

# outWord

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# RedRover in North Carolina Providing Emergency Sheltering for Animals Impacted by Hurricane Helene

In response to the devastating impact of Hurricane Helene, on Monday RedRover® mobilized its RedRover Responders volunteers to assist the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services with the emergency sheltering of vulnerable animals impacted by the disaster. Widespread catastrophic flooding and power outages have been recorded across the state.

RedRover has sent two staff Team Leaders and RedRover Responders volunteers to help care for animals September 30-October 6 at state-run emergency shelters. They began helping at the Western North Carolina Agriculture Center Shelter in Fletcher, and now are at the Salisbury State Operated Shelter (J.F. Hureley Family YMCA) in Salisbury, North Carolina.

"We are grateful we could answer the call and be on the ground helping the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services provide care and comfort to the animals displaced by Hurricane Helene," said RedRover Director of Field Services Beth Gammie. "Our dedicated RedRover Responders volunteers are working tirelessly to ensure every animal affected by this disaster receives the help they need during this challenging time."

With more than 4,800 trained volunteers in the United States and Canada, RedRover can deploy its volunteers quickly when communities become overburdened by a crisis involving a large number of animals. The volunteers provide a skilled and compassionate workforce which enables a jurisdiction to address large-scale natural disasters.

In its 37-year history, RedRover has responded to more than 270 natural disasters and other crises around the country including Hurricanes Katrina, Ian, Andrew, and Harvey, the Virginia lab beagle rescue, Northern California wildfires, Superstorm Sandy, and many more.

### Ways to Help

Donate to RedRover's Emergency Response Fund at [RedRover.org/HurricaneHelene](http://RedRover.org/HurricaneHelene)

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*Since 1987, RedRover has focused on bringing animals out of crisis and strengthening the human-animal bond through emergency sheltering, disaster relief services, financial assistance, and humane education. RedRover is a founding member of the National Animal Rescue and Sheltering Coalition (NARSC), established after Hurricane Katrina's devastating impact to more people and animals than any other storm in the history of the United States. RedRover has earned a coveted 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator. To learn how RedRover is creating a more compassionate world, visit [RedRover.org](http://RedRover.org).*

# How You Can Help Hurricane Rescue Efforts

To support rescue efforts for Hurricane Helene or any similar natural disaster, here are the top three ways to help:

### 1. Donate to Trusted Relief Organizations

**Why:** Financial donations allow relief organizations to allocate resources quickly and efficiently, providing essential supplies such as food, water, shelter, and medical care.

**How:** Donate to established relief organizations like the Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Global Giving, or local charities that are directly involved in the affected area.

### 2. Volunteer Your Time or Skills

**Why:** Many organizations rely on volunteers for rescue operations, logistics, medical assistance, and distribution of resources.

**How:** Contact disaster relief organizations to see if there are opportunities for either

in-person volunteering or remote assistance (e.g., crisis hotline support, organizing supplies). If you have specialized skills like medical training or search-and-rescue expertise, your help may be needed on the ground.

### 3. Provide or Coordinate Supply Drives

**Why:** Communities affected by hurricanes often need immediate access to basic supplies such as non-perishable food, water, hygiene products, blankets, and clothing.

**How:** Organize or contribute to supply drives with specific lists of needed items. Coordinate with local authorities or relief groups to ensure that donations meet the needs of those affected. Partner with local businesses or community centers to amplify efforts.

Each of these efforts, whether through donations, volunteering, or supply coordination, can make a tangible impact on the rescue and recovery process following a major hurricane.



# Outword Staff

PUBLISHER  
Fred Palmer

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE PUBLISHER  
Julie Ebe

ART DIRECTOR/PRODUCTION  
Ron Tackitt

GRAPHIC DESIGN  
Julie Ebe  
Ron Tackitt

EDITOR  
[editor@outwordmagazine.com](mailto:editor@outwordmagazine.com)

ARTS EDITOR  
Chris Narloch

SALES  
Fred Palmer

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS  
Chris Allan  
Matthew Burlingame  
Diana Kienle  
Chris Narloch  
Judy Saint  
Ron Tackitt

PHOTOGRAPHY  
Chris Allan  
Ron Tackitt

ON THE COVER  
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Photo by Troy Hallahan

ADVERTISING SALES  
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Fred Palmer

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# The List

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www.outwordmagazine.com  
[sales@outwordmagazine.com](mailto:sales@outwordmagazine.com)

PHONE: (916) 329-9280

**Mailing Address**  
1026 Florin Road, #344  
Sacramento, CA 95831

**Outword Magazine Inc.**



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# CCAF's Scholarship Student Goes from Prison to College

by Guy Farris

**R**esilience, transformation, and hope. Those watchwords describe the journey of 28-year-old Natalie Michalik. She's faced more challenges than most people could ever imagine.

Her traumatic story caught the eye of the Capital City AIDS Fund (CCAF) Committee when reviewing applications for the Helen Veress Mitchell Scholarship Fund. "It sounded almost unbelievable," said CCAF Scholarship Chair Stuart Eldridge.

"It was worth a follow-up phone call, Eldridge continued. "And we confirmed what she wrote in the application. We funded Natalie last year when she was attending college while serving jail time. We funded her again this year after she was released and enrolled in school. It's been an honor to help her advance as a student and a human being."

On home arrest and wearing an ankle monitor, Natalie reflects on her early life as being turbulent. "My life has been quite a rollercoaster," said Natalie. "From the age of 12, I struggled with a methamphetamine addiction. By 14, I was in and out of juvenile detention."

Natalie's mother had cancer and couldn't take care of her. At 16, Natalie went into foster care.

She became homeless, and that's how she lived most of her teen years. "I was sleeping outside of stores, in parks, in alleys, and always on the move," said Natalie.

Then, she became pregnant, had a child, and got sober. Another pregnancy with twins followed.

In 2018, while in labor delivering the twins, Natalie was diagnosed with HIV. She was three years drug-free and living in San Diego. But the HIV diagnosis threw her into a tailspin.

Natalie became severely depressed. Her children were taken away. And she once again landed behind bars. While imprisoned, Natalie enrolled in college, and that's when she found CCAF.

With lots of help, Natalie emerged from the darkness. Now, like many other CCAF scholarship recipients, she is committed to helping others in similar situations. She's also



working to get her kids home.

That ankle monitor Natalie wears allows her to attend college. Her goal is to become a social worker specializing in assisting incarcerated people living with HIV/AIDS.

Natalie finds the stigma associated with HIV to be one of her biggest obstacles. She said that she has been rejected by partners, unfairly judged, and faced threats while being in custody.

Determined to raise awareness, Natalie speaks openly about her experiences. She uses her story of recovery to break down the stigma surrounding HIV.

"Knowing that there are places like CCAF that support the advocacy we need in this world for people with HIV/AIDS helps motivate me to continue my dream of making a change," said Natalie. "We all have a purpose. We just have to find it."



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**Website:** [https://linktr.ee/LGBTQ\\_Historic\\_Experience](https://linktr.ee/LGBTQ_Historic_Experience)

**The SECOND DRAFT is online and  
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**LGBTQ+ history is best told by those who lived it firsthand.** We are seeking the public's help in reviewing the draft to make sure we capture a well-rounded overview of the LGBTQ+ community's history in Sacramento. Join us at the Preservation Commission to learn more about the project, to pick up a printed copy, and to make sure your story is told.

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## The Right's Raid on Libraries Is So Extreme, Even the Dictionary Is Under Fire

by Jesse Hagopian, TRUTHOUT

It may have started off as an ordinary fall school day at a high school in the Wentzville School District of Missouri in 2022, but when a police officer entered the school library, the day took an unsettling turn. The school librarian didn't know why the officer was there until he approached her and explained that he was investigating a complaint — she had been accused of distributing pornography to students.

The librarian listened as the officer told her that certain books in her collection, like *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Gender Queer: A Memoir*, had triggered the accusations he had come to investigate. She was dumbfounded. These books were not pornography as someone had charged; they were award-winning works of literature and personal memoirs that explored themes of identity, gender and social control. Yet here she was, being interrogated by police for simply doing her job.

"It felt surreal," she later told reporters, declining to be identified for fear of her safety. "I was scared to have a police officer questioning me over books. It didn't seem real."

In the Wentzville School District, more than 200 books were banned as part of the wave of censorship sweeping through Missouri and the nation. Tom Bastian, the ACLU's deputy director of communications, explained to the *Columbia Missourian*, "It is unconstitutional for Missouri's lawmakers to threaten teachers and librarians with criminal offenses for observing students' First Amendment rights." But despite legal challenges and public outcry, bans have continued to grow around the country, turning school libraries into battlegrounds and pushing educators and librarians into the crosshairs.

In 2023 alone, the American Library Association reported 4,240 unique book titles being targeted for censorship — a 65 percent increase from 2022. Almost half of these attacks in 2023 were aimed at books representing the voices and experiences of LGBTQIA+ and Black, Indigenous and other communities of color.

Florida passed a law making it a third-degree felony for teachers to allow students

to access banned books — many of which deal with issues of race, gender or sexuality — carrying with it up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine.

In Tennessee, a school district banned the Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic novel *Maus*, which tells the story of the Holocaust, while the right-wing parent group *Moms for Liberty* (MFL) demanded the removal of a book about Martin Luther King Jr.

In Pennsylvania, *Brand New School*, *Brave New Ruby* and *The Story of Ruby Bridges* — which tells the story of a courageous 6-year-old Black girl who was the first to integrate a white Southern elementary school — were also banned. Idaho passed a law that could lead to the prosecution of librarians who check out books deemed harmful to minors.

In a suburban district near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, *Queer: The Ultimate LGBTQ Guide* by Kathy Belge and *This Book Is Gay* by Juno Dawson were removed from shelves, and students' library borrowing records were sent to parents on a weekly basis.

Even the dictionary is now too subversive because it does, after all, contain the words "racism," "sex" and "transgender."

In Wyoming, a public library board fired head librarian Terri Lesley in July 2023 after she refused to pull certain titles.

The Escambia school district in Florida even issued a ban "pending investigation" of — wait for it — Merriam-Webster's *Elementary Dictionary*. Even the dictionary is now too subversive because it does, after all, contain the words "racism," "sex" and "transgender." The satirical Seattle newspaper the *Needling* ran the headline "Florida Bans 'LGBTQ' from Alphabet" — an absurdity rivaled only by the actual policy of banning

continued on page 21

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## SF Mayor London Breed Announces New, Permanent Home For LGBTQ History Museum

San Francisco will establish a permanent home for the nation's first LGBTQ museum at 2280 Market Street, located in the heart of the Castro neighborhood, following years of temporary locations. Mayor London Breed and Supervisor Rafael Mandelman announced this historic development, which will preserve and celebrate LGBTQ history, culture, and arts for future generations. The new site will serve as the GLBT Historical Society Museum and Archives, housing its collections and providing a full-scale research center.

In 2021, Mayor Breed allocated \$12.5 million for the project, which was followed by an additional \$5.5 million from the State of California, secured through the efforts of Senator Scott Wiener. The 14,640-square-foot parcel at Market and Noe streets features a two-story building with 22,330 square feet of space, and a 33-space parking lot. Once acquired, the museum will have approximately 11,165 square feet on the second floor, with plans to expand into the ground floor as leases expire over the coming years. The museum's current location, a smaller 1,660-square-foot space, will be replaced by this significantly larger facility.

Mayor Breed emphasized the Castro's importance as the center of LGBTQ culture, highlighting the significance of establishing a permanent museum in this iconic neighborhood. Supervisor Mandelman praised the Mayor's long-term commitment to the project, which involved exploring multiple sites before finding an ideal location in the heart of the Castro. Senator Wiener expressed pride in securing state funding to ensure the project's success and to solidify the Castro's position as a world-class LGBTQ destination.

The museum will not only showcase the rich history of San Francisco's LGBTQ community but will also serve as an educational resource for future generations. Roberto Ordeñana, Executive Director of the GLBT Historical Society, emphasized that the new facility will preserve the stories, struggles, and hopes of LGBTQ leaders, ensuring that their legacy continues. Ken Ikeda, CEO of the Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST), echoed this sentiment, expressing excitement about contributing to the preservation of LGBTQ



photo courtesy of glbthistory.org

history and culture.

The City's acquisition of the property will involve a partnership between the GLBT Historical Society and CAST, which will manage and operate the site. The Real Estate Division will lease the property, with the aim of the GLBT Historical Society eventually owning it. The City and its partners plan to establish a public-private partnership for property management. The purchase agreement will be introduced to the Board of Supervisors in October, with final approvals expected by mid-2025.

In addition to the museum, the Castro neighborhood continues to grow as a vibrant hub for LGBTQ life, with new businesses opening and events planned to enhance the community. Mayor Breed's legislation waiving City fees for outdoor street events will support several upcoming events in the Castro, further cementing its place as a beacon of LGBTQ culture and history.

Additional information on the GLBT Historical Society may be found at: [www.glbthistory.org/overview-mission](http://www.glbthistory.org/overview-mission)



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## Second Trump Term Would Roll Back LGBTQ+ Rights and Freedoms

A Washington Post article by Hannah Knowles explored the potential rollback of LGBTQ+ rights under a second Trump presidency. As former president Donald Trump seeks re-election in 2024, his campaign has increasingly centered on anti-LGBTQ+ policies, signaling a sharp turn against gender identity protections. Civil rights organizations like the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) warn that his agenda could lead to significant erosion of rights and freedoms for LGBTQ+ Americans, even in traditionally progressive “blue” states.

A key focus of Trump’s platform is the removal of federal protections for gender identity, a move that could drastically affect transgender individuals. Trump has proposed cutting off Medicare and Medicaid funding for healthcare providers who offer gender transition services to minors, including hormone therapy and surgery. He also wants to

Clarence Thomas’s suggestion that rulings protecting gay marriage and access to contraception could be revisited has further heightened concerns.

The article underscores that Trump’s evolving stance on LGBTQ+ issues represents a marked departure from his earlier political career when he positioned himself as more tolerant of gay



withhold federal funding from schools that support gender-affirming care for children and strip any federal initiatives promoting transgender identity. Such measures could effectively restrict access to critical medical care for transgender youth, particularly in states that already have laws limiting these procedures.

Trump’s agenda extends beyond healthcare, as he is expected to further solidify his influence on the federal judiciary by appointing more conservative judges. These appointments could shape future rulings on LGBTQ+ issues, raising concerns about the potential reversal of key protections established in recent years. Trump’s first term saw the removal of references to sexual orientation from anti-discrimination guidelines in various federal agencies, and his administration consistently argued against expanding protections to include sexual orientation.

Civil rights advocates emphasize that Trump’s rhetoric and actions suggest he would pick up where he left off in his first term, with even more aggressive efforts to curtail LGBTQ+ rights. The article highlights that many of Trump’s proposals, such as banning gender-affirming care for minors and reinstating the ban on transgender individuals serving openly in the military, could be implemented through executive actions, making them difficult to counter even in states that have passed their own protections for LGBTQ+ residents.

The Supreme Court, which has moved further right with the appointment of three justices during Trump’s first term, also plays a pivotal role in the ongoing battle over LGBTQ+ rights. In 2022, the Court’s decision to overturn the constitutional right to abortion signaled the potential vulnerability of other rights, including those affecting the LGBTQ+ community. Justice

rights. However, in recent years, his alignment with conservative and evangelical Christian groups has pushed him toward a more overtly anti-LGBTQ+ stance, particularly concerning transgender issues. Trump’s campaign videos focus heavily on transgender rights, framing them as a critical issue without addressing broader concerns about sexual orientation.

Leslie Cooper of the ACLU’s LGBT & HIV Project cautions that even those living in progressive states should not feel insulated from the effects of a second Trump presidency. She argues that Trump’s plans would have nationwide repercussions, with federal actions superseding state protections in many instances. The potential removal of federal funding for gender-affirming care, for example, could severely limit access to this care across the country, regardless of state laws.

In response to the growing threats to LGBTQ+ rights, organizations like HRC are mobilizing voters to counter Trump’s agenda. The HRC’s Equality Votes PAC aims to galvanize the 75 million voters who support LGBTQ+ rights to turn out in force in 2024 and prevent what they describe as an “agenda of bigotry and hate.”

Ultimately, the Washington Post article paints a grim picture of the potential consequences of a second Trump term for LGBTQ+ rights. With his commitment to undoing federal protections for transgender individuals and his influence over the judiciary, Trump’s reelection could mark a significant rollback in hard-won rights for the LGBTQ+ community. Civil rights advocates warn that vigilance and voter turnout will be crucial to preventing these outcomes. For more on the Trump Project 2025 agenda, visit [DismantleProject2025.com](http://DismantleProject2025.com)

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# Little Activisms *by Judy Saint* Take Back The House – Or Suffer The Trumpequences

“Don't worry about voting,” Trump told a crowd in Derry, NH, on October 23, 2023. He kept repeating that oddity over and over.

October 23, 2023, Derry, NH, “You don't have to vote. Don't worry about voting.”

June 15, 2024, Detroit, MI, “I don't need votes.”

June 22, 2024, Washington DC, “I tell my people I don't need any votes. We've got all the votes we need. I don't need votes.”

June 28, 2024, Chesapeake VA “We don't need votes.”

July 25, 2024, Charlotte, NC, “Do not bother to vote for me. It doesn't matter if you do. I don't need your votes.”

July 25, 2024, Fox & Friends interview, “We don't need the votes.”

Trump says he doesn't care if his supporters vote – he has a different plan. So, dear readers, here is your early Hallowe'en fright: He is right. He can become president without winning the election. This is why he is out golfing half the time.

The plan: He doesn't need a majority of the electoral college when they officially count votes on January 6. He only has to keep Kamala from getting it. Then he becomes president. Here's the 12th Amendment of the Constitution:

“...the President of the Senate shall open all the certificates, and the [electoral college] votes shall then be counted ... if no person have such majority, then ... the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. ... each state having one vote...”

Here's the key to keeping Kamala under 270: “if a state's vote is not certified by the governor under seal, it shall not be counted.” The plan is to keep votes from being certified in a few key states where she won. Those votes won't be counted.

If Trump has more House state delegations on January 6, as he does now, he would be the next president.

Don't close your eyes to it. They're saying it out loud. Our hope is to win enough House seats to give Democrats a majority of state delegations.

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13th District (tossup) –Adam Gray (D) ... [adamgrayforcongress.com](http://adamgrayforcongress.com)

22nd District (tilts R) – Rudy Salas (D) ... [rudysalas.com](http://rudysalas.com)

27th District (tossup) – George Whitesides (D) ... [georgewhitesides.com](http://georgewhitesides.com)

40th District (likely R) – Joe Kerr (D) ... [joekerrforcongress.com](http://joekerrforcongress.com)

41st District (tossup) – Will Rollins (D) ... [willrollinsforcongress.com](http://willrollinsforcongress.com)

45th District (tilts R) – Derek Tran (D) ... [derektranforcongress.com](http://derektranforcongress.com)

47th District (tilts D) – Sen. Dave Min (D) ... [davemin.com](http://davemin.com)

49th District (likely D) – Rep. Mike Levin (D) ... [mikelevin.org](http://mikelevin.org)

“California has several of the most 2024 competitive races for the U.S. House of Representatives, races crucial to deciding who wins control of the chamber.” (Gillian Brassil, journalist)

From Hakeem Jeffries, the leader of the House Democrats, “I will do everything I can to stand up to far-right extremism in the People's House. I'm counting on grassroots Democrats from California ... Keep the faith.”

Donate to these House races individually or to DCCC.org which funds all key House races. Volunteer if you can, put out a yard sign, knock on doors, write postcards, and talk with those you know. The House members who will be sworn in next January 3 might decide the next president. This is worse than Hallowe'en fright night – because it's real.

*Little Activisms encourages readers to consider small changes we can make to help social causes, and to feel good about ourselves for taking small risks. Judy Saint is President of the Greater Sacramento Chapter of Freedom From Religion Foundation and author of The Pleasant Atheist Adult Coloring Book available on Amazon. She and her wife live in Roseville, CA.*

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## Breast Cancer Awareness Month: Shining a Light on Prevention, Treatment, and Hope

Every October, the world turns pink as communities, organizations, and individuals unite to observe Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This annual campaign is dedicated to increasing awareness about breast cancer, the most common cancer among women worldwide. Through education, fundraising, and events, Breast Cancer Awareness Month seeks to reduce the stigma associated with the disease, promote early detection, and support ongoing research efforts to find a cure.



### The Importance of Awareness

Awareness plays a critical role in the fight against breast cancer. It empowers individuals with the knowledge they need to take proactive measures for their health. One of the primary messages of Breast Cancer Awareness Month is the importance of early detection. When breast cancer is found early, at a localized stage, the five-year survival rate is over 90%. Regular self-exams, clinical breast exams, and mammograms can help detect the disease before it spreads, increasing the chances of successful treatment.

Beyond detection, awareness efforts also help to destigmatize the conversations around breast cancer. Many people feel fear or embarrassment when it comes to discussing their bodies and potential symptoms. Through public campaigns, testimonials, and media attention, Breast Cancer Awareness Month fosters a more open dialogue, encouraging people to seek medical advice without hesitation.

### Prevention and Risk Factors

Breast Cancer Awareness Month also serves as an opportunity to educate people about risk factors and prevention strategies. While some risk factors, such as age, family history, and genetics, are beyond a person's control, others are linked to lifestyle choices that can be modified to lower the risk of developing breast cancer.

Some prevention tips promoted during Breast Cancer Awareness Month include maintaining a healthy diet, exercising regularly, limiting alcohol intake, and avoiding smoking. Additionally, for those at higher risk, such as individuals with a family history of breast cancer or certain genetic mutations (like BRCA1 and BRCA2), doctors may recommend more frequent screenings or even preventive surgeries.

### Supporting Research and Treatment

Another major component of Breast Cancer Awareness Month is the support it generates for research. Events like charity

walks, fundraisers, and merchandise sales contribute millions of dollars each year to organizations focused on advancing breast cancer research. These funds are crucial for developing new treatments, improving existing therapies, and ultimately finding a cure for breast cancer.

One key area of research that has seen significant progress is targeted therapy. Unlike traditional treatments like chemotherapy and radiation, which can affect healthy cells as well as cancerous ones, targeted therapies focus on specific genetic mutations or proteins involved in cancer growth. This more personalized approach to treatment offers new hope for patients with different subtypes of breast cancer.

### The Power of Community

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is about more than just raising funds and promoting education—it's about community. Survivors, patients, families, and friends come together to share their stories, offer support, and

inspire one another. Events like the annual "Race for the Cure" or "Pink Ribbon" campaigns bring people together in solidarity, creating a sense of hope and resilience.

For those currently battling breast cancer, the awareness month offers a reminder that they are not alone. Survivors' stories provide encouragement, and the visible support from others, whether through donations, participation in events, or simply wearing pink, can lift spirits during challenging times.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is a time of education, action, and compassion. As awareness continues to grow each year, the focus remains on empowering individuals with the knowledge they need to protect their health, supporting cutting-edge research, and creating a sense of community for those affected by breast cancer. While the fight against breast cancer is far from over, the progress made through these collective efforts brings hope for a future where breast cancer is no longer a life-threatening disease. For more info: [www.nationalbreastcancer.org](http://www.nationalbreastcancer.org)

# David Černý Rebellion

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art museum

David Černý (Czech, born 1967). Tower Babies (detail), 2001-2008. Metal framework covered with fiberglass and paint, 132 x 102 x 48 in. Photo by Pablo Guezada, courtesy of Centro Cultural Tijuana (CECUT). This exhibition was organized by the Centro Cultural Tijuana (CECUT), an institution of the Secretariat of Culture of the Government of Mexico, and made possible by HOHMANN, Inc.





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# Relic Wine Cellars: Worthy of Your Time

words by Diana Kienle, Certified Specialist of Wine  
photo by Cathy Swamberger

This past week, I had the pleasure to visit Relic Wine Cellars. The winery is located in Napa, CA, up Soda Canyon Road. It is well worth the drive. While it is only 20 minutes off the Silverado Trail, it narrows and winds up the mountain side. Once you arrive, the scenery is truly beautiful. Quite frankly, one could just sit and look out at the valley and feel the relaxing mood settle in. I loved the views.

What we came for, though, was the wine. That was truly the value of the trip. We were greeted by Maddy, who is an educated professional who shared the wine and the story behind the wine with us. Our first taste, as we took in the lovely views, was a 2023 Vermentino that was grown in the Rutherford AVA. It is a light-skinned white grape, predominately found in Italy. It was a refreshing welcome to our tasting due to its high acidity and stone fruit flavors.

We moved into the cellar to dive into a tasting. The setting was relaxing and very chill. Our host, Maddy, was a resource and engaging, allowing us to explore the wines ourselves without a lot of “direction” that you get from some who lead your visit. We were free to taste and enjoy, yet Maddy was there to offer information as we would like. The tasting itself unfolded as a relaxed stroll through the wines.

There were five wines in the line-up with one surprise at the end. This included the wine we were greeted with, the Vermentino. We then moved on to a Pinot Noir – 2019 Silver Eagle from the Sonoma Coast that, on the entry, was full of bright red fruit. What followed was the 2019 Merlot from the Hyde Vineyard that was a rush of deep red and black fruit and finished soft and very smooth. For me, this was the star of the tasting with solid structure and a long finish. Wine Spectator awarded the wine 94 points. We also enjoyed the 2019 Cabernet Franc which was fruit forward and ripe with blueberries. Finishing off the line-up was the 2021 La Place Cabernet, the grapes coming from Calistoga. Another well-crafted wine, Jeb Dunnick awarded this luscious Cabernet 95 points.

This is a winery that is worth your attention. The owner and winemaker, Michael Hirby, was the winemaker at Realm until 2008 where he continued to hone his craft and pallet. Prior to that, he worked at Behrens & Hitchcock which truly set his wife (co-proprietor and general manager Schatzi Throckmorton) and him on the path to creating Relic.

Please look for their wines locally or simply go on-line to sample a few bottles for yourself. If you can, a visit is well worth your time.

Enjoy!



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## “What the Constitution Means to Me” Plus, “Come From Away” Comes Back

by Chris Narloch

Must-see theatre this month includes a perfectly timed B Street production of “What the Constitution Means to Me” and the return of a great modern musical titled “Come From Away.”

### B Street Theatre

I haven’t had the opportunity to see the B Street production of “What the Constitution Means to Me” yet, but I was blown away by a filmed version of the play from 2020 that starred the show’s playwright, Heidi Schreck, who had also performed the play off-Broadway and then on Broadway.

Elisabeth Nunziato should be perfect as Schreck, whose play recalls her own history with the Constitution, as a fifteen-year-old earning college money by participating in Constitutional debate contests around the country. An adult Schreck then highlights what she now sees as the pitfalls of the Constitution.

This incredibly insightful, compelling play also addresses themes of sexual assault, domestic abuse, and immigration, as well as the playwright’s own experience in getting an abortion in her 20s. I doubt that there will be a more urgent, timely play performed in Sacramento this year.

“What the Constitution Means to Me” performs at Sacramento’s Sofia through Nov. 10. For more information, please visit: <https://bstreettheatre.org>



### Harris Center

On September 11, 2001, the world stopped, but in the days that followed a small town in Newfoundland welcomed some 7,000 stranded airline passengers into their homes and their hearts. The Tony award-winning musical “Come From Away” tells the remarkable true story of these men and women.

Cultures clashed and nerves ran high during those days, but uneasiness turned into trust, music soared into the night, and gratitude grew into enduring friendships. I wouldn’t have imagined that anybody could create a feel-good musical around the events of 9/11 until I saw this heartwarming, powerful play.

“Come From Away” performs at Harris Center in Folsom this Oct. 22–27. For more information, visit: [www.harriscenter.net](http://www.harriscenter.net)

## Check Out These Gallery Shows

There are a multitude of terrific art galleries in and around Sacramento. Here are two intriguing shows you can see this October, one in Sac and the other in Davis.

### Pence Gallery

This art space in Davis is currently hosting an exhibit by artist Dave Webb titled “the grateful chair,” through this November 1st. The display of thought-provoking photography is the artist’s response to his wife’s cancer diagnoses and path to remission.

<https://pencegallery.org>

### ARTHOUSE

ARTHOUSE on R Street in Sacramento is proud to present the art exhibition “Latitude/Longitude” through this November 4th. The exhibit features large format pieces by Brad Morlock using brick charcoal and printmaking paper that challenge value and perspective.

Morlock is best known for creating immersive landscapes that look photorealistic from a distance, but on closer inspection reveal the textures and values used to create the image.

Morlock’s work has won numerous awards, including “Best in Show” at the Union Gallery at Sacramento State University and three “Awards of Merit” at the California State Fair Art Show. <https://arthouseonr.com>

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# New Research Reveals The Best States For Wine Enthusiasts by jeffbet.com

California is named as the best state for wine enthusiasts, with an overall index rating of 82.79. New York and Washington rank in second and third place, respectively. Mississippi is named the worst state for wine enthusiasts, with an index rating of 8.02. New research has revealed the best states for wine enthusiasts, with California taking the top spot—by a close margin.

Experts at JeffBet analyzed various factors, including the number of wine bars with a Tripadvisor rating of 4.5 or higher, the gallons of wine produced, and the months in optimal average temperature in each state. Index scores out of 100 were awarded to each state to determine the ranking.

In first place is California. The state is far and away the biggest wine producer in the US, with 680.3 million gallons of wine produced each year.

It performs very well in other metrics, too, with 0.61 gallons of wine consumed per capita, 193 wine bars, 352 wine tours, and 619 wineries rated 4.5 or higher. This gives the state a final score of 82.79.

New York ranks second, with a final score of 77.39. The state has 225 wine bars (more than California), 39 wine tours, and 232 wineries rated 4.5 or higher. Each New Yorker consumes an average of 0.49 gallons of wine annually, and the state produces 28 million gallons in total each year.

Third is Washington, which receives a final score of 72.20. The state is the second-largest wine producer in the country, churning out 40.7 million gallons each year. There are 84 wine bars, 26 wine tours, and 603 wineries

rated 4.5 or higher for oenophiles to enjoy.

Ranking in fourth place is Oregon, which has a final score of 70.60. Like its two neighbors to the north and south, the state has many wineries (there are 591 of them rated 4.5 or higher in the Beaver State), although it produces a much lower volume of wine than either of them: just 11.8 million gallons per year.

The state also boasts 84 wine bars and 26 wine tours rated 4.5 or higher, helping Oregonians to consume a yearly average of 0.68 gallons of wine per capita—the fourth highest in the country.

Massachusetts comes fifth, with a final score of 70.10. It has 37 wine bars, four wine tours, and 39 wineries rated 4.5 or higher, and each Bay Stater drinks an average of 0.59 gallons of wine per year.

Though much smaller than some of the other states ranked in the top 10, Massachusetts still manages to produce 792,000 gallons of wine per year.

In sixth place is Virginia. The 59 wine bars, 17 wine tours, and 307 wineries rated 4.5 or higher give the state a final score of 68.07 and go some way toward explaining the state's respectable output of 2.2 million

gallons of wine per year.

New Hampshire is in seventh place, with a final score of 61.71. Although there are just six wine bars, two wine tours, and 21 wineries (producing 159,300 gallons of wine a year) rated 4.5 or higher in the Granite State, the citizens of New Hampshire each consume an average of 0.76 gallons of wine per year—more than any other state besides Delaware.

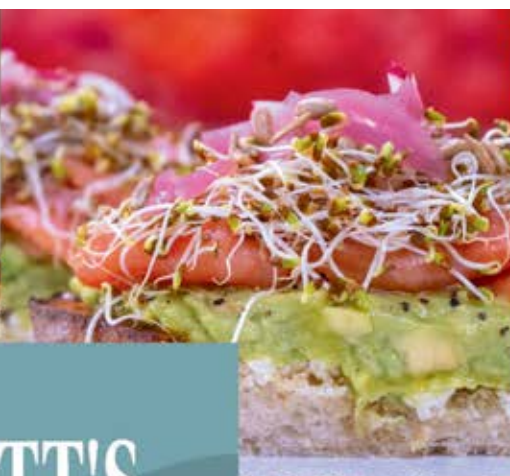
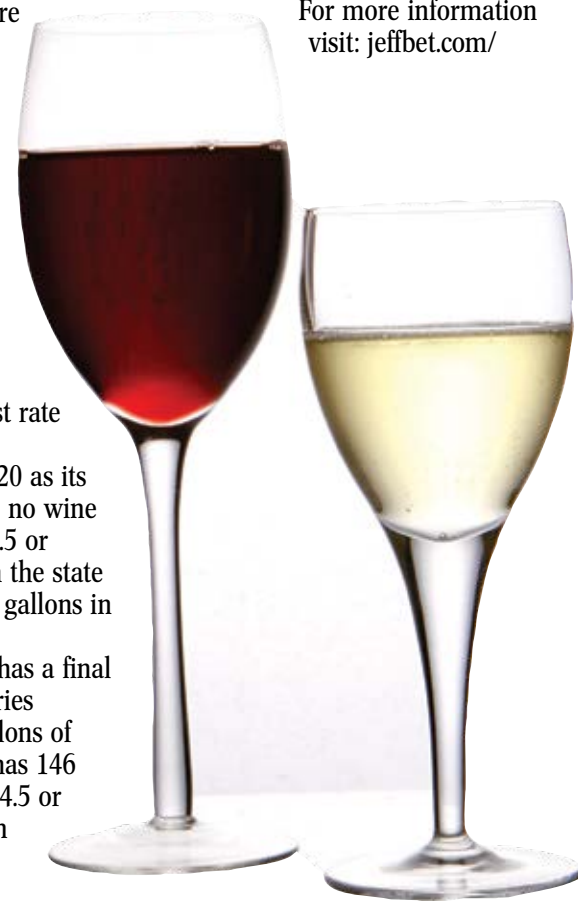
Vermont, with its final score of 61.27, is eighth. There are no wine tours and only three wine bars rated 4.5 or higher in the state, but its 21 wineries produce 2.2 million gallons of wine per year, and its citizens consume 0.72 gallons on average each year—the third-highest rate in the country.

New Jersey ranks ninth, with 61.20 as its final score. Like Vermont, there are no wine tours and just 11 wine bars rated 4.5 or higher, but there are 53 wineries in the state that produce an annual 1.8 million gallons in total.

At number ten is Florida, which has a final score of 59.58. Along with 39 wineries producing a total of 1.6 million gallons of wine per year, the Sunshine State has 146 wine bars and 27 wine tours rated 4.5 or higher. Each Floridian consumes an average of 0.58 gallons of wine per year.

With a final score of 8.02, Mississippi is the worst state for wine enthusiasts. The state produces no wine, has the fifth-lowest wine consumption per capita in the country, and has just three wine bars, three wineries, and no wine tours rated 4.5 or higher.

For more information visit: [jeffbet.com/](http://jeffbet.com/)

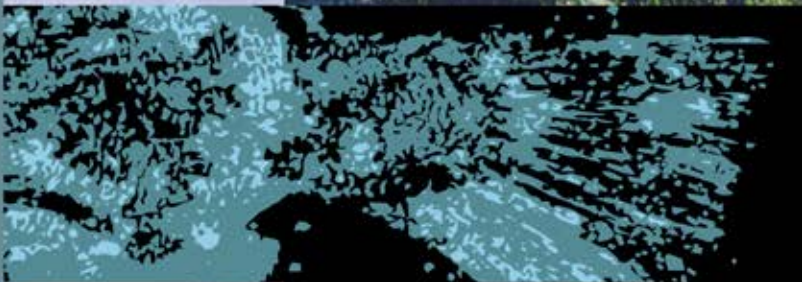
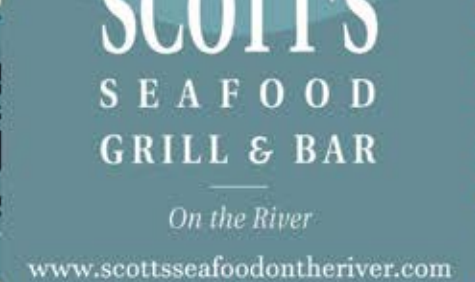
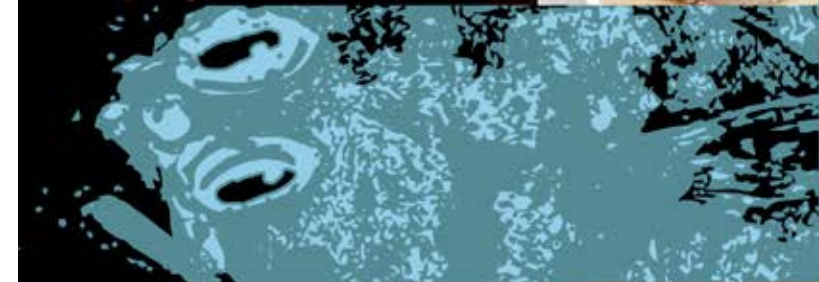


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# Saoirse, Kate, Gaga and Joaquin Plus, Don't Miss "The Wild Robot"

by Chris Narloch

One of my favorite actors, Maggie Smith, died recently, at the ripe old age of 89, and I wanted to briefly pay brief tribute to her genius here, before my movie reviews. Smith had an unrivalled acting career, bouncing brilliantly between movies, television, and the stage, both in the United States and England, for 70 years.

She will be greatly missed for her versatility, which allowed her to conquer comedy, tragedy, and everything in between, including her scene-stealing roles in "Downton Abbey" and the Harry Potter films. We will miss you, Maggie, but thanks for the amazing body of work you left behind.

## Joker: Folie a Deux

It must be monumentally depressing to spend many months and millions of dollars on an ambitious, risky film and then have the movie declared a colossal box office bomb before the opening weekend is half over, but that is the situation that this new movie finds itself in. (I had a bad feeling when the half-French and totally pretentious-sounding title of the film was announced.)

Moviemakers keep trying to turn their Marvel and DC comic book flicks into "art" when they would be better off admitting that they are making popcorn movies. Director Todd Phillips goes even darker and more depressing with the sequel to his Oscar-winning 2019 film, and then he tries to add musical fantasy sequences to offset the gloom and doom of the courtroom and jailhouse scenes - it doesn't work.

Poor Lady Gaga, who of course sings beautifully in the film, is saddled with an impossible to play character that is even more unappealing and unsympathetic than the Joker. Thank God I didn't have to pay to see "Joker: Folie a Deux," but I wanted to ask for my two hours back. In wide theatrical release (but probably not for long).



Joker: Folie a Deux



The Wild Robot

## The Wild Robot

The great Lupita Nyong'o provides the voice for the title character, Roz, in this beautiful, animated meditation on friendship and acceptance. Roz is a robot who washes up on a remote island and must learn to survive and adapt to her new environment and the natural world around her.

Roz is initially feared by the island's animals, but she eventually bonds with them and becomes their friend and the adoptive mother to an orphaned goose. The film's animation is vividly colorful, the story is heartfelt without being cloying, and I wouldn't be at all surprised if "The Wild Robot" wins the Oscar for Best Animated Feature next year. In wide theatrical release.

## The Outrun

The camera loves Saoirse Ronan, and the American-born, Irish actress is once again on point in this compelling new drama, playing a troubled woman who returns from London to the wild beauty of Scotland's Orkney Islands where she grew up, hoping to heal her addictive past.

The German director and screenwriter Nora Fingscheidt steers clear of the usual rehab and recovery tropes in "The Outrun," with a fragmented approach to storytelling that takes a little getting used to but successfully conveys the heroine's splintered emotional state. If, like me, you're a Saoirse Ronan fan, then this movie is a must-see.



The Outrun



Lee

## Lee

The always reliable Kate Winslet gives another solid performance in this moving biopic about Elizabeth 'Lee' Miller, an American fashion model who hated modeling and became an acclaimed photographer during World War II, documenting the horrors of the Nazi era at a time when war correspondent was far from a typical career path for a woman.

Winslet is a perfect fit for the feminist story of a woman who is remembered for her grit and her groundbreaking work. Lee paid a personal price for that determination, and this mostly traditional but still stirring biopic honors her memory.

*Note: "The Outrun" and "Lee" were still playing at Sacramento's Tower Theatre as we went to press.*



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**Thurs. 31st: DJ, Karaoke, Costume Contest**

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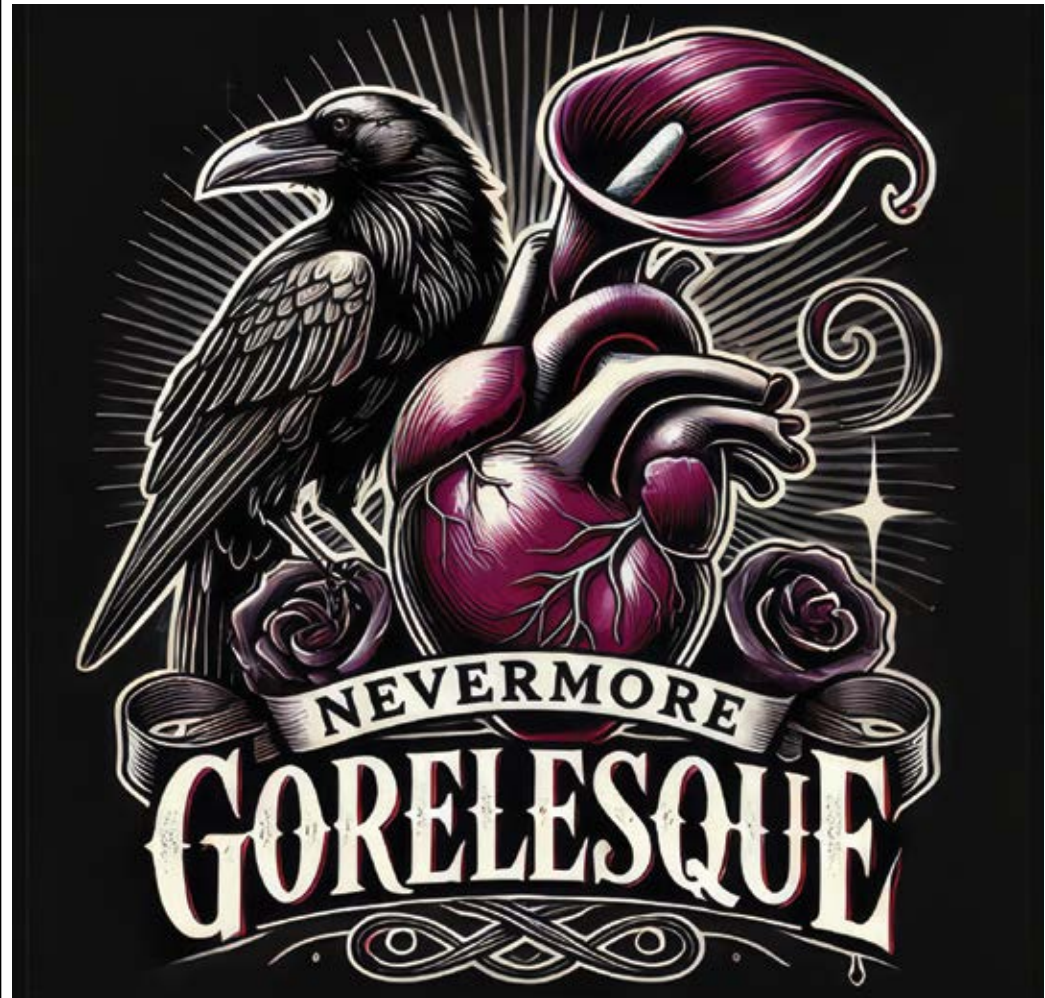
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## Scare Up a Good Time This Halloween

There are so many fun events planned for this scary season in Sacramento that Outword hardly knows where to begin. The annual Halloween blowout at FACES – on Oct. 26 this year – is always a good bet, and it includes a \$3,000 costume contest. Here are two other distinctly different local events happening this October.



### Nevermore Gorelesque

Nevermore Gorelesque is proud to present their Cabaret Macabre 2024 Experience, a cabaret themed around the macabre, the paranormal, horror films, and Halloween. The edgy, 18+ entertainment includes drag, burlesque, live music, and other forms of diverse avant-garde, eccentric, & fright-inspired performance art.

This year's Cabaret Macabre performers include Vander Von Odd, Disasterina, Morgana Grimm, Nicki Fable, Aspara Sin, Sett Duction, Unwoman, Cybil Unrest, Izzy Strange, A La Mode, and The She Creature & Honey Opal, with your host Rob Roberts. Don't miss the fun this Oct. 25, at Sacramento's historic Colonial Theatre.

For information about this and other exciting events, go to: [www.lovehorrorevents.com](http://www.lovehorrorevents.com)



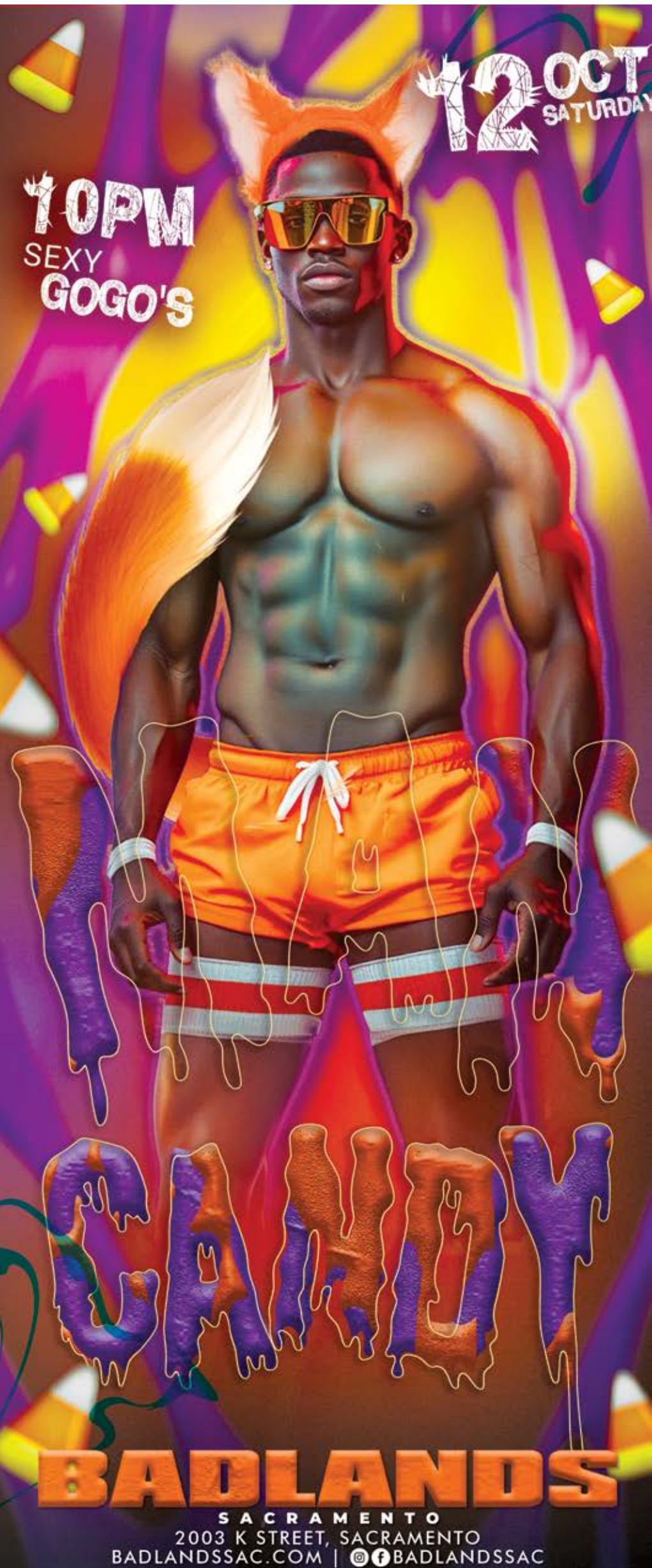
### Broadway Scarymento

Broadway fans should love this musical Halloween event, courtesy of Broadway Sacramento and featuring some of Broadway's best performing songs from its scariest shows – all live on the Broadway at Music Circus stage this Oct. 19th. You'll hear your favorite songs from some of Broadway's scariest musicals, including "The Phantom of the Opera," "The Addams Family," "Young Frankenstein," "Little Shop of Horrors" and more.

Broadway Scarymento is a fundraiser for Broadway Sacramento where costumes are optional – but you better be wearing something! – and your ticket price includes devilishly delicious desserts, creepy candies, beastly brews, wicked wines, and crazy cocktails, all complimentary with your paid admission.

For more information, visit:

[www.broadwaysacramento.com/production/broadway-scarymento](http://www.broadwaysacramento.com/production/broadway-scarymento)





# Marvelous Matteo Is Coming to the Crest Theatre

## An Exclusive *Outword* Interview with Matteo Lane

by Chris Narloch

**N**ot every comedian is as funny over the phone as they are on stage – I’ve learned that the hard way over the years – but Matteo Lane had me cracking up during a recent call to promote his two upcoming shows in Sacramento this December 14th at the Crest Theatre.

The handsome, 38-year-old comic, who was born Matthew Lane, hails from Illinois originally and recently married Rodrigo Aburto. (I know you’re disappointed that he’s not single but keep reading.) A true Renaissance man, Lane studied oil painting and drawing at The Art Institute of Chicago, after training in opera from the age of 15.

Matteo, who looks very Italian, is of Mexican and Italian descent, and he has conquered comedy clubs in New York and around the country since 2011. Lane’s biggest inspirations in comedy are Joan Rivers and Kathy Griffin, and those influences came through loud and clear on our friendly, fifteen-minute phone call.

**How is Matteo Lane today? Where is Matteo Lane?**

I’m okay. I just landed in Cincinnati. We had the shakiest flight I’ve ever been on, and I ordered a salad with no dressing, and it came with cheddar cheese dumped all over it. Oh yeah, I’m back in the Midwest!

**I feel your pain. I hate flying anyway, but turbulence is no fun...**

It was the worst. I was genuinely scared. There were these strange beeping noises, and I thought, “Am I dying in Ohio? Is that what’s happening?”

**I read on Wikipedia – so I have to fact-check – you have an older brother who is also gay? When did you officially come out yourself?**

1872...

**That was a good year, Matteo. I remember it well...**

It was a very good year. I haven’t been asked that question in a long time. I guess I was about 18, and then I started doing standup when I was 23.

**So, you’re all around the U.S. right now on your “Can’t Stop Talking” tour?**

Yes. I started in Provincetown and Miami, and those are two great places to start. Good food and beaches and tourists, but then you’re in Winnipeg in January, and it’s a whole other story.

**Well, your fans here will be getting an early Christmas present. We’re looking forward to your shows in Sacramento this December. Is this your first time in Sac?**

I may have opened for somebody there, but it’s my first time headlining in a big theater.

**I understand that your comedy was influenced early on by Joan Rivers and Kathy Griffin. Tell me about that.**

Yeah, I would also add Ellen and Margaret Cho. I know that there were gay men doing standup, like Mario Cantone and other guys, but I didn’t personally see a gay man do standup until I was 23. Before then, I thought standup was something for straight men, who all talked about their marriages and how they hate their wives or whatever. So, it wasn’t until I saw Kathy Griffin, and she tapped into how gay people talk and what we’re into and pop culture and dishing on celebrities. That was the first time I really connected with somebody doing standup and just totally enjoyed it.

**What about the late, great Joan Rivers?**

That was when I decided I wanted to do this and felt like I could do it because it was clearly a calling for her, doing standup, and she had so much strength and seemed so fearless.

**You sang professionally though, before doing standup, correct?**

I did, and so many of my gigs were performing at gay strip clubs, singing Mariah Carey songs. Drag queens, strippers, and then me! It was a great experience though, learning how to handle an audience and be with other performers and deal with drunks. I remember being in a basement in Illinois warming up while a drag queen was powdering her face and a man from Poland who speaks no English was jacking off in a G-string in the corner. It was bizarre. I really should talk about that period in my act...

**Man, you need to write a book, Matteo. Have you written a book?**

I just did. It’s a cookbook with a series of short stories, and it comes out in the spring.

**So, you have Mexican, Italian, and Irish ancestry. Does that mean you put Tapatio in your Irish coffee and your spaghetti sauce?**

(laughs) Doesn’t everybody? The Mexican and Italian is on my mother’s side, and then my dad is American Irish, but I grew up culturally Italian, and that’s how I got the nickname Matteo.

**Do you still have that sexy Super Mario moustache?**

Right now, it’s more of a beard – a work in progress. I feel like I need to move past my Luigi phase.

Note: To see if there are any tickets left for Matteo’s Sacramento shows, go to: <https://crestsacramento.com>

# Out & About

with Matthew Burlingame

Heat warnings and 100° days in October. Not exactly hayride at Apple Hill weather. But that's not stopping us from picking out our costumes for that IYKYK annual Halloween party, buying our Lantern Tour tickets and getting our pumpkins ready for carving. But there's lots of ways to beat the heat and still celebrate the autumn season. Below are some ideas to get you into the spirit.

Join us at *Outword's* monthly happy hour at 2003 K St. for a dose of Liquid Therapy! Everyone is welcome to enjoy the fun from 5:30-7 p.m., with chances to win prizes and enjoy drink specials. Reconnect with old friends and make new ones. [Badlandssac.com](http://Badlandssac.com)

The 2024 NCAC Pumpkin Pedal, a 42-mile ride along the Sacramento Delta, is set for Saturday, Oct. 12, starting at 8 a.m. Costumes and e-bikes are welcome, with safety in mind. Funds raised benefit HIV/AIDS nonprofits. On-the-road SAG support, rest stops, and lunch follow at Bike Dog Brewing Company, Broadway Taproom, 915 Broadway. [Norcalaidscycle.org](http://Norcalaidscycle.org)

Delve "Into the Woods" at the East Sonora Theatre, 13891 Mono Way, Sonora, from Oct. 10 - Nov. 10. This timeless musical, featuring a book by James Lapine and music/lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, weaves the tales of beloved storybook characters. Join the Baker and his wife on a captivating journey to break a Witch's curse. [SierraRep.com](http://SierraRep.com)

Sinister Halloween Con 2024 will take over the Scottish Rite Center, 6151 H St., on Oct. 19-20. Attendees can enjoy live demonstrations, horror panels, and over 100 spooky vendors. Featured guests include Jeffrey Combs, Quinn Lord, and Sandy Johnson. Don't miss out on the eerie fun! [SinisterCreatureCon.com](http://SinisterCreatureCon.com)

ArtMix: Color Madness lights up the Crocker Art Museum on Thursday, Oct. 10, from 6 to 9 p.m. The 18+ event features live performances, DJ sets, art activities, and comedy headlined by Matty Cardarople

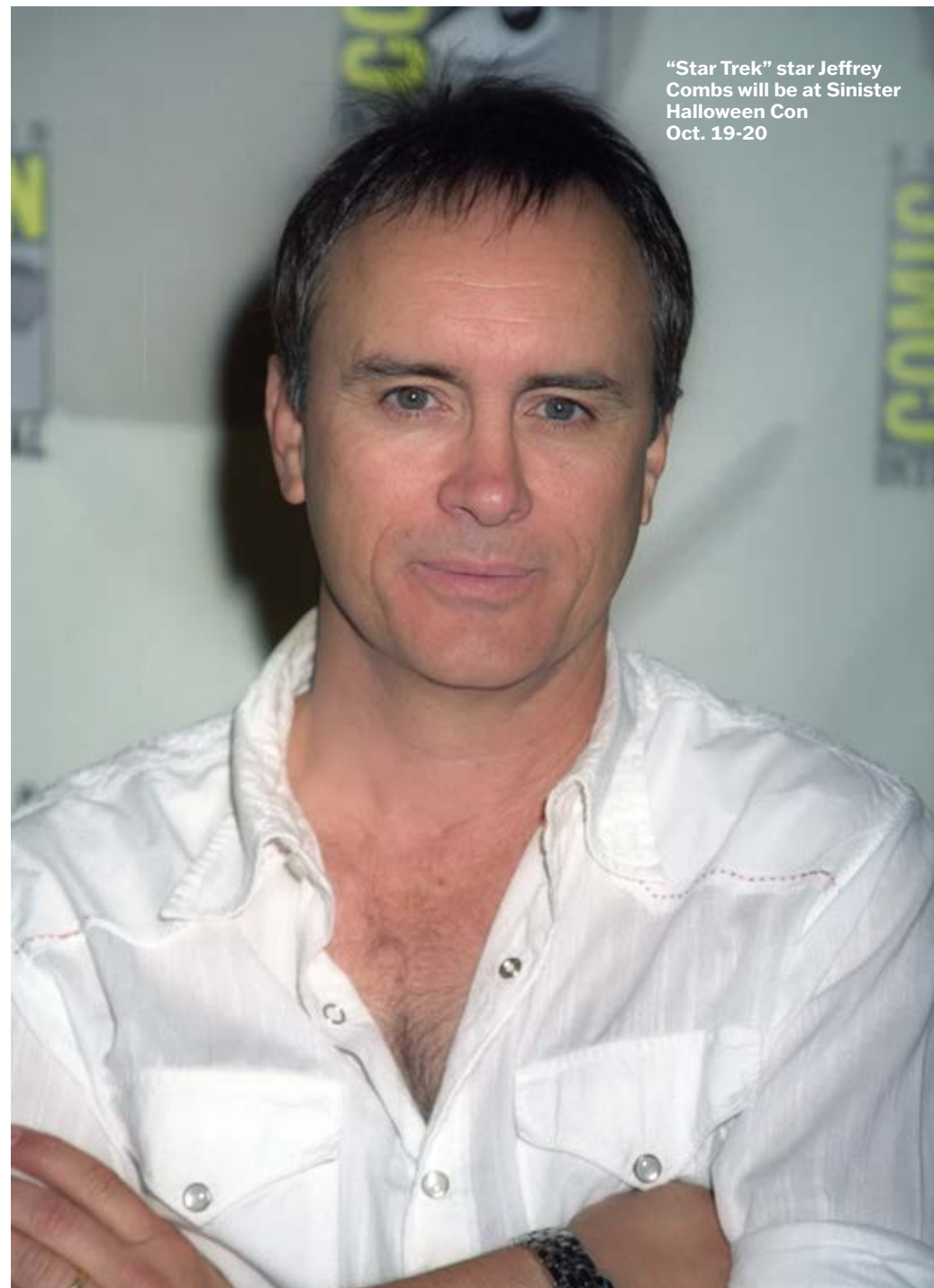
(Stranger Things). Free for members, \$25 for nonmembers. Don't miss Sacramento artist Raúl Gonzo's immersive art installations and stand-up by Johnny Taylor and Melissa McGillicuddy. [Crockerart.org](http://Crockerart.org)

Enjoy "Our Planet Live - Life on Our Planet with Dan Tapster" on Oct. 20 at the Harris Center, 10 College Pkwy. in Folsom. This Netflix Original Documentary Series explores 4 billion years of life on Earth, covering millions of species and five mass extinction events. Discover the cataclysmic events that reshaped our ecosystems and the creatures that survived (or didn't). [Harriscenter.net](http://Harriscenter.net)

The Sacramento SPCA's Fall Gala, themed "Totally Pawsome 80's Prom," will take place on Saturday, Oct. 26, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. at 6201 Florin Perkins Rd. Attendees can expect 80's-inspired entertainment and cuisine. Tickets are selling fast. [Sspca.org](http://Sspca.org)

The Cabaret Macabre 2024 will continue on Friday, Oct. 25 at 8:30 p.m. at the Historic Colonial Theatre, 3522 Stockton Blvd. Enjoy an evening of drag, burlesque, and music with performances by Vander Von Odd and Disasterina. Costumes encouraged. No touching without consent. 21+ event. [LoveHorrorEvents.com](http://LoveHorrorEvents.com)

The 5th Annual Spirits, Brews and Bites returns to Historic Folsom on Saturday, Oct. 19, from 2:30-5:30 p.m. This adult-only beer and spirits crawl offers live music, tasty treats, and exclusive access to hidden spots around town. Costumes are encouraged for added Halloween fun. Tickets are limited and sell out fast! [Historicfolsom.org](http://Historicfolsom.org)



"Star Trek" star Jeffrey Combs will be at Sinister Halloween Con Oct. 19-20

The Wisdom Project, celebrating LGBT Elders of Servant Hearts, invites you to a potluck picnic in Placerville on Saturday, Oct. 19. Enjoy the fall apple season with music, apple donuts, and community gathering in the foothills. Bring a dish to share and join us for a day of connection and celebration! [Servant-hearts.org](http://Servant-hearts.org)

**Register to vote online. Your registration must be postmarked or submitted electronically no later than Oct. 21.** [sos.ca.gov](http://sos.ca.gov)

*Do you have events, birthdays, or announcements to share? Feel free to send them to [matthew.burlingame@gmail.com](mailto:matthew.burlingame@gmail.com).*

## Classic Movies Have a Home in Orinda

In the spirit of Hallowe'en, October's Orinda Classic Movie Matinee, on Tuesday, Oct. 29th at 1:00 p.m., is the exquisitely made 1945 M-G-M prestige feature, "The Picture of Dorian Gray" which stars George Sanders, Donna Reed, Hurd Hatfield, Peter Lawford and Angela Lansbury, who was nominated for an Oscar for her performance in the film. There will be only one single screening.

The feature is accompanied by a news reel at the start of the show, the cartoon "Betty Boop's Hallowe'en Party"(1933), and "prevues" of coming attractions coming to the monthly matinee series, recreating the Orinda matinee experience of 1945 when the movie came out.

Directed by the aesthetically-minded Albert Lewin (who adapted Oscar Wilde's strange and unusual novel), a rich score by Herbert Stothart, and stunning black and white photography by Harry Stradling (which won an Oscar), "The Picture of Dorian Gray" is richly designed by Cedric Gibbons and Hans Peters to the smallest detail.

The lavish Victorian world of young Dorian Gray, who wishes to remain eternally young whilst his portrait ages for him, is recreated to perfection. Noted artist Henrique Medina created the portrait of young Dorian, and Ivan Le Lorraine Albright painted the aged and debauched monstrosity Dorian becomes.

Stylish, supernatural, and wickedly witty, "The Picture of Dorian Gray" is best seen on the giant screen of the Orinda Theatre's original 1941 auditorium. Admission is just \$10.00, available at the door or at: [orindamovies.com](http://orindamovies.com).



A still photo from the 1945 classic film, "The Picture of Dorian Gray"

## Raid on Libraries

continued from page 6

the dictionary.

Beyond the books that have been explicitly banned, teachers have also reported the phenomenon of “shadow banning.” In some districts, books quietly disappear from shelves without any formal public process. A teacher from Texas told the Zinn Education Project: “Leaders in the district are quietly pulling books from shelves so that there’s no record of banning. This shadow banning is removing access to books as we increasingly focus on school culture and policy that polices students, forces assimilation, and dehumanizes our children.” Shadow bans not only strip students of their right to access information but do so covertly, without public scrutiny or accountability.

It’s also quite telling which books are not being banned. As the historian Robin D.G. Kelley wrote in the book he recently co-edited, *Our History Has Always Been Contraband*, “For example, there are no calls to ban Thomas Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia*, which asserts frequently that Black people are innately inferior to whites—physically, intellectually, and even in terms of imagination.” The book banners aren’t trying to remove books like *Master George’s People: George Washington, His Slaves, and His Revolutionary Transformation* that gloss over the brutality of slavery. Instead, the targets of censorship are books that challenge white supremacy and heteronormativity. Books that glorify the framers’ enslavement of Africans or sanitize the U.S.’s violent history remain safely shelved.

The banning of books is not just an attempt to suppress information but also an attempt to maintain inequitable power distributions. Yet, as Oscar Wilde wrote, “The books that the world calls immoral are the books that show the world its own shame.”

What is it, then, that the U.S. has to be ashamed of today? Structural racism, transphobia, homophobia, the widening wealth gap and the continued exploitation of the most vulnerable, to begin. These are the issues that young people have a right to read about and discuss.

“My school library has been entirely cleared out and locked in a closet,” a 15-year-old student in Ohio told the Books Unbanned campaign for their “In Their Own Words” report. “And the only public libraries nearby are outright removing every piece of LGBT ... media [they] possibly can. I just want to read.”

The supreme irony of book banning is that the same right-wing voices bemoaning “cancel culture” are themselves engaging in the most tyrannical form of cancellation — using the power of the state — to censor any books, ideas or stories they disagree with. Consider Donald Trump’s denunciation of canceling when he said, “The goal of cancel culture is to make decent Americans live in fear of being fired, expelled, shamed, humiliated and driven from society as we know it.” And then consider that Trump also led the charge to

ban any discussion of race in the government, writing on X, “I BANNED efforts to indoctrinate government employees with divisive and harmful sex and race-based ideologies. Today, I’ve expanded that ban to people and companies that do business with our Country, the United States Military, Government Contractors, and Grantees. Americans should be taught to take PRIDE in our Great Country, and if you don’t, there’s nothing in it for you!”

“My school library has been entirely cleared out and locked in a closet,” a 15-year-old student in Ohio told the Books Unbanned campaign.

They’re not just banning free speech and removing books from shelves; they are intimidating educators, threatening librarians and enforcing their will with the force of law.

Thanks to a movement of librarians, educators, students, parents and writers — including an open letter signed by 27 authors and illustrators calling on Missouri school boards and districts to end book bans — the Missouri school district of Wentzville reshelfed most of the over 200 books they had banned. And yet, 17 books — including *The Handmaid’s Tale – The Graphic Novel* by Margaret Atwood, *Renee Nault* (illustrator) and *Slaughterhouse-Five: The Graphic Novel* by Kurt Vonnegut, *Ryan North*, *Albert Monteys* (illustrator) — have been permanently banned.

A 16-year-old student from Georgia summed up well the stakes of this struggle:

The freedom to read is the freedom to explore and uncover worlds that were previously unknown. It is the ability to understand the important conversations being discussed around you, and the decisions that are being made on the Congress floor. To have the freedom to read taken away is equivalent to taking away the ability to see, to talk, to listen, to understand, to be compassionate, and to be informed. How can one learn if they are restricted to a certain selection of books?”

The voices of young people, educators and librarians are clear: Censorship erodes our freedom and the ability to question, learn and grow. During this year’s National Banned Books Week (September 22-28) and beyond, let us commit to defending access to anti-racist ideas and stories that lift up LGBTQIA+ people, for without them, we close the book on our history — and with it, our humanity.

*Jesse Hagopian is a Seattle educator, an editor for Rethinking Schools magazine, a founding steering committee member of Black Lives Matter at School and serves as the director of the Teaching for Black Lives Campaign for the Zinn Education Project. Jesse is the author of the forthcoming book from Haymarket Books, Teach Truth: The Attack on Critical Race Theory and the Struggle for Antiracist Education, editor of More Than a Score: The New Uprising Against High Stakes Testing, and the co-editor of the books, Teaching for Black Lives, Black Lives Matter at School and Teachers Unions and Social Justice. You can connect with Jesse on IG @jessehagopian or via his website, www.IAmAnEducator.com.*

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## Upcoming events. 2024

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Artwork Deadline  
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OCT  
11

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OCT  
11

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Badlands. 5:30-7:00pm  
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#### PRIMETIMERS

Architecture & Stain Glass Tour  
More events and info online:  
<https://primetimersofsacramento.org>

OCT  
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#### NETWORKING MIXER

Sacramento Rainbow Chamber's Monthly  
Mixer - @ Elevation Ten. 6:00-7:30pm  
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OCT  
26

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Halloween costume contest. you could win  
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Contest



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Send in photos of your pet to  
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Deadline: Oct. 14

OCT  
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#### PRIMETIMERS

Mens Support Group- More events and info  
online: <https://primetimersofsacramento.org>

OCT  
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#### CROCKER ART MUSEUM

Halloween fun @ crocker Art museum. All  
ages. More Information online:  
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# Coming Soon

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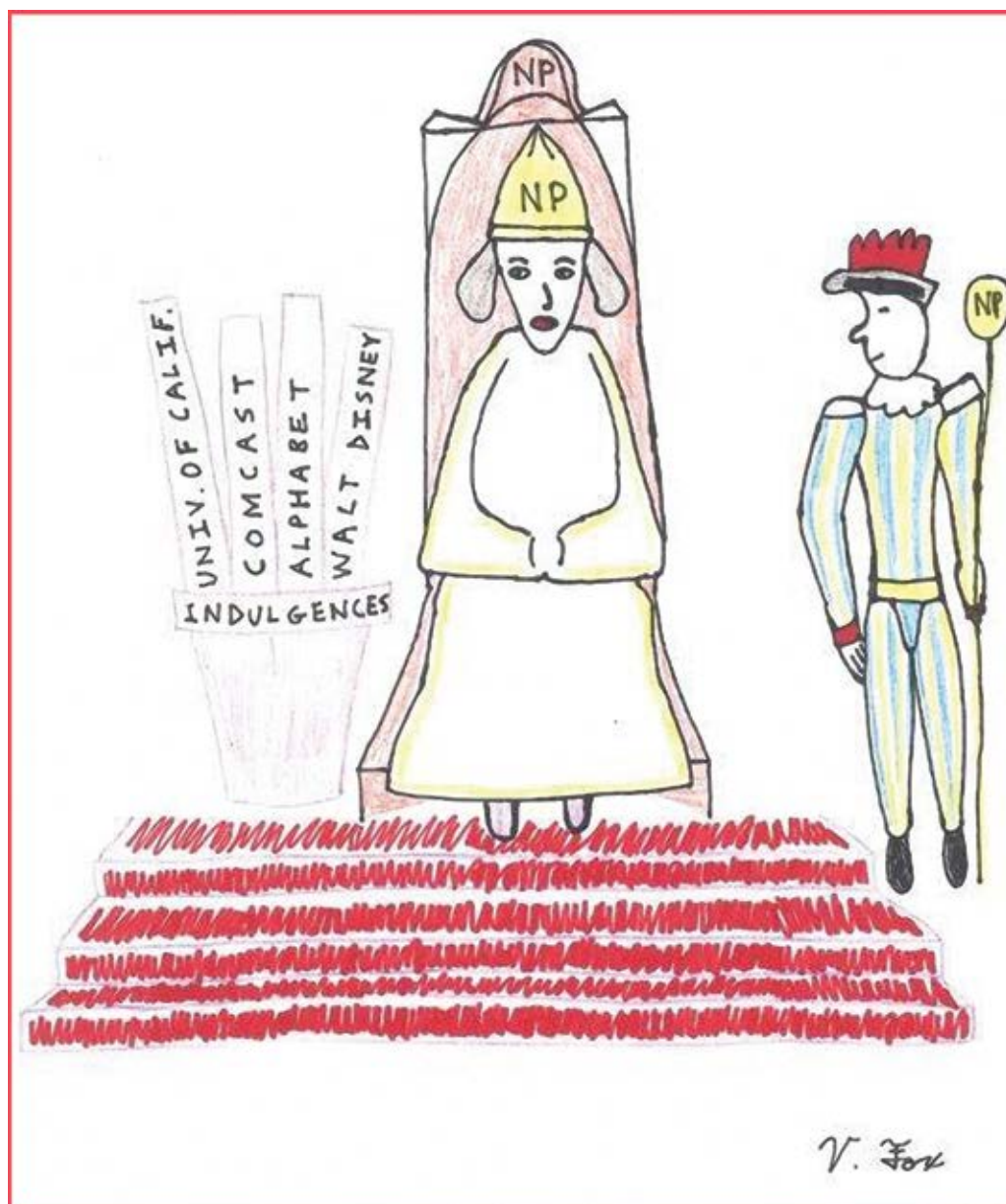
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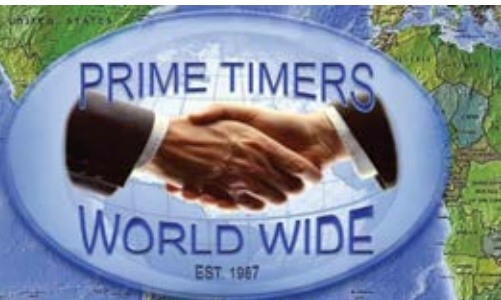


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