder and how it impacted others, hearing those stories.”

For more information about the work of the Matthew Shepard Foundation and The Laramie Project, visit www.matthewshepard.org.



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Briefly Put

Anti-Harassment Act Introduced to Combat Bullying and Harassment at Colleges and Universities

Legislation that would work to reduce the bullying and harassment epidemic at colleges and universities across America, where LGBT youth are twice as likely to be harassed as their peers, has been introduced by U.S. Senators Patty Murray (D-WA) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), along with Congressman Mark Pocan (D-WI).

The Tyler Clementi Higher Education Anti-Harassment Act of 2015, reintroduced on March 18, requires institutions of higher education to establish policies to prohibit harassment based on actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion.

The bill also establishes a grant program to support campus anti-harassment activities and programs. The legislation is named after Tyler Clementi, a freshman at Rutgers University who took his own life after his roommate and another student invaded his privacy and harassed him over the Internet.

Oregon House Passes Conversion Therapy for Youth Ban

The Oregon House voted 41 to 18 to pass HB 2307, the Youth Mental Health Protection Act, which would ban conversion therapy for youth in Oregon. The bill now moves to the Oregon Senate.

The Act will prevent licensed mental health care providers in Oregon from practicing "conversion therapy" on youth under the age of 18. Its passage is a top legislative priority for Basic Rights Oregon (basicrights.org.) in 2015.

"I am lucky that as a kid I was never subjected to conversation therapy and told there is something wrong with me that needed fixing. It would not have worked, and if I had to endure conversion therapy along with adolescence I don't know. I might not be here before you today, in this capacity, on this floor." - Representative Rob Nosse (D-Portland), who carried the bill on the floor.

NJ SPCA Police Chief Resigns After Homophobic, Transphobic, Racist Texts Exposed

Monmouth County SPCA Officer, Sue DesMarais, has exposed the homophobic, transphobic, and racist text messages of Monmouth SPCA Police Chief Victor "Buddy" Amato, who, following the posting of a story in Buzzfeed about his texts resigned.

"Sue DesMarais saw injustice, acted, and is a hero," said Andrea Bowen, Executive Director of Garden State Equality.

Amato's texts compared Michelle Obama to an ape, made fun of slain black teenager's Michael Brown's death, and included a Christmas song with homophobic lyrics.

CalPERS Board Diversity Urged for Women, People of Color and LGBT Persons

The California Public Employees' Retirement System, working at the request of State Treasurer John Chiang, took steps on March 16 to promote increased corporate board room diversity by broadening its definition of diversity to include applicants' sexual orientation.

The move comes after the Treasurer sent a letter to both of the State's major pension funds asking them to explore an expanded view of board diversity.

"Companies benefit when their boards include voices from many backgrounds," said Chiang. "During the last three decades, there has been such a dramatic shift in demographics and in the consumer marketplace that to maintain the 'Mad Men-era' status quo is to ignore the new consumer power held by women, individuals from the LGBT community and persons of color. With diversity comes new ideas, and those ideas can help companies thrive and fuel a stronger economy for all Californians."

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Folsom Mother Says “No More Bullying!”

by Colt McGraw

When Lori Anderson’s son, Max, came out, she vowed to be his biggest advocate, a promise she has kept. Still, after years of seeing bullying and discrimination, she has decided to do more and to take matters into her own motherly hands by creating Folsom LGBT Youths.

Folsom LGBT Youths goals are to promote acceptance, equality and unity for all LGBT youths in Folsom, especially in response to the lack of LGBT support and resources in Folsom. Plans are to offer a meeting place for Folsom youths age 12-18 – a place where they can feel safe to be themselves and connect with like-minded kids.

They also hope to provide support and resources for parents and families of LGBT kids or kids who are questioning their sexuality.

Those are ambitious goals, and *Outword* wanted to know more about what motivated Lori Anderson to take them on.

Why did you decide to start a support group?

When Max came out, I knew it was important to get him connected to a supportive community where he could be accepted as his wonderful self – free from judgment or the bullying he’d already experienced. I did a lot of research and found that the local schools have GSAs, but we don’t have access because we left the district to keep him safe from bullies. The only support group I found that wasn’t school-

affiliated was the Sacramento LGBT Community Center – which is great, but too far from Folsom to easily build lasting friendships.

What do you hope to achieve?

I’m hoping that there are other LGBT kids in the surrounding communities, who aren’t served by the school GSAs, and who need community, like Max does. I hope we can create a judgment-free place where they can hang out, meet new friends, access resources and get their questions answered. Most importantly – I hope they keep coming back because it’s fun!

What concerns do you have raising a gay son?

Especially during the teenage years, self esteem is so critical – it can be hard to feel good about yourself when you see how different you are from others and when your peers don’t “get” you. I also worry a lot about his safety – we know too well that the world can be a scary place when you belong to a culture that is misunderstood.

What types of resources and public/personal figures will you use to



Max and Lori Anderson

educate yourself and your son about the history of homosexuality and its evolution in American culture?

Despite being only 14, Max is an avid proponent for equal rights, so we track current LGBT issues daily through our favorite news sources including *Slate*, Rachel Maddow, Chris Hayes, and *Huffington Post’s* Gay Voices. Because he believes so strongly that gender should simply be a non-issue, I’m pretty sure that Max will someday use his talents and life experience to ensure equal rights for all.

For more information about Folsom LGBT Youths visit www.folsomlgbtyouths.org or [Facebook.com/FolsomLGBTYouths](https://www.facebook.com/FolsomLGBTYouths).

Colt McGraw is a freelance writer in Sacramento, and frequent contributor to Outword. He can be reached at mrcoltmcgraw@yahoo.com.

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Jonathan Groff to Be Honored at Horizon Award at Gala

Actor Jonathan Groff is being recognized with the Point Horizon Award as a young trailblazer who has taken a leadership role as an advocate of the LGBTQ community.

Groff, currently starring in HBO’s critically acclaimed series *Looking* and appearing in the Public Theater’s hit musical *Hamilton*, was nominated for a Tony Award for his performance in *Spring Awakening*.

Groff will receive the Point Horizon Award at the April 13 Point Honors gala at the New York Public Library. The gala program also features the presentation of the Point Courage Award to actor Jeffrey Tambor. The evening is a benefit for Point Foundation, the nation’s largest scholarship-granting organization for LGBTQ students of merit.

“As a proud member of the ever-evolving LGBTQ community, I am so moved by how the Point Foundation truly brings us together

as a community in order to reach back and help the youngest generation find pride and inspiration in being who they are,” said Groff. “The Foundation helps these young LGBTQ scholars, at perhaps their most vulnerable age, realize that the thing that makes them different can be one of their greatest assets.”

“Jonathan Groff is a young star of great talent, ambition and vision – very much like our Point Scholars,” said Jorge Valencia, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of Point Foundation. “He is a proud member of the LGBTQ community and uses his position to speak about both the challenges and opportunities young LGBTQ



Jonathan Groff

people face in society. As an actor and an advocate, Groff is an inspiration to the next generation of LGBTQ leaders.”

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Plans Advance for 20th & K Rainbow Crosswalk

by Bonnie Osborn

An effort months in the making to designate a section of Midtown as “Lavender Heights” got a vote of support recently from the Midtown Business Association, which approved initial plans to install rainbow-striped crosswalks at the intersection of 20th and K streets.

“We believe a designated Lavender Heights district will be an attraction, benefiting local businesses and boosting tourism and convention traffic,” said Sacramento Rainbow Chamber of Commerce President Paul Weubbe. “Even more importantly, it will be a way of connecting future generations with the history and achievements of the leaders who have gone before us. Educating and raising awareness of issues affecting the LGBT community is a core mission of the Foundation.”

Design and installation of the crosswalks are projected to cost approximately \$35,000. The Chamber, under the auspices of its 501(c)3 Rainbow Chamber Foundation, has voted to make the first official donation to the fundraising effort of \$500 and has set up a Lavender Heights Project account with Wells Fargo Bank to receive tax-deductible donations for the project.

The Chamber will work with other community organizations, including the Sacramento LGBT Community Center and Prime Timers, business owners such as FACES’ owner Terry Sidie, and community activists such as David Heitstuman and Gary Federer to publicize the fundraising drive, Weubbe said. The Midtown Business Association has agreed to help obtain city permits and maintain the crosswalks following construction.

The Lavender Heights neighborhood traditionally has been a hub of gay culture and LGBT community activities in Sacramento; several gay-owned clubs and



restaurants and the Sacramento LGBT Community Center are located near the 20th and K intersection.

LGBT activists and civic leaders have been working for the past several months with City Councilmember Steve Hansen’s office to create an official Lavender Heights district. Boundaries of the new district would be I Street on the north, N Street on the south, 19th Street on the west and 21st Street on the east.

Hansen, the city’s first openly gay city councilmember, said the Lavender Heights

historically has been a “safe place” for LGBT people to gather. “That meant a lot to the generations that came before us,” he said.

Additional ideas for delineating the Lavender Heights district include street sign toppers, banners or public art installations. Other Sacramento neighborhoods previously

have won official neighborhood designations, including the Handle District, Alkali Flats and Mansion Heights.

To make a tax-deductible contribution to the Lavender Heights crosswalk project, checks payable to Lavender Heights Project can be mailed to the Rainbow Chamber Foundation, P.O. Box 160126, Sacramento, CA 95816. Or donate online at Business. RainbowChamber.com/events/details/lavender-heights-project-fundraiser-49. Donors will receive a letter of acknowledgement.

Rainbow Village Housing for LGBT Elders Plans Continue

The LGBT Community has benefited greatly since the fall of Prop 8. For many, both in the legal and social aspects, life has improved. However, there is one group that has not been getting needed attention for quite some time, and that is LGBT elders.

To address the needs of Sacramento’s LGBT elders, Sacramento Rainbow Village, a non-profit organization, has been formed to develop LGBT housing in the Sacramento region. The concept for the development would include mixed-use, non-profit as well as for-profit property that would become much-needed affordable housing for LGBT seniors.

Kaye Crawford, founder and chairperson of the planning committee for Sacramento Rainbow Village, is in the process of identifying community partners and potential funding sources, and reaching out to local and state officials to build interest and hopefully help pave the way to develop the housing project.

A recent study by SAGE (Services and Advocacy for LGBT Elders), titled Out and Visible, states that one in two (51 percent) LGBT older people are very or extremely outwordmagazine.com

concerned about “being lonely and growing old alone,” as compared to 19 percent of non-LGBT people. Also, 44 percent of LGBT older adults are very or extremely interested in living in an affordable LGBT-friendly housing development at some point in the future.

“Today in the U.S. there are four affordable rental housing projects focused on LGBT elders – with a total of 285 units,” lamented George Raya, Rainbow Village co-chairperson. “There are 104 units in Los Angeles at Triangle Square, 46 units in Minneapolis at Spirit on Lake, 56 units at the John Anderson Apartments in Philadelphia, and 79 apartments at the Town Hall development in Chicago.

“Now reflect on the reality that there are around two million LGBT folks that are 65 and older and that number is expected to reach three million by 2030. So where are

these hundreds of thousands of LGBT elders going to find safe, secure, respectful and affordable housing if we only have less than 300 units spread across the country?”

Crawford has been committed to developing not only an affordable community housing project for LGBT seniors, but also a project that would include stimulating activities to enhance their quality of life and a holistic environment to promote healthy growth.”

“I have spent most of my life working for dignity and equality for gay and lesbian Americans,” Crawford said. “I hope to create an impact by bringing this issue to the forefront of being recognized as a critical need. The quality of life of those older Americans can improve greatly by being accepted, being welcomed and being socially active.”

For more information about Sacramento Rainbow Village or to offer your assistance contact Kaye Crawford at kayecwfrd@yahoo.com or check out their website at www.sacramentorainbowvillage.com.

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Out & About

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We took our show on the road and headed to Davis to raise funds for the Phoenix Rising Coalition and Davis Pride on Thursday, March 19, and thanks to the amazing folks that turned out at Wunderbar – beyond standing room only – we raised \$1,037 that will be used to kick off this year's Pride in Davis! Thanks to Domemoore, Rusty Nails and Felicity Diamonds for making it a wild and crazy night. DQB has now raised over \$96,758, thanks to all you amazingly generous Bingo Players! You can see more fun photos - and download them for free at OutwordOutAbout.shutterstock.com.



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When Planning a WineCation, Don't Pass by Paso Robles

Diana Kienle

California wines have a huge following, and while Napa has the biggest reputation, there are some beautiful wines coming out of California's Central Coast. This region is definitely worthy of a visit, or a WineCation. We visited the area a while ago and had a wonderful time.



Specifically, my spouse Cathy and I visited Paso Robles and stayed at the Hotel Cheval. Paso Robles is a quiet town with excellent food and a quaint town square. Our experience was refreshing and relaxing.

The hotel itself was small, and the well-appointed rooms surrounded a peaceful courtyard. Chairs were set in the courtyard in front of fireplaces, and there was a nightly S'mores service. Yes – a young gentleman would come around with a cart, and you could order your flavor of marshmallow with a specific chocolate. Yes, I am admitting right here that I sat back and let him make a S'more for me!

As for the wine, the region of the Central Coast has a diversity of terrain, wind, water, soils, climate, fog, and sunlight, all combining to produce wines capable of competing with the best in the world.

The Paso Robles American Viticultural Area (AVA) is one of the larger appellations in the Central Coast AVA. It is known for its outstanding Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Merlot. It is also known for wonderful Rhone-style wines (my favorites out of this area) such as Syrah, Grenache, Roussanne, Viognier and Mourvedre.

Also, an increasing number of growers and vintners in the Paso Robles area are enjoying success with Italian varieties, such as Barbera, Sangiovese and Nebiolo.

The Rhone reds are big and earthy with great spice. In Paso, you will find great richness of these wines.

The list of outstanding wineries continues to grow in this area. If you see some of these names, I would encourage you to try the wines: Booker, Denner, Epoch, Terry Hoage, L'Adventure, Linne Calodo, Herman Story, McPrice Myers, Torrin, and, of course, Justin, just to name a few.

Saxum is another winery out of Paso Robles whose wine received top honors from *Wine Spectator* as their #1 wine of the year for 2012. If you get the chance, pop a cork and give them a try.

Some of the attributes of this area are the casual atmosphere, relaxed pace, and more affordable price point of the wines. Visit Paso and plan for a pleasant, rewarding time. To read more about wine tasting in Paso Robles, visit www.dianaswineblog.com.

Diana Kienle is a freelance writer and blogs about wine at www.dianaswineblog.com. She can be reached at diana@dianaswineblog.com.

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Word on the Street

What Do You Think of the Idea of Putting a Rainbow Crosswalk at the Corner of 20th & K Streets?

Asked at 20th & K



Suzanne Milana

I think it is a great idea, it will bring the community together and everyone can talk about it. Maybe they could even put a mural in the center of it.



Billy Ray Parrish

As long as the taxpayers don't have to foot the bill, I'm OK with it. I think it's a great idea, it will brighten up our community a little more.



Brandon Venerable

I think it is great. It fosters diversity and promotes equality in the city, so I am all for it.



Kylee Giovanetti

If I saw a rainbow crosswalk I'd be dancing across it!



Aimee Chilson

I love it! We should do a rainbow crosswalk *Abbey Road* reshoot on it.



Patrick Harbison

I think it is a wonderful thing for our city. What better way to demonstrate how inclusive the City of Sacramento is then to really embrace the LGBT community?

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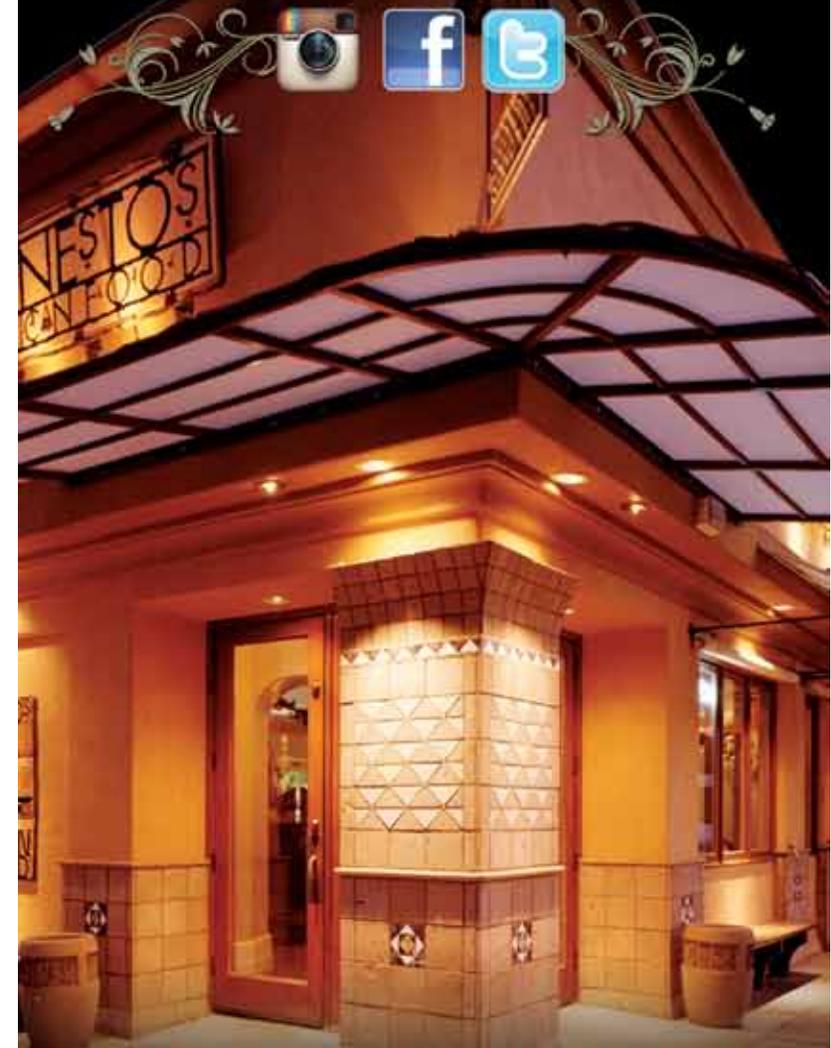
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Fernando Miro Flies High In *Varekai*

by Chris Narloch

Dancer, acrobat, and certified handsome devil Fernando Miro received a wonderful Christmas present last year: he took over the lead in Cirque du Soleil's international touring show, *Varekai*, on December 25, 2014.

The 27-year-old performer is a veteran of Cirque du Soleil, having previously appeared in *Criss Angel Believe* and *Michael Jackson The Immortal World Tour*.

Miro has also worked with Taylor Swift, *Panic! At the Disco*, and photographer David LaChapelle.

I spoke with Miro recently about the journey to *Varekai*, which features his first starring role in a Cirque du Soleil show.

Fernando, I know you play Icarus in the show, and it sounds as if the story has been tweaked for this version, right?

Yes. Instead of him landing in the ocean and drowning, Icarus lands in this mythical forest full of creatures. They catch him, and he has no idea where he is, but he gets to meet all these exotic creatures and interact with them. So, it's like Icarus getting a second chance, and what is he going to do with his life now because he can't fly anymore.

How would you describe *Varekai* to someone who has never seen a Cirque du Soleil show?

It's a super-fun show for the whole family. Very colorful, and it has a story you can follow. And the different acts in *Varekai* are ridiculously talented.

Do you sing in the show?

Not really. I can sing, but I mainly am an acrobat, a dancer, and a circus performer. There is a lot of acting in this show because my character tells the story. It's his journey.

You're originally from Puerto Rico?

Yes, but I moved to Las Vegas when I was 20. I live in Los Angeles now.

Where does one go to learn how to be a circus performer?

There are several major schools, one in Montreal, which is where the Cirque du Soleil headquarters is, and there is one in France and also Australia. I started training in November in Montreal for *Varekai*.



I started as a gymnast first, when I was younger and then became a professional dancer. After I moved to Vegas, I started training in the circus arts.

So you've never had a fear of heights?

I don't believe so. I think my first professional gig as an aerialist I was 50 feet up, and I had no safety net or anything. After that, I knew I could do it.

I understand you toured with Taylor Swift on her *Speak Now* tour?

Yes, for over a year. It was awesome. It was a worldwide tour. I had two aerial numbers in the show and a lot of dancing. I played a janitor character that was madly in love with Taylor.

What is she like to work with?

Super fun. When we were cast, we had to meet her in person, and she knew exactly what she wanted from each person. It was a bit scary in the beginning, performing in front of 17,000 people, but I got used to it pretty quickly.

Now, you are on another long tour with *Varekai*. Do you sometimes miss your family and friends and your boyfriend?

That's the only downside to touring. The company that we work with really becomes your family on the road, but I do miss my friends and my partner as well. But you make it work. Like next week, we have a two-week break so I get to see him for two weeks, which is great.

What does the tattoo on your arm say? It looks like Latin.

It is Latin. One of them says, "You were born with wings," and I actually got it long before I was cast as Icarus, believe it or not, because my mom used to tell me stories about angels when I was a kid. And now I am playing a character that is famous for flying like an angel.

Varekai plays April 9-12 at the Sleep Train Arena in Sacramento. For more information, go to www.cirquedusoleil.com/varekai.

See Jane Sing at Mondavi

by Chris Narloch

Tickets are going fast for the area debut of that stunning songstress Sue Sylvester, or rather the Emmy and Golden Globe-winning actress who plays her on *Glee*, Jane Lynch.

Hopefully, there will be a strict policy of "no slushies allowed" at the Mondavi Center when Lynch brings her *See Jane Sing* tour to that hallowed hall on the campus of UC Davis.

Lynch has quite a way with a tracksuit, but she was renowned for her comic timing long before she hit it big on *Glee*. Her career-defining roles in Christopher Guest's *Best in Show* and Judd Apatow's *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*



Jane-Lynch. Photo by Starla-Fortunato.

established the performer as a go-to comic and supporting actress.

Before that, Lynch cut her theatrical teeth at Second City, the Steppenwolf Theatre and, as she describes it, many church basements all over the Chicago area.

For this special evening, Lynch and her band, The Tony Guerrero Quintet, will pull out all the stops: expect musical comedy and a not-too-serious, but totally heartfelt, exploration of American standards and show tunes.

Jane Lynch will perform at Mondavi on Thursday, April 9 at 8 p.m. Visit www.MondaviArts.org.

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Don't Miss Ai Weiwei Exhibit on Alcatraz

by Chris Narloch

You have until April 26, 2015 to view one of the most unique art installations to be seen anywhere in the United States this year, and a trip to Alcatraz is all that is required.



One of Ai Weiwei's installations at Alcatraz

@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz is the exhibition in question, and it is the creation of an artist who is internationally renowned for work that removes the distinction between art and activism.

The Chinese artist has been repeatedly persecuted and also imprisoned by his government, but Ai fearlessly continues to raise questions about freedom of expression

and human rights with his work.

In this exhibition of new works created specifically for Alcatraz, Ai comments on the island's layered legacy as a 19th-century military fortress, a notorious federal penitentiary, a site of Native American heritage and protest, and now one of America's most visited national parks.

Revealing new perspectives on Alcatraz,

Ai's sculpture, sound, and mixed-media installations occupy four locations in the former prison: the New Industries Building, a group of cells in A Block, the Hospital and the Dining Hall.

With the exception of the Dining Hall, these areas are usually not accessible to the public, but all are open throughout the run of the exhibition. @Large turns Alcatraz into a space for dialogue about how we define liberty and justice, individual rights and personal responsibility.

The artworks directly and imaginatively address the situation of people around the world who have been deprived of their freedom for speaking out about their beliefs – people like Ai himself.

A vocal critic of his nation's government, Ai was secretly detained by Chinese authorities for 81 days in 2011, and is still not permitted to travel outside China.

As a result, the artist was unable to visit Alcatraz during the planning of this exhibition: he developed the artwork at his studio in Beijing, with the help of the FOR-SITE Foundation.

But constraints have only galvanized the artist's commitment to art as an act of conscience. With this project, he aims to expand our understanding of "the purpose of art, which is the fight for freedom."

For more information, visit www.aiweiwei.com and www.alcatrazcruises.com.

A Same-Sex Couple Wedded To Dance

by Chris Narloch

You may have seen the pair poised in mid-air for their stunning promotional photos, but you probably did not know that those two beautiful male stars of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater are in fact husband and husband.

World renowned performers Antonio Douthit-Boyd and Kirven Douthit-Boyd were married on June 7, 2013, just weeks before DOMA was struck down by the Supreme Court.

Antonio, 33 and Kirven, 30, made history as the first same-sex, actively dancing Alvin Ailey members to marry each other. The Douthit-Boyd's incredible off stage connection only adds to their indelible impact onstage.

The *New York Times* has described Antonio's artistry as "majestic," "incandescent," and "boundless," while *The Boston Globe* recently called Kirven "a tour de force."

You can witness their artistry firsthand when Alvin Ailey's 2015 National Tour stops at Zellerbach Hall on the campus of UC Berkeley, April 21-26.

For more information, please visit www.AlvinAiley.org.

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Elections Underway for CGNIE Emperor and Empress 42



The Court of the Great Northwest Empire is holding elections for its new Emperor and Empress, and you get a vote! The candidates for Emperor 42 are Santos Rosales and Spade RoyalGotti and the candidates for Empress 42 are Jowana Piece St. James, Harmony Envy and Miss Truffles. Voting will be on Saturday, April 4 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Kennedy Gallery, on the corner of 20th and L Streets. Joining them in the photo, center, is Court supporter George Raya.

New Girls On the Block Will Tell it Like it Is



New Girls On The Block follows a group of highly inspirational and entertaining women from Kansas City, MO. – all friends, some couples – who just happen to be transgender, as they confront issues with their relationships, their femininity, their families and friendships. The six-part series will premiere on Discovery Life Channel on Thursday, April 2 at 10 p.m.

Video Highlights LGBT Catholic's Efforts to Own Their Faith



The short video *Owning Our Faith* eloquently and clearly depicts the struggles LGBT Catholics endure on a daily basis as they try to achieve the full acceptance of LGBT persons in the Catholic Church. The video can be watched at www.owningourfaith.com.

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You will love *The Way He Looks* on DVD

by Chris Narloch

If you see one movie on DVD this month, I recommend you watch *The Way He Looks*, the official Brazilian entry for Foreign Language Film at the 87th Academy Awards, and the winner of seven film festival Audience Awards for Best Feature Film.



Fabio Audi (Gabriel) and Guilherme Lobo (Leonardo) in a scene from *The Way He Looks*.

Subtly directed by Daniel Ribeiro, and starring Fabio Audi and Guilherme Lobo, the movie tells the story of Leonardo and Gabriel, two teenaged boys who fall in love with each other. Beyond the obvious hurdle of being gay, the classmates face the challenge that one of the young men is blind.

The same-sex attraction develops slowly, and the film is filled with wonderful, slice-of-life moments such as the one in which the blind boy is taught how to shave for the first time by his father.

Both young leads are superb in the movie, as is Tess Amorim, who plays the female friend who is attracted to both boys. *The Way He Looks*, in Portuguese with easy to read English subtitles, is not to be missed.

Know Your Rights/California: Social Security and the LGBT Community

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(in partnership with Sacramento LGBT Community Center)

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For more information on these and other Town Halls in the Bay area visit: <http://www.ncpssmfoundation.org/Portals/0/know-your-rights-initiative-california.pdf>

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So, as we all know, fashion designers Dolce & Gabbana (past gay lovers) have made a statement opposing all types of "synthetic" or otherwise unnatural births, including babies raised by homosexual couples. They believe that the only family worth perpetuating is the "traditional one." Well, Openly Jake can explain it all to you at youtube.com/watch?v=OU9Uzw1g0&app=desktop

Crystal inspires us

When fatigue, upper body pain and nausea overwhelmed Crystal one day, she brushed off suggestions she could be having a heart attack. After all, she was young and had no obvious risk factors.

But heart disease symptoms in women can be subtle and unique, and often go unrecognized. Friends pointed Crystal to UC Davis, home of the nation's first program dedicated to treating and preventing cardiovascular conditions in women.

Tests revealed three narrowed blood vessels, including one dangerous enough to require a stent. With help from the UC Davis Women's Cardiovascular Medicine Program, Crystal has since changed her diet and exercise regimen to avoid future problems. Now she shares her story so other women will "know their numbers" and the warning signs of a cardiac event.

To learn more about Crystal's new lease on a heart-healthy life and the comprehensive, nationally ranked cardiovascular services available at UC Davis, visit medicalcenter.ucdavis.edu

One team. One choice.
One UC Davis.



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