

Special Issue!

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outWord



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Welcome to Outword's 2025 Sacramento Pride Issue, Celebrating 30 years (Well... Almost!)

Can you believe it? *Outword Magazine* is turning 30 this year—well, officially in August, but who's counting? That's three decades of telling stories and celebrating the heart of our LGBTQ+ community.

First, thank you. Whether you've been with us since the early days or just read your first issue this week online, you're part of why we're still here. *Outword* has always been driven by passion, not profit. We're not a massive media empire—we're a small, scrappy team fueled by coffee (ok maybe Bourbon, Vodka and a little Champagne), and a whole lot of love for what we do. Each issue is a commitment to our readers. Every page, every story, every ad reflects the belief that LGBTQ+ media matters.

We couldn't do this without our readers, our advertisers, our contributors, and the many partners who believe in what we do. You've shown up for us, and because of that, we've been able to show up for our community. You've helped us weather tough years, celebrate the good ones, and stay true to our mission.

Pride Month means something different to everyone. For some, it's dancing in the streets, rainbow flags flying, and unapologetic joy. For others, it's quieter—maybe a moment of reflection or a reminder of the path it took to get here. What started with a brick at Stonewall to the horrific stories coming out every day. It's a revolution. A march. We owe it to the



decades filled with unsung heroes who paved the way, and our work is still not done. Pride isn't one-size-fits-all. It's personal. It's powerful.

That spirit is what keeps us going. We know LGBTQ+ stories aren't just important during Pride Month; they matter all year long. That's why we encourage you to support the businesses in *Outword* not just now, but every month. These are folks who do more than place ads. They believe in what *Outword* stands for. They support

representation. They invest in queer visibility. And that kind of backing keeps independent media alive.

Every time you choose to support one of our advertisers, you're keeping this work alive too. You're saying that representation isn't a trend. It's essential. You're helping ensure LGBTQ+ voices continue to be heard, especially in these times when that's more important than ever.

Pride is about resilience. It's about showing up, speaking out, and standing tall in spaces that weren't always accessible to us. *Outword* has spent 30 years carving out space—and we're not slowing down. We're proud to be part of this community and proud to keep telling stories that reflect strength, joy and our continued resilience.

So, here's to 30 years. To every last-minute deadline, every unforgettable Pride event and every reader who's ever felt a little more seen because of something they read here.

Happy Pride from all of us at *Outword*. However you decide to celebrate, know that we're here for it—and for you. Thanks for being a part of our story, and here's to all of us together for the next chapter.

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President Breaks With Tradition by Ignoring Pride Month

info updated 6-9-25

For the first time in years, the White House has omitted any official acknowledgment of Pride Month—no presidential proclamation, public statement, or social media message. This silence is particularly notable amid mounting legislative attacks and over 500 anti-LGBTQ bills introduced in state legislatures nationwide.



What's Changed This Year?

- No Pride proclamation - On June 3, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt confirmed the administration has “no plans” to proclaim June as Pride Month, despite the deeply symbolic value of such recognition.
- June renamed “Title IX Month” - The U.S. Department of Education officially rebranded June as “Title IX Month,” focusing on women’s educational rights and reversing many transgender protections from the previous administration [watermarkonline.com](https://www.watermarkonline.com)+11out.com+11economictimes.indiatimes.com+11.
- Wider federal erasure - In recent months, multiple federal agencies—including the Defense Intelligence Agency—have scaled back or removed LGBTQ focused observances, including events tied to MLK Day and Holocaust remembrance [cbn.com](https://www.cbn.com)+7news.com.au+7time.com+7washingtonpost.com+15them.us+15washingtonblade.com+15. The Pentagon even renamed the USNS Harvey Milk, erasing a high-profile LGBTQ honor.
- Corporate and civic pullback - Faced with a hostile federal climate, many corporations and institutions have dialed back Pride visibility. Sponsors of major events have withdrawn, internal DEI efforts have been shelved, and some cities have seen rainbow flag prevalence drop substantially.

Impact on LGBTQ Community & Advocates

- These moves have triggered alarm across the LGBTQ+ landscape:
- Community safety concerns - Transgender individuals particularly express fear amidst the rollback of policies and rising government hostility.
 - Symbolic void - Amid thousands gathering for WorldPride in Washington, D.C., organizers note that while events continue on the ground, they proceed with unprecedented security and tempered enthusiasm. Advocates argue that the federal silence and symbolic erasure deepen the sense of vulnerability.

Why This Matters

Presidential acknowledgment of Pride Month has historically reaffirmed LGBTQ+ Americans’ visibility and legitimacy:

- Bill Clinton issued the first proclamation in 1999.
- Barack Obama expanded it, named Stonewall a national monument, and held White House events.
- Donald Trump acknowledged Pride via a 2019 tweet.
- President Biden resumed robust yearly proclamations and public celebrations.

This year’s absence of any federal-level celebration or statement comes as anti-LGBTQ efforts escalate in states and internationally, removing the once-expected affirmation from the nation’s leader.

Looking Ahead

With no indication of returning to Pride acknowledgment, many LGBTQ+ leaders are amplifying calls for visible federal support. As local Pride events continue throughout June—from D.C. to Sacramento—they’re now also venues for protest and advocacy, urging national leaders to recant and recommit.

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Voice Actor Jonathan Joss Killed in Texas Shooting

Jonathan Joss, best known as the voice of John Redcorn on *King of the Hill*, was shot and killed in San Antonio, Texas, on June 1, 2025. He was 59. According to his husband, Tristan Kern de Gonzales, the couple had returned to their former home—previously destroyed in a fire—to check the mail when a neighbor, Sigfredo Alvarez Ceja, confronted them with homophobic slurs before opening fire.

Gonzales stated that the couple endured over two years of threats and harassment from neighbors who “could not stand the sight of two men loving each other.” Despite dozens of calls to police about the harassment, no action was reportedly taken.

Joss, of Comanche and White Mountain Apache descent, was a respected actor who also appeared in *Parks and Recreation* and *Tulsa King*. The San Antonio Police have not officially confirmed the shooting as a hate crime, but the investigation is ongoing.



Maryland Ends The Criminalization of HIV

In May 2025, Maryland Governor Wes Moore signed a groundbreaking bill repealing the state’s outdated law that criminalized the “knowing transfer” of HIV. This marks a major shift in Maryland’s approach to HIV, aligning with modern science and public health strategies.

Originally enacted in 1989, the law imposed criminal penalties of up to three years in prison and a \$2,500 fine. However, it was widely criticized for being rooted in fear rather than science. A 2024 study by the Williams Institute showed that Black Marylanders, especially Black men, were disproportionately targeted under this law—despite representing just 14% of the population, they accounted for 68% of prosecutions.

The repeal effort was led by Delegate Kris Fair and Senator Will Smith. Their bills passed with strong bipartisan support, reflecting growing recognition that criminalizing HIV harms public

health. Experts note that people living with HIV who are on treatment and have an undetectable viral load cannot transmit the virus sexually—making laws like this both obsolete and harmful.

The new law also represents a win for racial and LGBTQ+ justice. Advocacy groups like FreeState Justice championed the change, and the legislation was named in honor of late LGBTQ+ activist Carlton R. Smith Jr. Governor Moore’s support aligns with his broader push to modernize state laws and promote equity.

Maryland now joins a growing list of states reforming HIV criminalization statutes in favor of more compassionate, science-based approaches.



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He Has Always Been My Son

by Cynthia Green - she/hers

After about a year and a half of trying, I found I was pregnant from a successful home IVF with sperm from a friend. February 1996, I gave birth to a beautiful child, who was assigned female at birth. They were always very girly when they were young, and wanted every doll they'd see at the store, loved dresses, and in their teenage years loved Victoria Secret panties, bras and pedicures.

Around 16 years of age, things begin to change. My once happy child appears confused, and unhappy, dating boys and girls, cutting their skin and doing poorly in school. As a single parent most of their life, we were very close, sharing our feelings, needs and dreams, but a change is beginning, and I feel sad of their distance, and their reluctance to talk with me about what they were going through. Surely, they knew, that as a gay parent, I would understand what they were going through.

At around 20 years old, they met a woman from Texas, fell in love, and moved from California to be with them. During one of their visits, we enjoyed a great day of shopping and dining in SF. While shopping at a clothing store, my child's partner tells me that my child, prefers Men's clothing. Confused, I say "okay" as it really is no big deal to me as we have always shopped both men's and women's clothing.

The following year, I receive a call they are

having top surgery. My emotions are all over the board, as it just felt so final. When I needed someone to talk to, my wife and I visited the Sacramento LGBTQ center and spoke with a lovely woman that helped tremendously in sorting our feelings. During the visit, I was reassured of my feelings and realized, it was about them, not me, and it was at this time, I embraced their change.

Our first meeting in person after their change, my son confided that he was very nervous to see me. I hugged him and told him that I have and always will love them no matter what, and said that I am a very lucky mom, as I get 20 years having a daughter, now a handsome and loving son.

My Son is blessed to have the full support of his family, even his 93-year-old Grandmother embraces him.

I am saddened to hear a family would disown their children for living as their



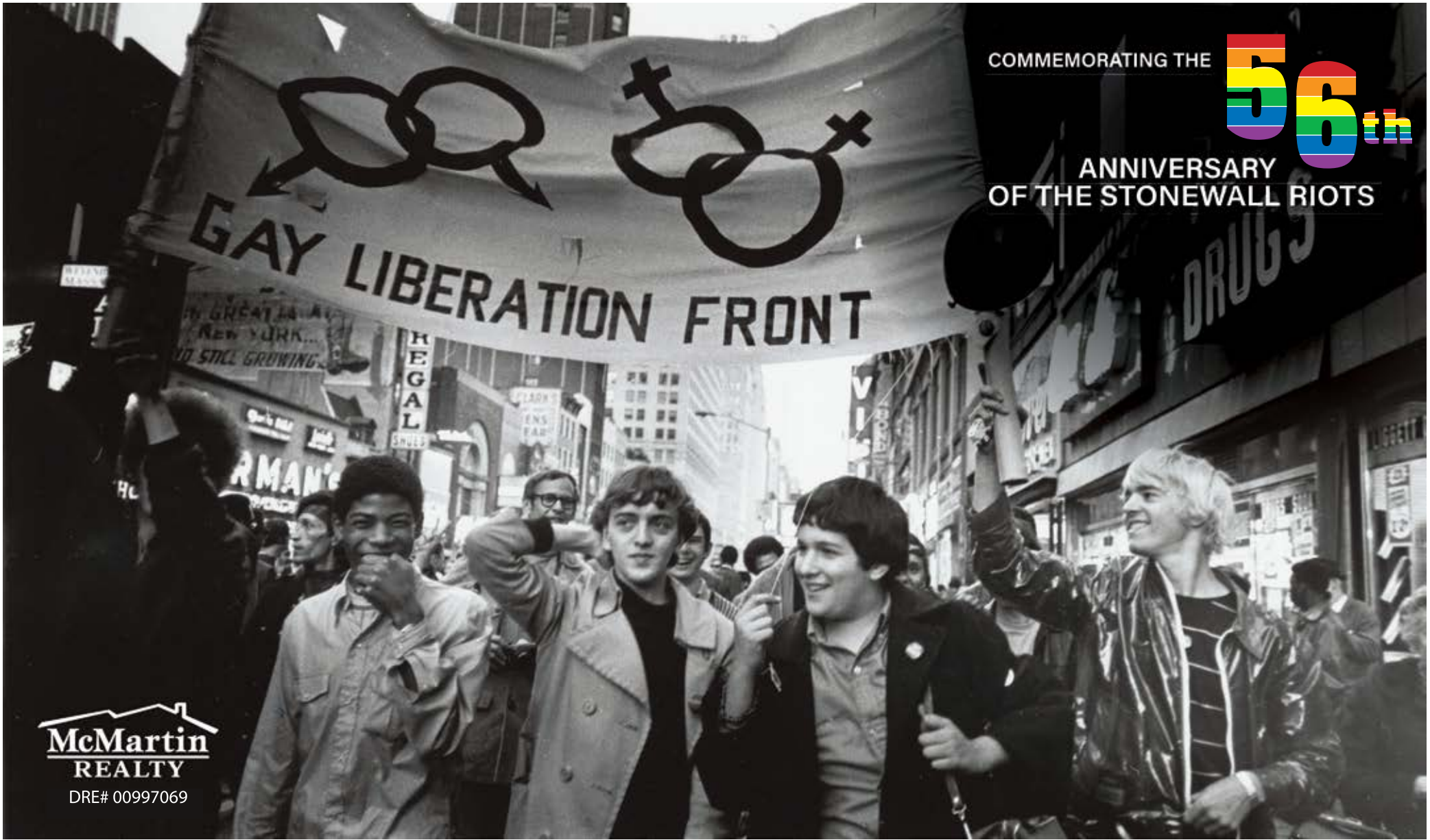
Cynthia Green

true self, and wish I could take them all under my wing to give them my love.

Seeing my Son so happy, makes me so proud of who they have become. I would not, and could not ask for anything different. My son, whether a woman or man, is the

same beautiful sole I gave birth to. Seeing him happy, is all I ever wanted. It is my wish that all transgender individuals are loved and supported as my son is.

I love you Son
Love, Mom



Texas Enacts Sweeping “Don’t Say Gay” Law, Banning LGBTQ+ Student Clubs

In a deeply controversial move, Texas lawmakers have passed one of the most aggressive anti-LGBTQ+ education laws in the country. Championed by far-right Republicans, the new legislation—dubbed by critics as a “Don’t Say Gay” law—mirrors Florida’s notorious measure but goes a significant step further by outright banning LGBTQ+ student clubs in public schools.

The law prohibits educators from discussing sexual orientation or gender identity in classrooms from kindergarten through 12th grade, claiming such topics are “inappropriate for minors.” Teachers who violate the policy may face disciplinary action, including termination. But what sets the Texas version apart is its explicit targeting of student organizations: under the new rules, school districts are barred from recognizing or supporting any LGBTQ+ alliance or pride clubs, effectively silencing a primary support system for queer and questioning youth.

Civil rights advocates say the law is not just discriminatory—it’s dangerous. LGBTQ+ students already face disproportionately high rates of bullying, depression, and suicide. For many, school-based groups like GSAs (Gender & Sexuality Alliances) offer a rare safe space to find community, acceptance, and resources. By banning these clubs, critics

argue, Texas is endorsing exclusion and reinforcing a climate of fear.

The move aligns Texas with increasingly authoritarian trends seen in places like Russia and Hungary, where governments have restricted LGBTQ+ expression under the guise of “protecting children.” LGBTQ+ rights groups say this is no coincidence, calling out the global rise of anti-queer rhetoric as a strategic political tool to energize conservative bases.

Governor Greg Abbott is expected to sign the bill into law, solidifying Texas as one of the most hostile states for LGBTQ+ youth. Already, several school districts have begun issuing compliance guidelines, and teachers are expressing confusion and concern over what they’re now legally allowed to say—or not say.

Legal challenges are expected, but for now, LGBTQ+ students across Texas are bracing for a school year where simply being visible could come at a cost.

Bonta Files Amicus Brief in Support of Michigan’s Conversion Therapy Ban

California Attorney General Rob Bonta, along with a coalition of 20 state attorneys general, has filed an amicus brief in the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals supporting Michigan’s ban on conversion therapy for minors. The case, Catholic Charities v. Whitmer, challenges the state’s February 2024 law prohibiting licensed health care providers—such as doctors, psychologists, and counselors—from practicing conversion therapy on individuals under 18.

The brief argues that conversion therapy is a harmful, discredited practice that endangers minors’ mental health, increasing the risk of suicide, depression, and other long-term psychological harm. It

over 25 states have since enacted similar restrictions.

The multistate coalition further contends that the First Amendment does not protect harmful and ineffective medical practices

Attorney General Bonta underscored California’s commitment to protecting LGBTQ+ youth...

emphasizes that the treatment is not supported by any reputable medical or psychological organization and falls below the accepted standard of care for mental health professionals.

Attorney General Bonta underscored California’s commitment to protecting LGBTQ+ youth, stating that no child should be subjected to unsafe or non-evidence-based therapies simply because of who they are. California became the first state to ban conversion therapy for minors in 2012, and

from state regulation. Allowing licensed providers to engage in substandard care could undermine states’ longstanding authority to regulate professional conduct and health standards.

The attorneys general from states including New York, Colorado, Illinois, and Oregon joined Bonta in defending Michigan’s law, reinforcing the national effort to protect youth from conversion therapy and uphold state powers to regulate health care practices in the interest of public safety.

“I don’t like to talk about it.”

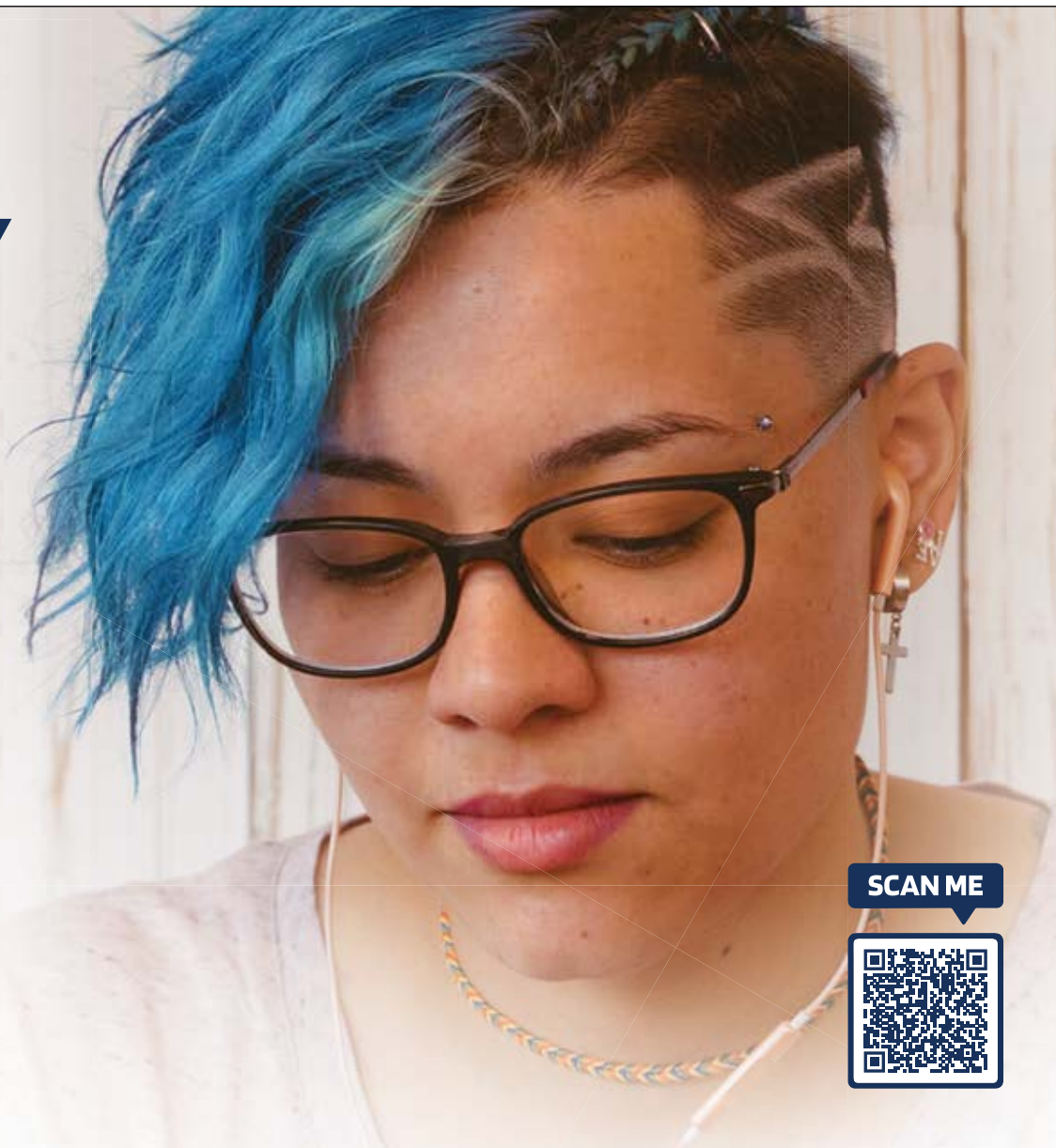
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River Bend Medical Associates Received Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition

by Olivia Garcia

Dr. Francisco Garcia of River Bend Medical Associates has received a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from Congresswoman Doris Matsui, honoring his Exemplary Leadership in Family Medicine and Dedication to Patient-Centered Care.



Dr. Francisco Garcia receiving the award

Dr. Garcia has long been a respected ally in the fight for health equity. His work consistently centers compassion, cultural sensitivity, and a deep understanding of the unique needs of our community. His leadership has not only guided River Bend Medical Associates to provide outstanding care—it has built trust where it's often been broken and expanded access where it's long been limited.

As someone who works closely with community-based organizations and voices from the margins, I know how rare and vital that kind of leadership is. Dr. Garcia doesn't just serve—he listens, he advocates, and he shows up. That matters.

Outword is proud to celebrate this well-deserved recognition and to stand alongside our partners at River Bend Medical Associates in honoring his legacy of care.

Congratulations, Dr. Garcia. This community is stronger because of you.



Happy Pride 2025!

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Hegseth Orders Navy to Remove Harvey Milk’s Name from Ship in Controversial Pride Month Move

In a highly controversial decision announced during Pride Month, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth has ordered the U.S. Navy to remove the name of gay rights icon Harvey Milk from a Navy ship, sparking widespread backlash from LGBTQ+ advocates and veterans’ groups.



USNS Harvey Milk

The USNS Harvey Milk, named in honor of the nation’s first openly gay elected official, has served as a symbolic gesture of the military’s increasing inclusion and acknowledgment of LGBTQ+ service members. Milk, a Navy veteran himself, was assassinated in 1978 and remains a powerful symbol of LGBTQ+ resilience and leadership.

According to a report from Military.com, a defense official said the timing of the announcement was “intentional,” underscoring what many see as a targeted political move against LGBTQ+ recognition.

Critics have called the move a direct affront to decades of progress in the armed forces.

“To strip Harvey Milk’s name during Pride Month is not just disrespectful—it’s a calculated attack,” said one LGBTQ+ advocacy leader. “It sends a chilling message about whose service and legacy are valued.”

The decision aligns with broader efforts by some conservative figures to roll back diversity and inclusion initiatives across federal institutions. Hegseth, a former Fox News personality and longtime Trump ally, has faced criticism for politicizing the Department of Defense since assuming his post.

As of now, the Navy has not announced what name will replace Milk’s on the vessel.

Senator Wiener Rebukes Secretary Hegseth’s Decision to Rename USNS Harvey Milk

from the office of Senator Scott Wiener

Secretary Pete Hegseth ordered the USNS Harvey Milk be renamed in an unprecedented attack on decades of work by LGBTQ veterans to persuade the Navy to recognize the civil rights icon. Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) issued the following statement in response:

“The removal of Harvey Milk’s name from a naval vessel — during Pride Month, no less — is absolutely shameful. Harvey Milk was a hero. He was a veteran who served our country. He died for our community.

“Brave LGBTQ veterans worked for years to achieve the naming of a ship for Harvey. Now Trump and Hegseth are wiping it away due to straight up bigotry. They’re determined to erase LGBTQ people from all aspects of public life.”

HRC Holds Events Throughout Pride Month

Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the nation's largest LGBTQ+ civil rights organization, has unveiled its 2025 Pride Month theme: "These Colors Don't Run." The theme reflects a defiant stance in the face of growing political attacks on LGBTQ+ rights, both federally and in states across the country. HRC enters Pride Month with renewed strength, announcing a record-breaking 3.6 million members and supporters—a powerful base that spans every U.S. state and congressional district.



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In the first 100 days of the current Trump administration, HRC's supporters have taken over 350,000 actions to defend LGBTQ+ rights, including writing to lawmakers and attending rallies. This surge in activism underscores the urgency felt within the community and their allies.

Kelley Robinson, HRC President, emphasized the deeper meaning behind the Pride flag and the theme, stating: "These colors don't run—and they never will." She noted that the flag represents generations of resistance and resilience, and that the growing support behind HRC is not just

symbolic—it's a call to action. "This is not just a number—it's a movement, a mandate, and a promise: we're not backing down."

As part of its Pride Month efforts, HRC will join over 150 events across the country, including the landmark celebration of the 10th anniversary of nationwide marriage equality. With World Pride taking place in Washington, D.C., this year, HRC views visibility and collective strength as more critical than ever. The organization's message is clear: the LGBTQ+ community stands united, unshaken, and ready to continue the fight for equality and freedom.

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**Celebrating Outword
Magazine's 30 Years of
Pride in Sacramento**

McCartney & Movies at NorCal Museums

NorCal museums, from River City to the City by the Bay, have a variety of events and exhibitions planned for this summer. Here are two that caught our eye.



Paul McCartney Photographs 1963–64

If you're itching to get out of the hometown heat and you have time for a day trip to the Bay Area, I highly recommend the current big photography exhibit at the de Young Museum in Golden Gate Park, which includes more than 250 personal photos taken by Paul McCartney when the Beatles were very young.

This exhibition offers a behind-the-scenes look at the meteoric rise of the world's most celebrated band. The images capture the period from December 1963 through February 1964 and the band's journey from local venues in Liverpool to The Ed Sullivan Show and beyond.

Photos of screaming crowds and paparazzi show the sheer magnitude of the Beatles' fame and the cultural change they represented. More intimate images of the band on their days off highlight the humor and individuality of McCartney and bandmates John Lennon, Ringo Starr, and George Harrison.

"Paul McCartney Photographs 1963–64: Eyes of the Storm" is a must-see for Beatles fans, and the exhibition continues through this July 6 at the de Young.

For more information: www.famsf.org/visit/de-young



Movies Off the Wall

Sacramento's Crocker Museum brings back its popular moonlight movies series when three blockbuster films take over the Museum's outdoor courtyard in a larger-than-life cinematic experience, screened against the Teel Family Pavilion's iconic architecture.

First up on Thursday evening, June 19, is John Waters' original 1988 "Hairspray" with Divine, Ricki Lake, Deborah Harry, and Sonny Bono. Big dreams and even bigger hair take center stage in this unapologetic celebration of individuality, which is the perfect movie for Pride Month.

Set in 1960s Baltimore, this feel-good flick blends humor and a dash of rebellion with unforgettable performances from an all-star cast. The other two Movies Off the Wall are "Mamma Mia!" in July and "Wicked" in August.

For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit: www.crockerart.org/events

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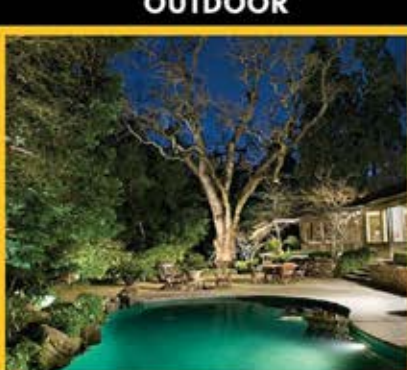


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Thank You
Sacramento and Outword Magazine
for 25 Great Years

Al Roche

Books for Pride, by Various Authors

reviewed by Terri Schlichenmeyer

You're going to be on your feet a lot this month. Marching in parades, dancing in the streets, standing up for people in your community. But you're also likely to have some time to rest and reflect – and with these great new books, to read...



First, dip into a biography with "Marsha: The Joy and Defiance of Marsha P. Johnson" by Tourmaline (Tiny Rep Books, \$30), a nice look at an icon who, rumor has it, threw the brick that started a revolution. It's a lively tale about Marsha P. Johnson, her life, her activism before Stonewall and afterward. Reading this interesting and highly-researched history is a great way to launch your Pride Month.

For the reader who can't live without music, try "The Dad Rock That Made Me a Woman" by Niko Stratis (University of Texas Press, \$27.95), the story of being trans, searching for your place in the world, and finding it in a certain comfortable genre of music. Also look for "The Lonely Veteran's Guide to Companionship" by Bronson Lemer (University of Wisconsin Press, \$19.95), a collection of essays that make up a memoir of this and that, of being queer, basic training, teaching overseas, influential books, and life.

If you still have room for one more memoir, try "Walk Like a Girl" by Prabal Gurung (Viking, \$32.00). It's the story of one queer boy's childhood in India and Nepal, and the intolerance he experienced as a child, which caused him to dream of New York and the life he imagined there. As you can imagine, dreams and reality collided but nonetheless, Gurung stayed, persevered, and eventually became an

award-winning fashion designer, highly sought by fashion icons and lovers of haute couture. This is an inspiring tale that you shouldn't miss.

No Pride celebration is complete without a history book or two.

In "Trans History: From Ancient Times to the Present Day" by Alex L. Combs & Andrew Eakett (\$24.99, Candlewick Press), you'll see that being trans is something that's as old as humanity. One nice part about this book: it's in graphic novel form, so it's lighter to read but still informative. Lastly, try "So Many Stars: An Oral History of Trans, Nonbinary, Genderqueer, and Two-Spirit People of Color" by Caro De Robertis (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, \$32.00) a collection of thoughts, observations, and truths from over a dozen people who share their stories. As an "oral history," you'll be glad to know that each page is full of mini-segments you can dip into anywhere, read from cover to cover, double-back and read again. It's that kind of book.

And if these six books aren't enough, if they don't quite fit what you crave now, be sure to ask your favorite bookseller or librarian for help. There are literally tens of thousands of books that are perfect for Pride Month and beyond. They'll be able to determine what you're looking for, and they'll put it directly in your hands. So stand up. March. And then sit and read.



*Craig Dresang, CEO, YoloCares
Treasurer/Board member Coalition for Compassionate Care of California*

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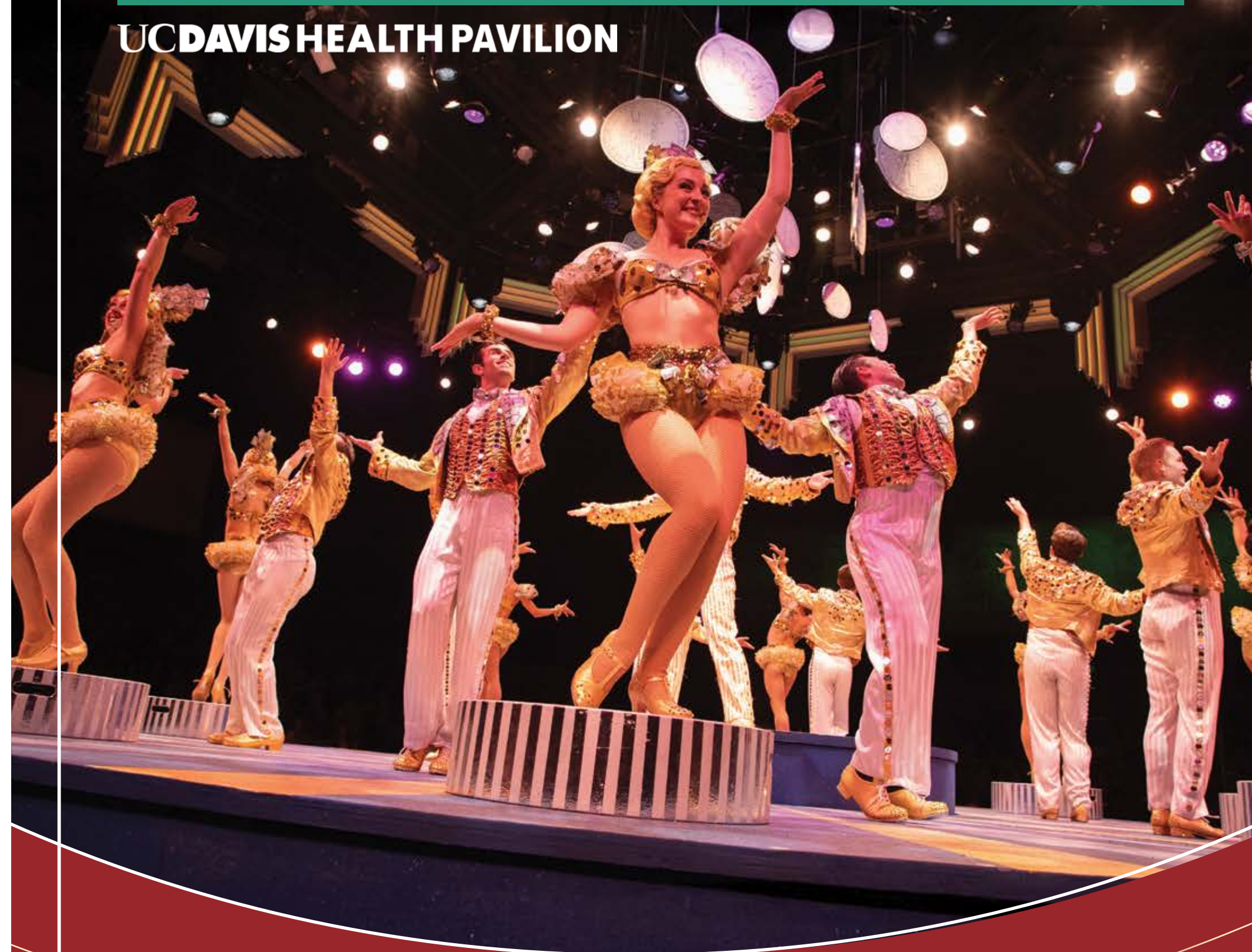


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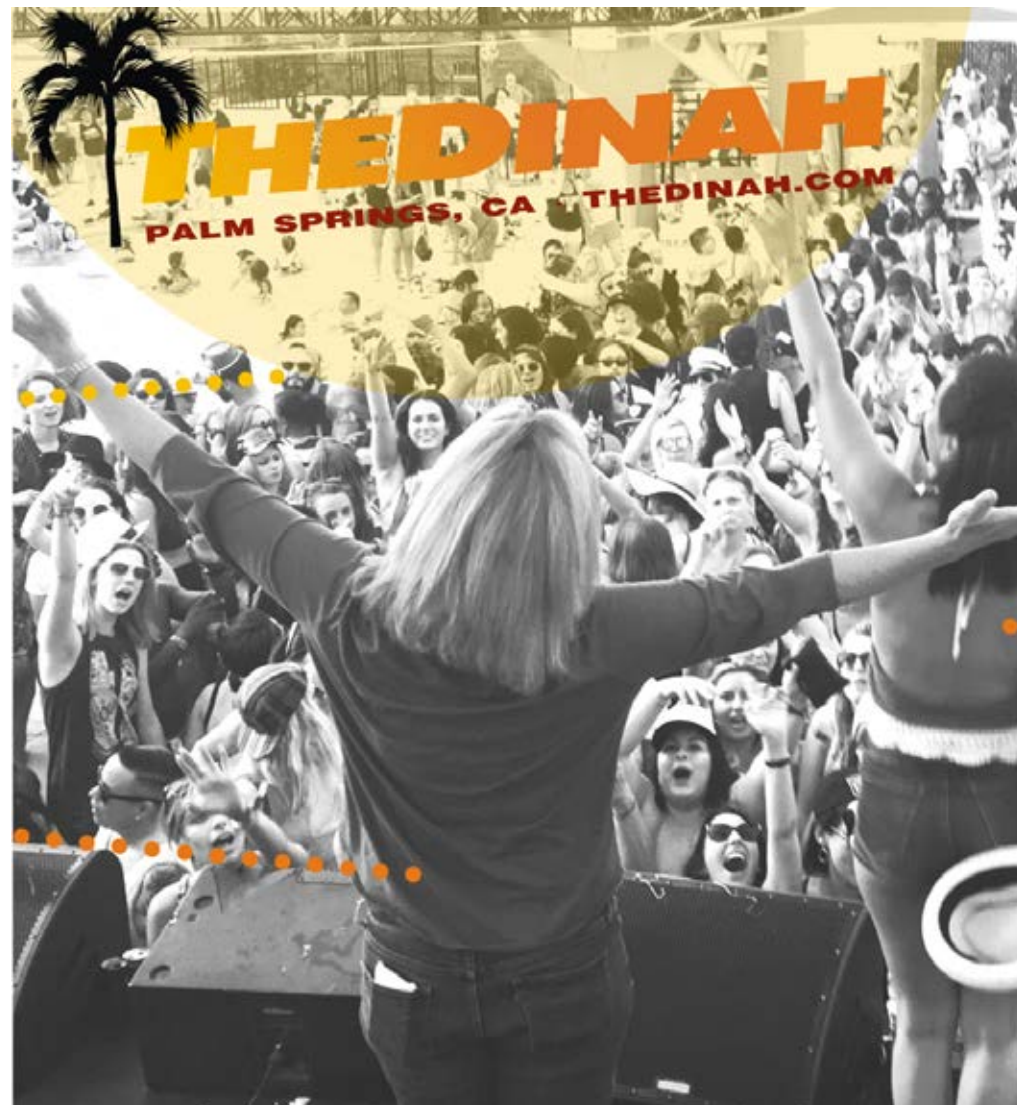
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Mariah Hanson to Step Down After 34 Years as Producer of The Dinah Festival

resource The Dinah press release

Mariah Hanson, founder and long-time producer of The Dinah, announced she will step down after the 2025 edition of the iconic festival. Scheduled for September 24–28 at the Riviera Resort in Palm Springs, the event will mark the end of Hanson's 34-year tenure leading the world's largest and longest-running music festival for queer women, nonbinary individuals, and allies.



Since its founding in 1991, The Dinah has grown from a grassroots gathering into a global celebration of LGBTQ+ identity and culture. Known for its vibrant pool parties, live music, and welcoming community atmosphere, the event has consistently drawn thousands from around the world. Under Hanson's leadership, The Dinah became a key platform for emerging artists, hosting performances from future stars such as Lady Gaga, Katy Perry, Lizzo, Bebe Rexha, and DoeChii.

In a statement, Hanson said she felt the timing was right to step aside and allow a new generation to lead the festival into the future. She is currently in discussions with potential successors to ensure The Dinah's legacy of pride, visibility, and empowerment continues.

"I never had a specific answer for when I'd pass the torch—only that I'd know when the time felt right," said Hanson. "Now, the time is right."

The 2025 festival promises to be a grand farewell. Among the headlining appearances are Kate Moennig and Leisha Hailey of The L Word, who will attend the Saturday pool party to sign copies of their new book *So Gay for You* and pose for photos. Their return marks a full-circle moment for The Dinah, which gained international visibility after being featured on the show.

The final lineup will be announced in mid-June and is expected to include top-tier artists and prominent queer figures. Hanson described the 2025 festival as her "love letter to the community," aiming to celebrate the joy, resilience, and unity that have defined The Dinah for over three decades.

While Hanson will take her final bow, she remains hopeful that the spirit of the festival will live on for generations to come.

Tickets and full event details are available now at www.thedinah.com.

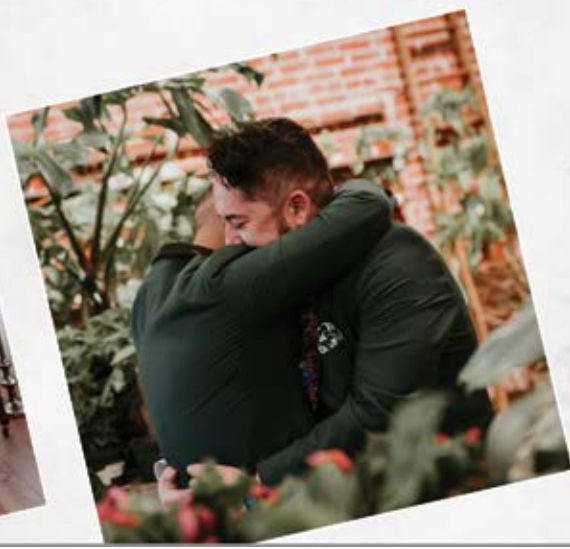
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Cynthia Erivo Has Arrived by Chris Narloch

The queer British singer and now movie star, Cynthia Erivo, just released her second CD (titled “I Forgive You”), and it’s a winner from start to finish.

Erivo can both belt and croon – often on the same song – and she knows when to hold back and when to pull out the stops. After her triumphant success as Elphaba in the first “Wicked” movie, she obviously had more control over her sophomore solo disc, and the singer co-wrote every song here, except for two of the short interludes.

The first interlude, a killer cover of part of the Annie Lennox classic “Why,” opens the CD and sets the album’s tone of introspection and forgiveness. Not every great singer is also a songwriter, but Erivo appears to be both, crafting lyrics with depth and emotion rather than banal pop hooks.

Musically, “I Forgive You” is eclectic, traversing Brit pop, folk, gospel, and especially R&B. It goes without saying that Erivo can sing anything and everything beautifully, and my favorite tracks on the album are “Best for Me,” “Worst of Me,” and “Brick by Brick.”

I had the good fortune to see Erivo’s Broadway debut ten years ago, when she played Celie in the revival of “The Color Purple.” I bought a ticket in order to see Jennifer Hudson, who was also in the cast (and who was also wonderful), but Erivo – who was unknown to me at the time – really blew me away.

I knew she was destined for greatness back then, and after seeing Erivo in “Wicked” and listening to “I Forgive You,” I think she has the potential to join a pantheon of once-in-a-generation talents that includes singers such as Aretha, Adele, and Annie (Lennox).



Darling Clementines Celebrate Pride

Dive into a night of dazzling performances, radiant artistry, boundless expression, and lovely lingerie when the Darling Clementines celebrate Pride later this month at Harlow’s in midtown Sacramento.



River City’s premier burlesque troupe performs frequently at Harlow’s, and the members have an extra-sexy extravaganza planned for Sunday evening, June 29, when the group presents The Darling Clementines Burlesque & Drag Pride Show.

Prepare to be stimulated and entertained. Doors open at 6:00, and the show starts at 7:00. Ages 18 and over only. To purchase tickets, please visit: www.harlows.com/event

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Cara Romero, Alike II, Courtesy of the Artist. © Cara Romero

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Valencia Gears Up to Host a Bold, Inclusive Gay Games XII in 2026

resource *Gay Games XII Valencia 2026*

Valencia is making major strides as it prepares to welcome the world to the Gay Games XII, set to take place from June 27 to July 5, 2026. This marks the first time the global LGBTQ+ celebration of sport and culture will be held in Spain, and organizers say it promises to be one of the most inclusive and accessible editions in the event's four-decade history.



Following a productive working visit by the Gay Games Steering Committee, local organizers have reaffirmed their commitment to three core principles: accessible sports, dynamic cultural programming, and strong community volunteer participation. These guiding values are helping to shape an event that's as much about unity and expression as it is about athletic achievement.

A Citywide Commitment to Inclusion

Gay Games Valencia 2026 will feature 37 competitive sports and two demonstration events, with a deliberate emphasis on accessibility. Many sports will include categories for athletes with disabilities, highlighting the Games' dedication to full inclusion. Events will take place across diverse venues throughout the city—from central locations to the lush Turia Riverbed, a green corridor transformed from a former river into a recreational space that symbolizes the city's innovation and adaptability.

In addition to athletics, the Gay Games will bring the city to life with 15 cultural events scattered throughout neighborhoods and landmarks, ensuring that the celebration extends beyond stadiums and sports halls. These events will showcase LGBTQ+ creativity and community through music, art, performance, and design, transforming Valencia into a vibrant stage for self-expression.

Valencia: More Than Just a Host City

Valencia offers more than just the infrastructure to support an international sporting event—it's a destination that blends hospitality, sustainability, and style. With its robust public transit network of metro, buses, and trams, the city ensures smooth mobility for participants and visitors alike. For those who prefer to explore on two wheels, Valencia boasts over 160 kilometers of bike lanes and a convenient public rental system, making it one of the most cycle-friendly cities in Europe.

Late June's sunny skies and mild Mediterranean climate provide an ideal setting for both competition and relaxation. Visitors can unwind on sandy beaches, enjoy post-match strolls along palm-lined promenades, or discover Valencia's urban pulse in bustling plazas and outdoor cafes.

An Immersive LGBTQ+ and Cultural Experience

Beyond the Games themselves, Valencia invites attendees to immerse themselves in local life. LGBTQ+-friendly neighborhoods like Russafa, Benimaclet, and El Barrio de Sagunto offer welcoming spaces full of nightlife, independent shops, and artistic energy. Culinary explorers will find everything from world-renowned paella to experimental dishes in Michelin-starred restaurants.

Culture lovers can take in architectural marvels like the City of Arts and Sciences or the Oceanogràfic aquarium, as well as explore Valencia's UNESCO-listed historic center. The combination of sport, cultural depth, and inclusive leisure makes Gay Games XII not only a global sporting event but a full-sensory journey through one of Europe's most forward-thinking cities.

For more information and to register, visit the [Gay Games Valencia 2026 official website](https://www.gaygamesvalencia2026.com) or the [Valencia Tourism Official Site](https://www.valencia-tourism.com).

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Pride in the Park

words and photos by Chris Allan

In a county better known for its pale purple politics than its queer community, Placer Pride marked its fourth year with a family-friendly kickoff to Pride season on Saturday, May 17, in Roseville's Royer Park.

"Pride is a reminder that everyone deserves to be safe, seen, and celebrated," said Jacque Vaughn, Board Vice President of the Placer LGBTQ+ Center, which hosts the annual free event.

Clad in a spring-chic, cotton-candy colored frock, DoMe Moore did the honors again as emcee. This year's entertainment began with a land acknowledgement by Joshua Frederick. Frederick spoke about their own Two-Spirit life as well as honoring the Maidu Nisenan peoples on whose unceded land the event was held. After Frederick came an awesome variety of acts, including drag performers, singer songwriters, local chorus and musicians, and even a portrait artist.

One young attendee wore a brilliant rainbow-checked suit that glittered in the warm sun. "It's my first time here," said Luca Fragoso, who identifies as pansexual and came from neighboring Loomis. "I hope to meet some new people."

The desire for safe spaces to meet queer peers is not at all lost on the organizers. Daniella Zimmerman, the Center's Board President and CEO, explained that extra security had been hired for the event, given that a group of young men had recently verbally attacked one of their board members at the post office. They then began to shoot some kind of pellet gun and the incident was reported as a hate crime. "They

(the police) used traffic cameras to find these people, and I don't know that there's been any serious consequences, unfortunately."

However, while the current political climate continues to be very daunting, especially in more conservative counties like Placer, the event's underwriters only stepped up their support. "We doubled our sponsor amount...which is really nice, and I think we have a couple of new sponsors as well," said Zimmerman.

Meanwhile, the Camp Fruit Loop "kids" led some cornhole play, even as they worked to raise financial support for their campers. The progressive Lutherans held a 1:30pm raffle, the vet vendors had treats for the four-footed, and a child with a rainbow cape chased friends on the huge lawn. Placer Pride is basically a queer take on homespun, all-American celebrations and feels like old-school Southside Sac Pride

with its tree-shaded picnic-table scene, and pop-up vendor and resource booths. It's fun, friendly and festive.

But if you're looking for beer-garden-variety fun, you won't find it. "Liquor licenses are expensive, and it would change the nature of the event," said Zimmerman. You see all the families and kids here, and we like that vibe, and everyone who comes likes that vibe," she said.

This "Pride in the Park" gathering keeps coming into its own and events like Placer Pride are critical for the area, says Vaughn. "In a climate where LGBTQ+ rights are being challenged, Pride is more vital than ever. It's not just a celebration — it's a declaration that we belong, we're resilient, and we're building a stronger future."

The Placer LGBTQ+ Center is currently fundraising to establish a permanent, safe and inclusive community space at <https://placerlgbtqcenter.org/the-center>.



Celebrating LGBTQ+ Culture in Sacramento: A Year-Round Welcome

Sacramento proudly stands as a vibrant and welcoming city where LGBTQ+ culture is not only visible but celebrated year-round. From dynamic performances and diverse musical talents to literary treasures and inclusive festivals, California's capital offers a rich tapestry of queer-centered events and experiences.

Sacramento's queer entertainment scene thrives with energy and variety. From drag queen bingo to drag brunches and even queer-fronted indie bands, the city buzzes with fun things to do that resonate across genres and identities. Whether it's dancing at a downtown club, flipping through vinyl at a record shop, or sitting on a patio, sipping coffee, and watching the people walk by, Sacramento has lots of LGBTQ+ friendly fun to be enjoyed.



Bookworms and history buffs can find their haven at the [Lavender Library](#), nestled in Midtown. This community gem is more than just a library—it's a hub for queer voices past and present. Stocked with books, zines, and archives by and for the LGBTQ+ community, it also hosts story times and open mic nights, making it a cultural cornerstone for Sacramento's queer residents and visitors alike.

Looking ahead, Sacramento Pride, June 14-15, promises a colorful and unifying celebration. With its parade, live entertainment, and community events, Pride transforms Capitol Mall into a joyful expression of visibility, equality, and belonging. It's a must-attend event for locals and tourists alike.

To help visitors navigate all that Sacramento's LGBTQ+ scene has to offer, Visit Sacramento provides an [LGBTQ Welcome Guide](#). This comprehensive kit is packed with resources, tips, and information on local gay bars, events, and neighborhood highlights—an ideal starting point for anyone looking to explore Sacramento's queer culture.

Whether you're a longtime local or a first-time visitor, Sacramento offers a year-round celebration of LGBTQ+ identity, creativity, and community. Be sure to check out Visit Sacramento's web site by [clicking here!](#)



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Learn More and Sign Up Online: Visit **sacramentopride.org** to explore volunteer roles, get more information, and sign up today!

Volunteer On-Site at Pride! You can show up to Capitol Mall on June 14 & 15 and sign up to volunteer that same day! We welcome your enthusiasm and support.

Don't miss this incredible opportunity to contribute to a vibrant cause, meet amazing people, and be an integral part of Sac Pride 2025. For any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the volunteer team at **pride.volunteers@saccenter.org**.



FESTIVAL LINEUP & SCHEDULE



*stage schedule subject to change, follow @sacpride for updates

5TH STREET PRIDE STAGE

SATURDAY JUNE 14

DJ CISCO

1:15PM SACRAMENTO GAY MENS CHORUS
2:00PM CULTURES OF PRIDE DANCE SHOW
3:00PM DRAG IS NOT A CRIME! SHOWCASE
4:45PM SAC DANCE LAB
5:45PM CRE8TIVE CONNECTIONS FASHION SHOW
6:30PM CYAH ENVY
6:45PM JOHN'NAY LASHA
7:15PM SHEA COULEE
8:15PM FLYANA BOSS



5TH STREET PRIDE STAGE

SUNDAY JUNE 15

DJ LADY CHAR

1:15PM ADAM ALDAMA AND THE ACES
2:00PM GLOOMY JUNE BAND
3:00PM HEATHER LA ROSE
3:45PM MAXX DRAG
TAKEOVER
4:30PM DRAG RACE
ALL STARS
SHOWCASE:
ROXXXY ANDREWS
DAYA BETTY



4TH STREET CABARET STAGE

SATURDAY JUNE 14 DJ LADY CHAR

1:15PM SACRAMENTO CHEER ELITE
2:00PM LAVENDER LOVELIES TAKEOVER
3:00PM KINGS N' THINGS SHOWCASE
4:00PM HIBISCUS TAKEOVER
5:00PM BESOS! LATINX TAKEOVER
6:00PM THE DARLING CLEMENTINES
BURLESQUE & QUEER CABARET TAKEOVER
7:30PM JUICEBOX DANCE PARTY

SUNDAY JUNE 15 DJ CISCO

1:15PM MERCURY RISING DRAG SHOW
2:00PM ARTHAUS DRAG SHOW
3:00PM DRESS CODE TAKEOVER
3:45PM HELLEN HEELS DRAG SHOW
DJ TLDSTR

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Attend any Pride themed ride
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the Sacramento LGBT
Community Center!

**Love Amplified - Full Send
Pride Party!** Presented by
Press Club
June 13 at 7:00 p.m. at Press
Club, Sacramento



Blockbuster Movies Have Arrived

by Chris Narloch

Blockbuster season is here, as evidenced by the advance trailer for the “Wicked” sequel, which already looks like a hit, even though it doesn’t open in theaters until November 21st.

The other big movie news involves two very popular NorCal film festivals, one in Sacramento and the other in the Bay Area this June, that should satisfy Sactown cineastes. Locally, the 24th Sacramento French Film Festival is ready to roll at Tower Theatre this June 20–22. For more information, go to: <https://sacramentofrenchfilmfestival.org> Over in the Bay Area, Frameline49 presents the largest and longest-running queer film festival in the world, this June 18–28. Details at: www.frameline.org Finally, read on for my latest blockbuster movie reviews.



Thunderbolts

I am not a huge Marvel fan, but I will see anything starring Florence Pugh, and she is the best reason to watch the new Avengers movie, which costars sexy Sebastian Stan and also David Harbour, plus other talented actors who make you believe in the comic book chaos on the screen. I especially enjoyed Julia Louis-Dreyfus, who injects some much-needed humor into the film as the CIA Director who recruits a ragtag team of antiheroes with issues, for a dangerous mission. Pugh lends gravitas to the proceedings with her usual fearlessness, and the action sequences (while familiar) are very well-executed. In wide theatrical release.



Final Destination: Bloodlines

I had never seen any of the films in this horror franchise until the reviews raved about the current installment (#6), so I had to see for myself what all the fuss was about. Turns out the sixth time is the charm, thanks to a mostly-clever script filled with scenes of people getting bumped off that are so over-the-top all I could do was laugh. Fatalism has rarely been this fun, and the duo of directors in charge go for broke with the deadly action sequences, which are not for the squeamish. The opening part of the film, involving an elaborate accident at a Space Needle-like restaurant, features absolutely spectacular special effects work. In wide theatrical release.



Mission Impossible: The Final Reckoning

See Tom run. See Tom swim. See Tom hang off the wing of a plane in midair (upside down!) It’s a shame that the new Oscar category for stunt work will not be awarded until 2028, because Tom Cruise (the ultimate movie star-stunt man) would definitely win that award, for risking life and limb to make the latest “Mission Impossible” movie. I was somewhat bored by all the dialogue in the first half of this very long film, which finds Mr. Cruise’s character, Ethan Hunt, saving the world yet again, this time from The Entity – essentially “evil AI.” Once the eye-popping action kicks in during the last half of the movie, however, I was glued to the screen, and I recommend seeing “Mission Impossible: The Final Reckoning” in the largest theater you can find. In wide theatrical release.



Dangerous Animals

This mash-up of “Jaws” and “Psycho” takes two popular horror genres, puts them in a blender, and somehow comes up with a killer cocktail that is trashy fun. The hunky Aussie actor Jai Courtney plays a sicko serial killer who likes to film the live women he feeds to sharks from his commercial tour boat. That sounds like a nauseating premise – and it is – but what makes this thriller work is a script that centers the gutsy surfer chick (a terrific Hassie Harrison) who is determined not to become shark food. To its credit, “Dangerous Animals” does not have a bumner ending, and it boasts a tough, smart heroine to root for. In limited theatrical release.

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ON THE RIVER



Fortune Feimster is a Riot

by Chris Narloch

It's official, ladies. Funny lady Fortune Feimster is back on the market, and you can bring her flowers and pledge your undying love when she brings her "Takin' Care of Biscuits Tour" to The Venue at Thunder Valley Casino Resort in Lincoln later this month.

Feimster will no doubt make light of being single again, after the comic's very recent but amicable split from Jacquelyn Smith, her wife of more than four years.

Writer, actor, and one-of-a-kind comedian Fortune Feimster has been building her unique comedy career for more than 20 years. Be it on the road, her radio show, film, or television, her contagious and joyous perspective touches lives and brings us all together.

I don't know if Fortune's tale of her 18th birthday party is still in the act – her family took her to Hooters to celebrate! – but that hilarious episode is a prime example of Feimster's classic, confessional comedy and superb storytelling skills.

With her unmistakable Southern charm, she's been described as "your funniest cousin" who isn't afraid to entertain the masses with stories of her insecurities, faux pas and of course, good fortune.

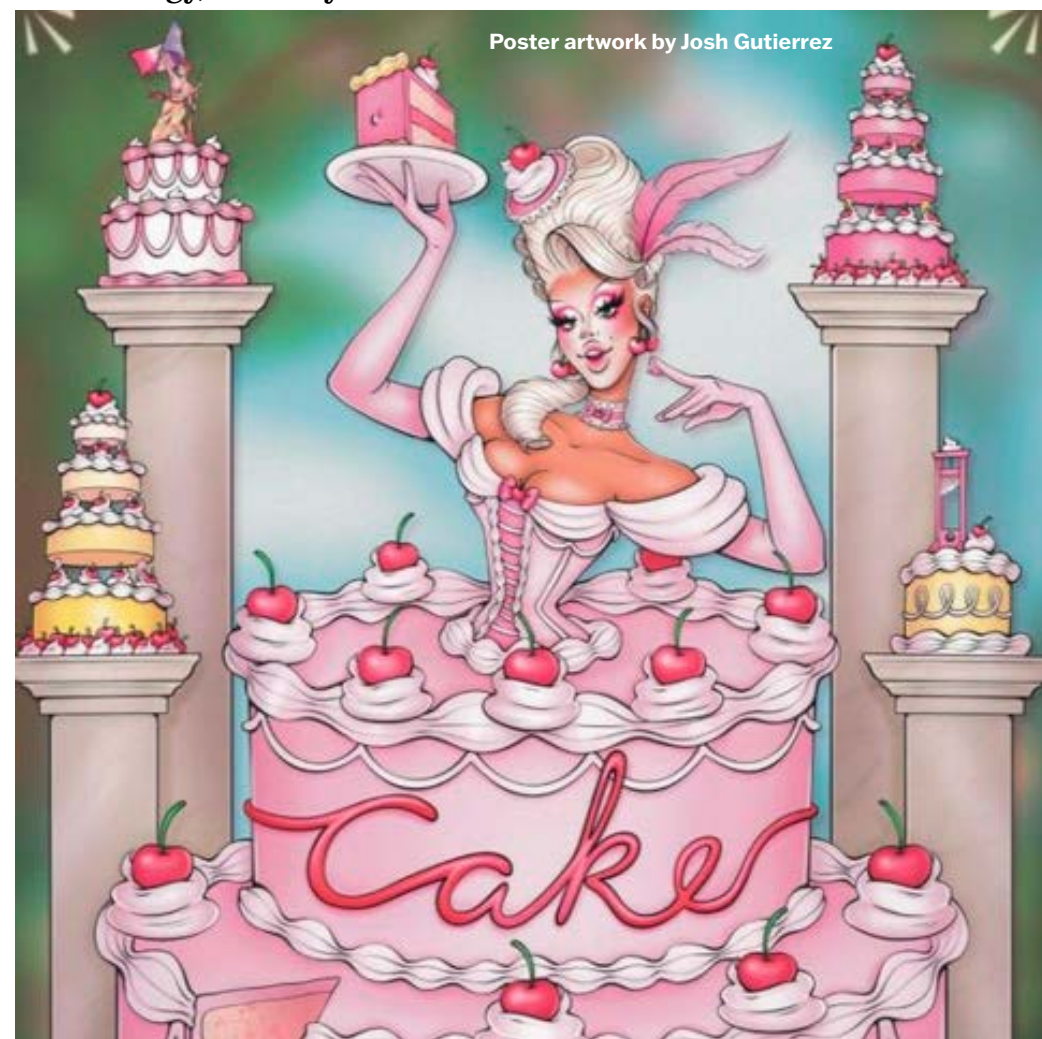
There are still tickets left for Feimster's local appearance, on Friday evening, June 27, 2025. For more information, go to: thundervalleyresort.com



Have Some "Cake" at Crocker

Sacramento's Crocker Art Museum will celebrate Pride this month with a serving of high tea, high fashion, and high energy, courtesy of ArtMix: Cake.

Poster artwork by Josh Gutierrez



Inspired by the current exhibit "Reform to Restoration: French Art from Louis XVI to Louis XVIII from the Horvitz Collection," the Crocker will feature a night of French decadence, a dazzling drag showcase, an LGBTQ+ market with QueerShoppe, and courtyard games fit for royalty.

Featured drag artists include: A La Mode, Bijou Bently, Billy Freak, Greasepaint, and Rhonda Beaverhausen. DJed dance floors will keep the vibes immaculate all night long, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., on Thursday, June 12.

To purchase tickets, please visit: www.crockerart.org/events

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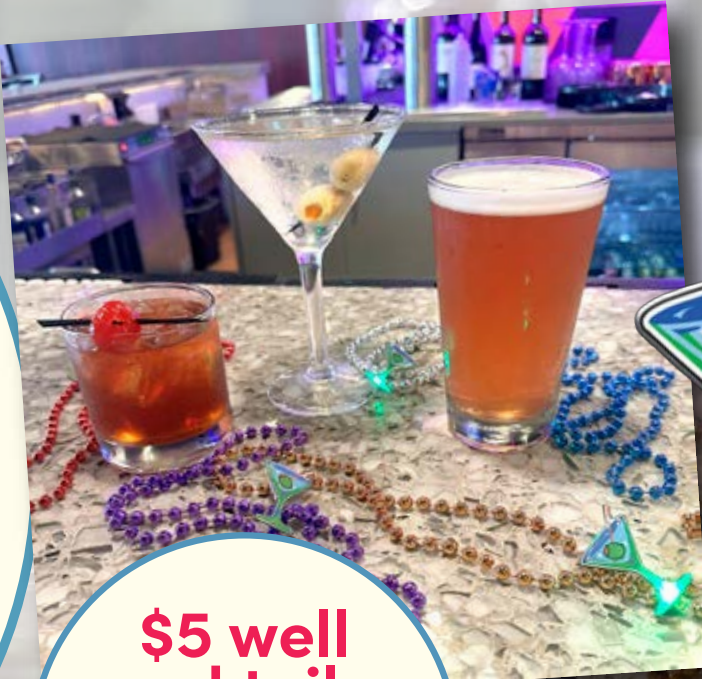
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Leather Pride Sacramento is Gearing Up!

by the Leather Pride Sacramento Crew

Leather Pride Sacramento is gearing up for its highly anticipated 3rd annual celebration, taking place during the vibrant Sacramento Pride weekend on June 14th and 15th, 2025. This event will provide a dynamic and welcoming space for individuals to embrace and express their identities within the leather, kink, and BDSM communities.

Whether you're a seasoned member or someone new to the scene, this inclusive event offers an exciting opportunity to connect, celebrate, and learn in a safe and respectful environment.

Located in the heart of Sacramento Pride, the Leather Pride tent is open to all individuals age 18 and older. The event is designed to highlight the rich history, diversity, and unity of the leather and kink communities, while also promoting awareness, consent, and mutual respect. This year's celebration promises to be bigger and better than ever, with a variety of activities, performances, shopping and community-building opportunities for all who attend.

One of the event's key features is its engaging lineup of performances and live demonstrations. Over 15 unique performances will take place on the newly designed stage, showcasing the talents of performers from across the leather, kink, and BDSM communities. These demonstrations will cover a range of practices and skills, from rope bondage, impact and even cacti offering a safe, educational, and entertaining experience for both experienced participants and curious newcomers. For those looking

to further explore the world of leather care, the event will also feature a team of skilled Bootblacks, ready to polish and maintain your leather gear, ensuring that you look your best while supporting the community.

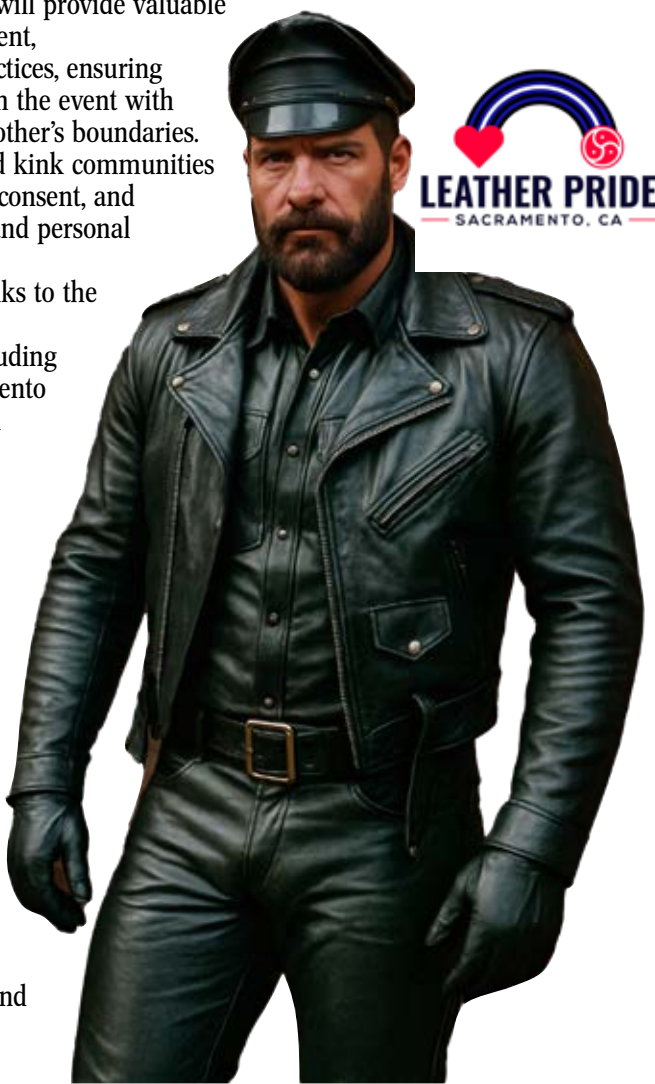
The Leather Pride tent will feature 12 leather and kink vendors showcasing a wide range of products, from custom gear to apparel and accessories. Whether you're looking for a new harness, collar, or just some unique, you'll find something to suit your style and needs. Shopping at these vendors not only allows you to express your individuality but also supports businesses and artisans within the kink and leather communities.

The event will feature a mosh area designed for pets, critters, furies, litters and all in between. This area will provide a space for attendees to interact in a playful and energetic environment, with the opportunity to explore roleplay, dynamics, and other forms of self-expression. It's an inclusive and non-judgmental space that encourages creativity and connection with coloring books and stickers.

For those looking to learn more about safer practices, the event will have a free resource table filled with safer sex supplies, harm reduction supplies, hygiene supplies and educational pamphlets. The table will provide valuable information on topics such as consent, communication, and safe play practices, ensuring that all attendees can participate in the event with confidence and respect for one another's boundaries. It's a reminder that the leather and kink communities are built on a foundation of trust, consent, and mutual respect, where education and personal responsibility are key.

The event is made possible thanks to the generous support of several local businesses and organizations, including The Bolt Sacramento, The Sacramento LGBT Community Center, SPUNK Lube, Double Scorpio, Hustler Hollywood, Boucher Law, Mr. San Francisco Leather, The Sac Batterie, and many others. These sponsors play a vital role in ensuring the success of the event and its continued growth. Volunteers also contribute significantly to the event's success, helping to create an atmosphere of inclusivity!

Tickets are available now at SacramentoPride.org, and donations can be made at saccenter.org to help support the ongoing efforts of the Sacramento LGBT Community Center. With so much to explore and experience, it's an event you won't want to miss!



Pride Events in California 2025

**SAC
PRIDE**

Sacramento Pride

Dates: June 14–15, 2025

Location: Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA

Website: <https://sacramentopride.org/>

Elk Grove Pride

Date: June 21, 2025

Location: Laguna Town Hall, Elk Grove, CA

Website: <https://www.exploreelkgrove.com/>

Santa Monica Pride (SaMo Pride)

Date: June 21, 2025

Location: Santa Monica Place and Main Street Santa Monica, CA

Website: <https://www.smpride.com>

Yountville Pride in the Park

Date: June 22, 2025

Location: Yountville Veterans Memorial Park, Yountville, CA

Website: yountville.com/pridecelebrations

San Francisco Pride

Dates: June 28–29, 2025

Location: Civic Center, San Francisco, CA

Website: <https://sfpride.org/>

Silicon Valley Pride (San Jose)

Dates: August 29–31, 2025

Location: Plaza de César Chávez Park, San Jose, CA

Website: <https://www.svpride.com/>

Palm Springs Pride

Dates: November 6–9, 2025

Location: Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs, CA

Website: <https://www.pspride.org/>

Please note that event details such as dates and locations are subject to change. It's advisable to check the official websites for the most current information.



Out & About

with Matthew Burlingame

Happy pride! Stand up, be proud of who you are and sparkle harder than you ever have before! They are trying to erase us—but we will wave our rainbow flags even higher, and shine brighter than a disco ball at midnight! They forget that pride isn't just a party... it was a protest born of the bravery of those who came before us. This month we honor them by living loudly and unapologetically. We are still here. We are still fabulous. And we will never stop fighting to be the fierce, amazing community that we are!

June 13

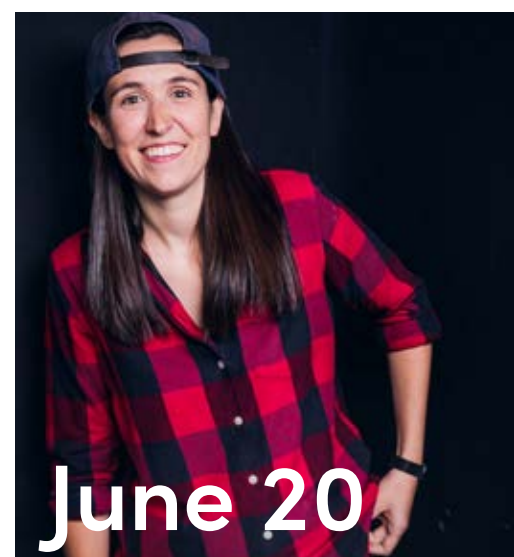
Join us at Outword's monthly happy hour on Friday, June 13, at Badlands Sacramento, 2003 K St. for a dose of Liquid Therapy! Everyone is welcome to enjoy the fun from 5:30-7 p.m., with chances to win prizes and enjoy drink specials. Reconnect with old friends and make new ones. OutwordMagazine.com

June 14

Start Pride weekend with pancakes, sausage and sass at the Sacramento Pride Pancake Breakfast, hosted by ACLC, Nina Kaiser and Joan Norry. The fun kicks off at 11 a.m. Saturday, June 14, at The Bolt, 2560 Boxwood St. Plates are \$10, with prize drawings every 30 minutes. "Not your father's pancakes...but they might be your daddy's!" Sacbolt.com

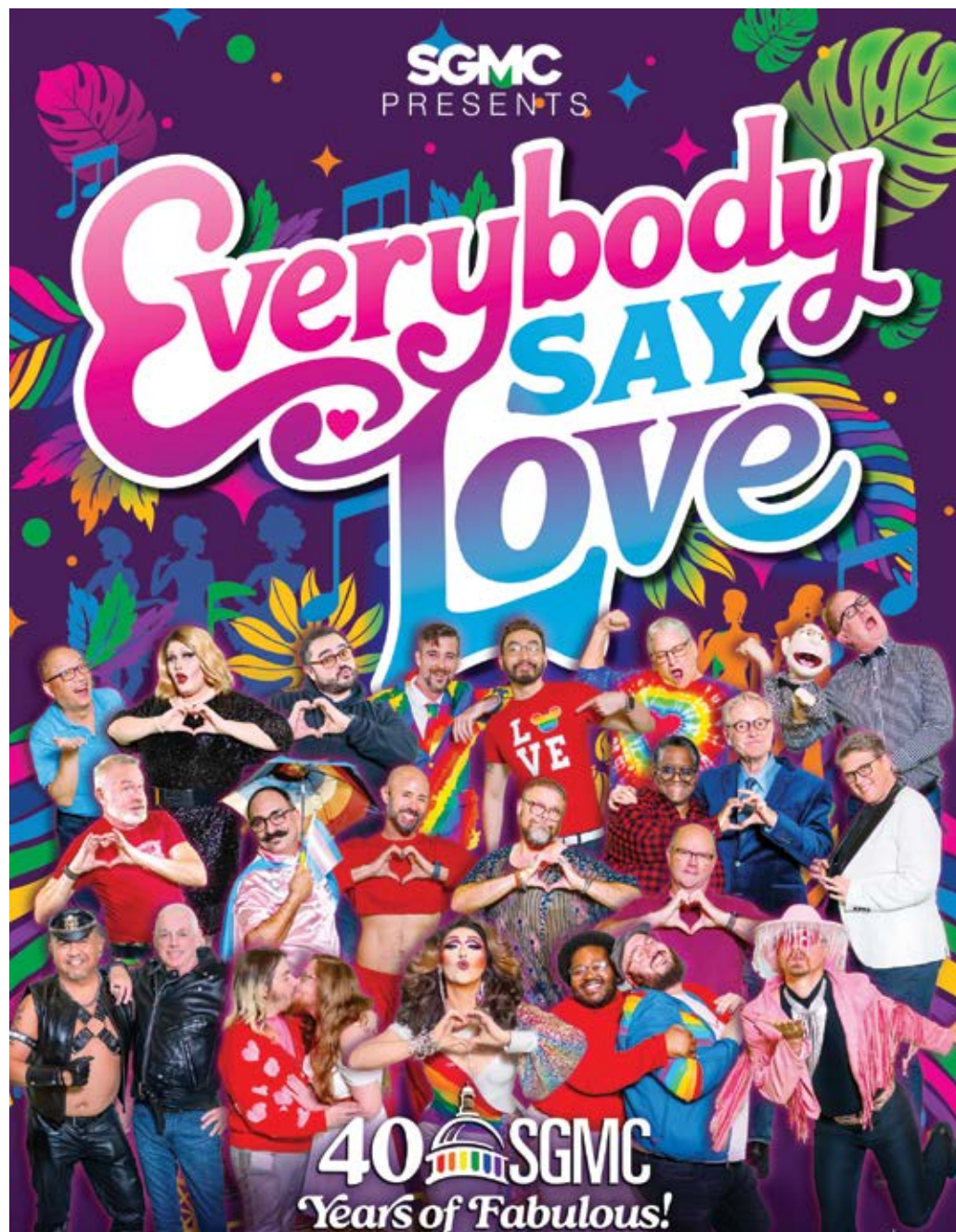
Join the circus of democracy at the "Kick Out the Clowns Out of the Government" protest, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 14, at the Roseville Galleria. Come costumed and colorful as citizens turn satire into statements. It's part political protest, part performance—because sometimes the best way to be heard is to clown around.

Celebrate freedom, culture and community at the 2025 Juneteenth Block Party from 4 to 9 p.m. Saturday, June 14, at the historic 40 Acres Complex in Oak Park, Sacramento. Enjoy live music, food trucks, a car show, kids' activities at Esther's Park, and a Black-owned business marketplace. Free and open to all! bit.ly/StHopeJuneteenth25.



June 20

Ashley Gavin brings her sharp wit and viral charm to Punch Line Sacramento, 2100 Arden Way, for a night of stand-up comedy presented by Live Nation and Punch Line Sacramento. Catch the Netflix, Hulu and TikTok star at her best-known gig: live and uncensored. Gavin hits the mic Thursday, June 20. Punchlinesac.com.



June 20

Experience the vibrant spirit of love and self-expression at Everybody Say Love! Join the Sacramento Gay Men's Chorus for an empowering musical celebration inspired by iconic drag queens and timeless love anthems. Catch the dynamic performances on Friday, June 20, and Saturday, June 21, at The Sofia, Home of B Street Theatre, 2700 Capitol Ave. Celebrate four decades of resilience, creativity, and unapologetic joy. Tickets available now — don't miss this unforgettable tribute!

Sacgaymenschorus.com

Be sure to swing by Roscoe's before the SGMC show for the return of Outword's Supper Club. They are having two seating times so show goers can still join in on the fun. There will be \$5 well cocktails, martinis or beer, so it's already got that going for it. Check out the deats on Outword's Facebook invite for the event, [click here](#).

June 21

Get moving for a cause at the Greater Sacramento Urban League's annual Juneteenth Freedom Run/Walk at 8 a.m. Saturday, June 21, on E Park Road in Sacramento. This free, family-friendly event honors the arrival of freedom in Galveston in 1865. Celebrate resilience with exercise, community, and history. Open to all ages—just bring your spirit! Gsul.org

Celebrate love and inclusion at Woodland Pride, hosted by CommuniCare+OLE on Saturday, June 21. The fun kicks off with a 10 a.m. parade at Main and Elm Streets in downtown Woodland, followed by a Pride Party from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 212 2nd St. Enjoy floats, food, music and community. Free and open to all!

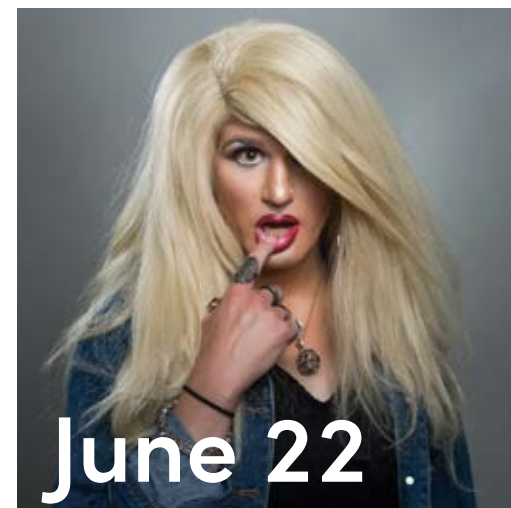
Sinister Creature Con creeps into Sacramento's Scottish Rite Center, 6151 H St., on June 21-22 for its 10th anniversary celebration. Horror fans can expect celebrity guests like Doug Jones and Devon Sawa, over 100 vendors, makeup demos, and cosplay contests. Don't miss this monstrous milestone of mayhem, magic and memories—where horror comes alive! LoveHorrorEvents.



June 21

June 22

LOLGBT+ brings the laughs to Punch Line Sacramento, 2100 Arden Way, at 7 p.m. Sunday, June 22. Founded by drag queen and comedian Suzette Veneti, the group's shows—like the fan-favorite "Queens & Comedy"—blend stand-up and drag in bold, hilarious ways. Expect a night of fierce fun, community vibes and boundary-pushing entertainment. Punchlinesac.com.



June 22

Do you have events, birthdays, or announcements to share? Feel free to send them to matthewburlingame@gmail.com

Pride on the Plaza

words and photos by Chris Allan

One of the first Pride events in the Bay Area this season, Suisun Pride 2025 marked just its second anniversary on June 1. Historic Suisun City hosted Solano County's signature Pride gathering at its charming Harbor Plaza.

The appropriately-shaped triangular plaza was packed with rows of vendors and exhibitors, food trucks and a palm-lined grassy space in front of the stage. Considering "Suisun" is believed to mean "where the west wind blows" in the Patwin language, it wasn't surprising that a strong but refreshing breeze blew off the nearby slough throughout the afternoon. "We only had drag performers and dancers last year," commented Stephan

Clifford, Treasurer for the Board of the Solano Pride Center. So (this year) we have live musical acts, we have a comedian and food trucks and food vendors all the way down... It's insane how much food we have right now!" The diverse crowd was definitely enjoying everything from lumpia to Maine-lobster rolls. They also freely dug up cash for drag artist Ana Filaxis and cheered on the Kashinoki Taiko drummers. The

relaxing event was strongly supported by the city's mayor and one of several planned during Pride month in the county. "Solano County really represents what the entire nation is doing," said Clifford, a trans man. We have all of it. We've got the people who really want to be with the (Trump) Administration and turn off DEL, and then we've got a lot of people that don't, and so there is definitely a huge mix and it's very interesting."



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Taylor Makes a Major Purchase, Fogerty Re-records

Taylor Swift has reportedly spent \$360 million to acquire the master recordings of her first six studio albums. This move marks the conclusion of her years-long effort to gain full ownership of her original work.



Swift began re-recording her early albums under the “Taylor’s Version” label as a way to reclaim control over her music. These releases were met with critical acclaim and strong fan support, boosting their commercial success and diminishing the value of the original masters.

She’s not alone in this approach. John Fogerty, frontman of Creedence Clearwater Revival, recently announced plans to release new recordings of the band’s classic songs—calling them “John’s Versions.” Much like Swift, Fogerty’s decision stems from a desire to reclaim his artistic legacy after a long history of legal disputes over his music’s rights. These re-recordings represent a powerful personal and creative statement, offering fans refreshed takes on beloved tracks while reinforcing the importance of artist ownership.

The recent acquisition solidifies Swift’s position as a powerful force in the music industry. With her masters now in her control, she not only ensures long-term creative and financial independence but also sets a powerful example—one now echoed by legends like Fogerty—for other artists striving for ownership of their work.

Retraction Statement

In our recent CA Pride issue, Outword Magazine republished an article from TheHomoCulture.com without receiving written permission. Additionally, the article was not properly attributed to the correct source. We acknowledge this oversight and offer our sincere apologies to TheHomoCulture.com and our readers.

We deeply respect the important work TheHomoCulture.com does in covering LGBTQ+ travel, events, and culture. Moving forward, we are reinforcing our editorial policies to ensure proper permissions and accurate attributions are in place for all third-party content.

We remain committed to celebrating the voices, experiences, and stories of the LGBTQ+ community. Our mission continues to be the amplification of diverse perspectives with respect and integrity.

Thank you for your continued support. We are proud to have served the Sacramento community, now in our 30th year, and look forward to doing so for years to come.



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Speedo Men's 18" Marina Flex Swim Trunks

Known for their performance swimwear, Speedo offers these versatile trunks featuring 4-way stretch fabric, UPF 50+ sun protection, and quick-dry material. Priced around \$50, they are suitable for both recreational swimming and casual beach outings.

[Click here for more info.](#)



Nike Men's Swim Breaker Specs 7 Inch Volley Short

These eco-conscious shorts are made with sustainable materials and designed for active swimmers. They include a stretch waistband, full mesh lining, and on-seam pockets. Available for around \$50. [Click here for more info.](#)

Hurley One & Only Men's Swim Trunks

These classic trunks provide a budget-friendly option at \$40. They feature quick-drying fabric and a regular fit, suitable for various water activities. With time-tested style, these trunks will help you swim through any bathing suit season.

[Click here for more info.](#)



Quiksilver x Pacifico Straight Leg 19" Boardshorts

A collaboration between Quiksilver and Pacifico, these boardshorts offer a classic straight-leg fit with 4-way stretch fabric. Priced at \$59, they are ideal for surfing, beach activities or relaxing around the pool.

[Click here for more info.](#)

Adidas Men's Adicolor 3-Stripes Swim Shorts

Combining style and function, these swim shorts feature the iconic 3-stripes design and are made with quick-dry fabric. They are available for \$30.00. [Click here for more info.](#)

Jack Adams World Pride Swimsuit

Make a splash in the World Pride Low Rise Swimsuit (\$72), designed with bold rainbow stripes and a sleek, low-rise fit that's sporty, lightweight, and quick-drying; it offers UVF50+ sun protection, a contoured double-ply pouch with a hidden inner pocket and an adjustable waistband for all-day comfort.

[Click here for more info.](#)



Old Navy Printed Swim Trunks

Make a splash in Old Navy's True Blue Flamingo Print Swim Trunks—now just \$15 (50% off)! These 7-inch inseam trunks feature stretch fabric, an elastic drawstring waistband, mesh lining, and built-in UPF sun protection. With a relaxed fit and practical pockets, they're perfect for beach days or poolside lounging.

[Click here for more info.](#)

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

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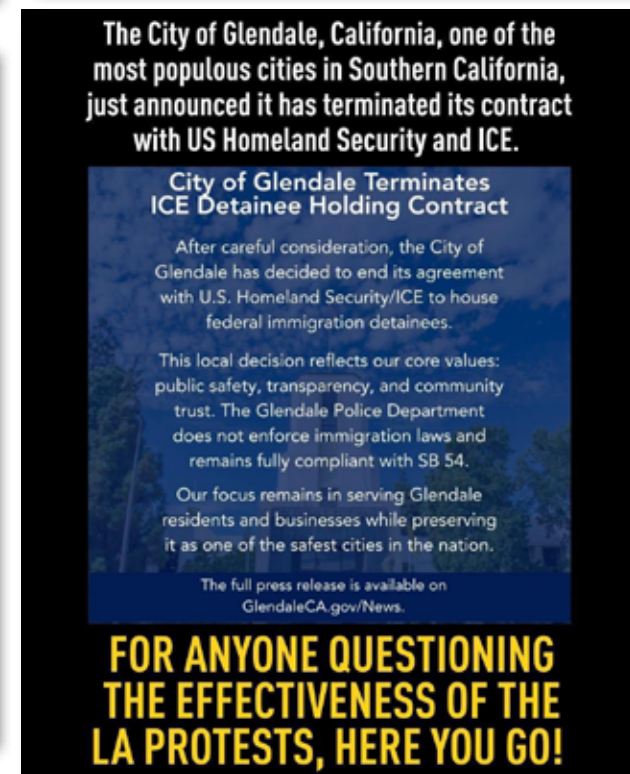
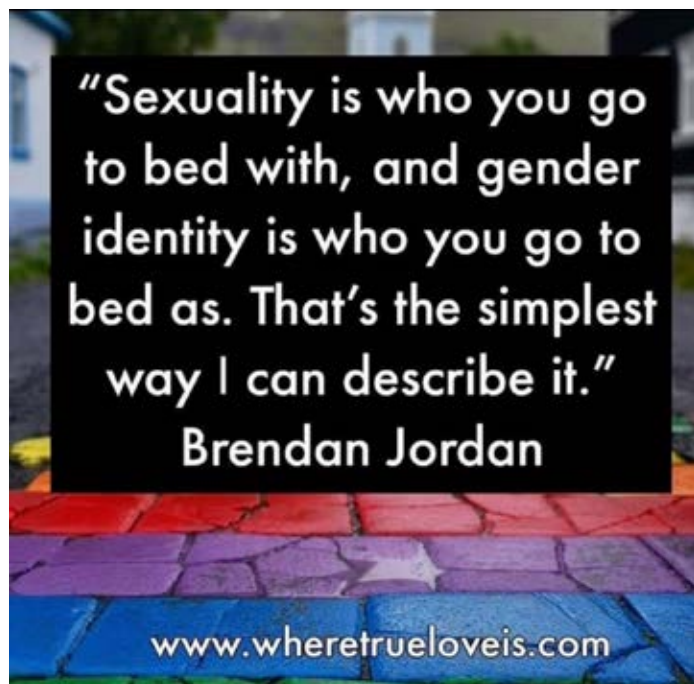
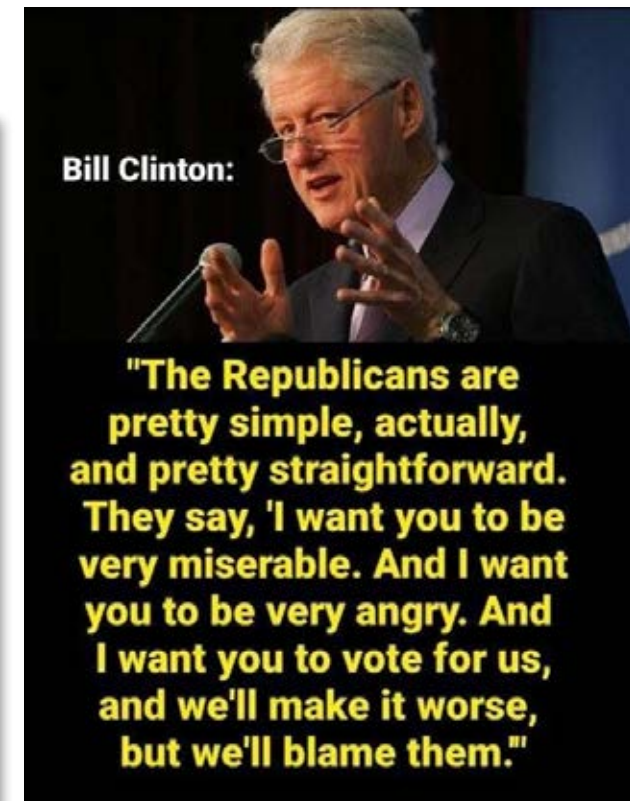
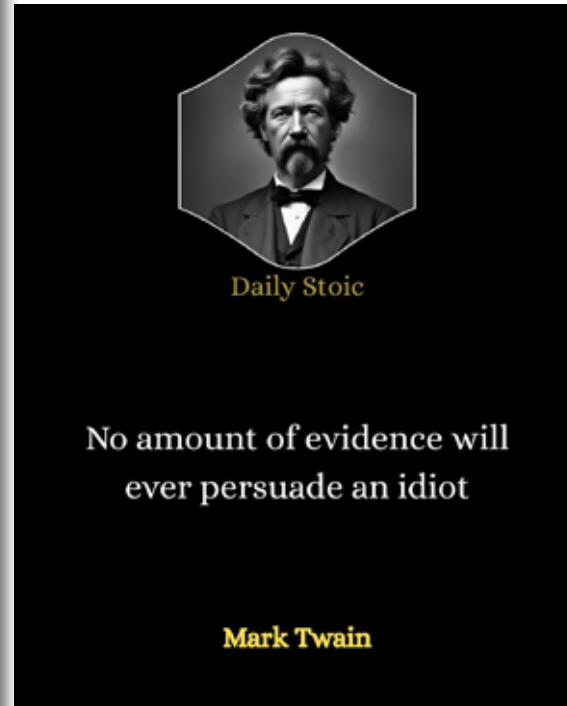
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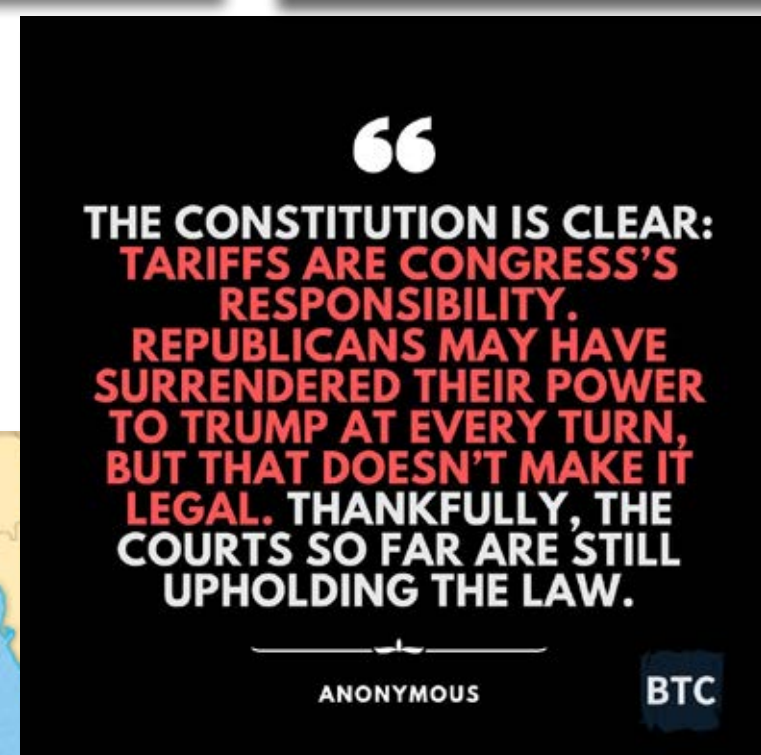
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Mememes from Facebook



Memes from Facebook





Activating Taste Buds (ATB) submitted by the Outword Team

The Outword team recently took a well-deserved break from the office for a long, leisurely lunch at The Waterboy, a Sacramento staple nestled in the heart of Midtown. For several of us, it had been years since our last visit, and we decided to make the most of the experience. That meant ordering a wide array of dishes—perhaps more than we strictly needed—to sample as much as possible from the thoughtfully curated menu. What followed was a flavorful journey that more than lived up to our expectations.



Cheese Selection
Pt. Reyes Bay Blue (California) - Cow's Milk Humboldt Fog (California) - Goat's Milk Manchego (Spain) - Sheep's Milk French Brie (France) - Double Cream, Cow's Milk



First up a cocktail was in order. So two of us had dirty martinis with blue cheese stuffed olives and Fred had what he called the best Manhattan he has ever experienced. (And he knows his way around a Manhattan.) It was definitely a great way to get started.



Six Beautiful Oysters: Served on the Half Shell with Lemon & Mignonette 24



Deviled Eggs: Bacon, Capers, Dill 10



Pickled Beets: Feta, Watercress 10

Then we began with a few small starters and sides. Of course, we had to try the “Six Beautiful Oysters,” which were so fresh! Then the deviled eggs—enhanced with bacon, capers, and dill—were a classic with just enough flair to feel special, and the pickled beets with feta and watercress made a lovely, refreshing side, balancing sweet and tangy elements in a simple but satisfying way.



From there, we enjoyed The Waterboy's take on the classic Caesar salad. With Parmigiano Reggiano, housemade croutons, garlic, and a bright touch of lemon, it delivered bold flavor and a satisfying crunch. It wasn't oversized, but certainly enough for two to share as a starter, or in our case the three of us.

Waterboy Caesar Salad: Parmigiano Reggiano, Garlic, Croutons, Lemon • Salad of Local Strawberries: Whipped Goat Cheese, Baby Lettuces, Toasted Pistachios 18



To accompany the meal, we shared a bottle of Brick & Mortar champagne, which proved to be an excellent choice. Crisp and elegant, it's a perfect example of how California continues to impress on the sparkling wine front.



One of the real highlights came from the pasta course: the ravioli, filled with spinach, ricotta, and gorgonzola, and finished with pistachio, black pepper, and a delicate chive butter, was relatively small in portion, but immense in flavor. Each bite was layered, balanced, and memorable, comforting, yet refined.

Ravioli: Spinach, Ricotta, Gorgonzola, Pistachio, Black Pepper, Chive Butter, Balsamico 25

For entrées, the sea scallops were seared to perfection and paired with crispy pork belly, a silky carrot purée, and lemon butter. Like the ravioli, the portion wasn't large, but the dish was beautifully composed and fully satisfying. The sliced prime New York steak was the heartiest plate on the table, arriving with roasted onions, blue cheese, Full Belly Farm potatoes, and romesco. It was a generous, expertly cooked dish—robust, savory, and grounded.



Pan Seared Sea Scallops: Pork Belly, Sautéed Dwelley Beans Nantes Carrot Purée, Lemon Butter 36



Grilled Sliced Prime New York Steak: Arugula, Roasted Onions, Romesco Blue Cheese, Full Belly Farm New Potatoes 36



**Butterscotch Budino
Whipped Cream, Caramel & Biscotti 12**



**Carrot Cake
Orange Cream Cheese Frosting
Candied Pecans 12**



**Chocolate Pâté (GF)
Strawberry Compote & Whipped Cream 12**

We couldn't resist the dessert menu, and it's safe to say The Waterboy shines just as brightly at the end of the meal. The butterscotch budino was indulgent in the best way, topped with whipped cream, caramel, and a biscotti on the side. The carrot cake, with orange cream cheese frosting and candied pecans, had a subtle fruitcake essence—in a surprisingly delightful and nostalgic way. The flourless chocolate pâté was rich and dense, and it rounded things out with the help of a bright strawberry compote.



www.waterboyrestaurant.com

Admittedly, this wasn't a modest lunch, but we were determined to savor every bite—and we did, without a crumb wasted. The Waterboy isn't a budget-friendly stop, but that's not the point. This is a place where high-quality ingredients, polished service, and a warm, inviting ambiance come together for a truly special experience. Whether you're celebrating or simply want to treat yourself and someone you care about, The Waterboy remains one of Sacramento's most reliable and rewarding dining destinations.



Help Your Pet Stay Calm This 4th of July

Inspired by guidance from [Asher House Wellness](#)

For many pets, Independence Day can be one of the most stressful days of the year. The loud booms, sudden flashes, and unpredictable nature of fireworks can trigger intense anxiety and fear. Asher House Wellness reminds us that now is the time to start preparing your pet for a calmer, more comfortable holiday.

Begin Early for the Best Results

According to Asher House Wellness, one of the most effective ways to support your pet during fireworks season is to begin a calming routine well in advance. Introducing CBD into your pet's daily regimen in the weeks leading up to July 4th can help them feel more balanced and relaxed by the time the celebrations begin. Consistency is key—daily use makes the biggest impact.

Why CBD?

Asher House Wellness offers pet-safe, full-spectrum CBD formulated to support relaxation and reduce sensitivity to stressful stimuli. It can help your pet better manage loud or chaotic environments. Whether your pet deals with general anxiety or heightened stress during fireworks, CBD is a natural way to promote calm behavior.

Options That Fit Your Pet's Lifestyle

Asher House Wellness offers CBD in both oils and chews, making it easy to find a form that suits your pet's routine and preferences. Whether they're treat-motivated or respond better to oils added to their food, there's a solution that works.

Help your pet enjoy a peaceful Independence Day this year. To learn more and explore the full range of CBD options, visit [Asher House Wellness](#).



The Sky River Casino is hosting a Sac Pride Celebration Pre-Party on Friday, June 13, 2025, at 1 Sky River Parkway in Elk Grove, California. This event is part of the casino's ongoing commitment to inclusivity and community engagement.

Event Details

Date: Friday, June 13, 2025

Location: Sky River Casino,

1 Sky River Parkway,

Elk Grove, CA 95757

While specific details about the pre-party's activities haven't been disclosed, Sky River Casino is known for its vibrant entertainment offerings, including live DJs, themed parties, and a variety of dining options. The event is expected to feature lively music, dancing, and special Pride-themed promotions.

Sky River Casino, opened in August 2022, is a premier gaming and entertainment destination in Northern California. The venue regularly hosts live entertainment and community events, emphasizing a welcoming atmosphere for all guests.

For more details about the Sac Pride Celebration Pre-Party or other events at Sky River Casino, you can visit their official website: [Sky River Casino Events](#).



SAC PRIDE

PRE-PARTY | FRIDAY, JUNE 13 | 8PM



MENU

GARLIC FRIES 8

crispy fries tossed in garlic & parmesan

PRETZEL BITES 12

ale mustard & beer cheese

BREWS CHICKEN WINGS 15

crispy wings tossed in buffalo sauce

BREWS STREET TACOS CHICKEN 14 | STEAK 17

cilantro, onions, pico de gallo, cotija cheese

BREWS BURGER 19

lettuce, tomato, onion, cheddar cheese, brews burger sauce

CHURROS SUNDAE 12

bavarian cream, cinnamon, sugar, vanilla ice cream

MUST BE 21+. MANAGEMENT RESERVES ALL RIGHTS.



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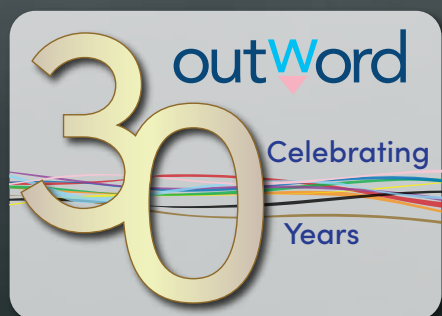
For 30 years, Outword Magazine - Sacramento's longest-running LGBTQ+ publication has been a trusted voice, sharing stories, uplifting our community, and keeping you informed.

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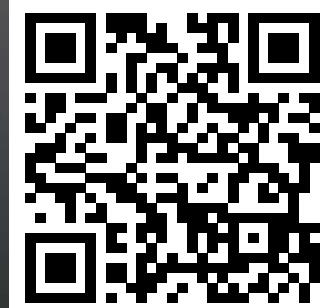
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Thank you, from the Outword team.



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The spectacular trailer for *Wicked: For Good* is out now! The conclusion to last year's global cinematic sensation and the most successful Broadway film adaptation of all time, reunites director Jon M. Chu with stars Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande for this final chapter. As Elphaba and Glinda face the fallout of their choices, the untold story of the witches of Oz reaches its electrifying climax. [Watch the trailer here.](#)

AIDS Play Revived at Celebration Arts

by Chris Narloch

Kudos to Sacramento's Celebration Arts for reviving "Before It Hits Home," a hard-hitting AIDS play from 1991 that addresses the hysteria that surrounded HIV/AIDS during that era and tackles the homophobia that sadly is rearing its ugly head once again in 2025.

Conrad Crump heads the cast as Wendal, a Black, bisexual musician who contracts AIDS, and the actor gives a committed performance in a very demanding role. Wendal's family, which includes his brother, father, mother, and his young son, does not take the news well.

Cheryl L. West's play, a heavy drama with some moments of levity in its first Act, takes audiences back to a scary time in the late '80s and early '90s when some gay men were having sex on the down-low, contracting HIV, and then giving it to their wives or girlfriends.

Even more tragic, these men were often ostracized by their own families at a time when they needed them the most, and that is initially what happens in Act 2 of "Before It Hits Home." I won't divulge any more of the action, but the play is a painful depiction of how ignorance and fear can bring out the worst in some people.

The production was still a little rough on opening weekend, at least on the second night when I was there, but hopefully those issues – moments when the timing seemed off, and cast members failing to project enough – will be ironed out.

"Before It Hits Home" continues at Celebration Arts through this June 22. For ticket information, go to: www.celebrationarts.net

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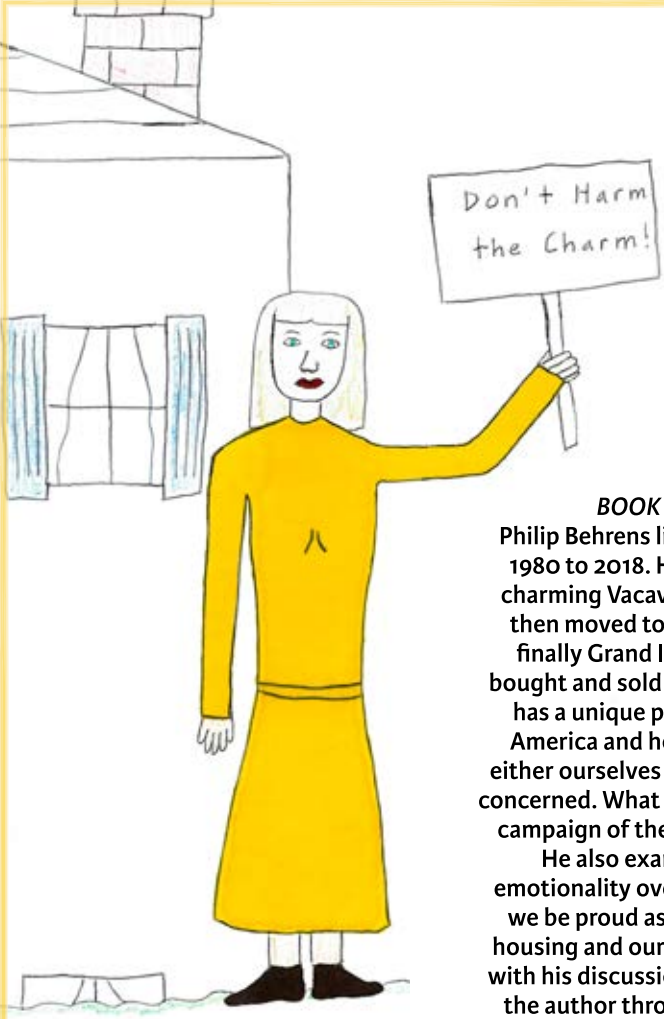
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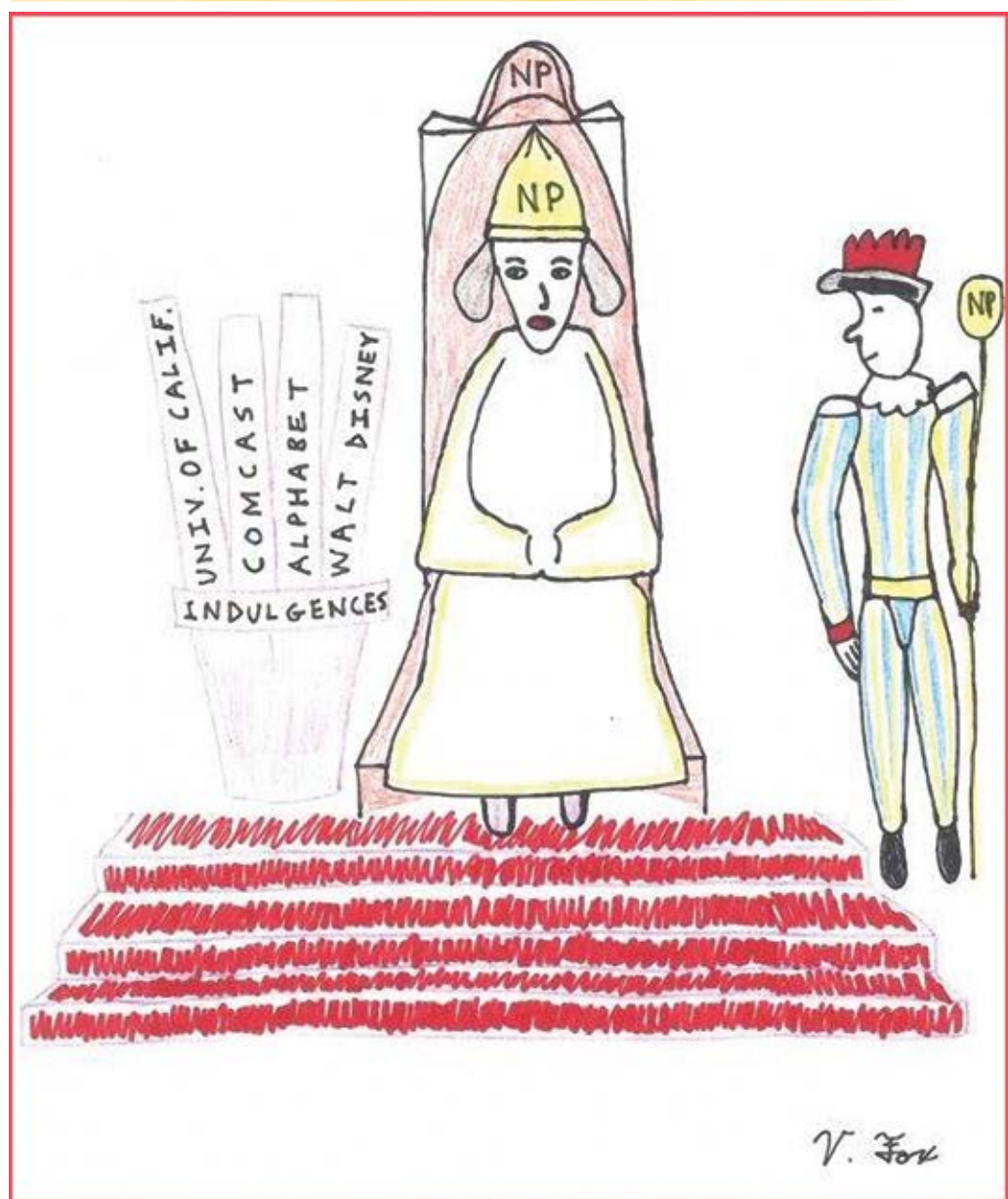
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The
Word
is out.



BOOK INTRODUCTION

Philip Behrens lived in San Francisco from 1980 to 2018. He took a 10 year break in charming Vacaville from 2001 to 2011. He then moved to Vermont, Cape Cod, and finally Grand Island, New York. Having bought and sold 5 homes over the years, he has a unique perspective on housing in America and how we are not truthful to either ourselves or others where housing is concerned. What is really behind the "charm" campaign of the Cape Cod city of Dennis? He also examines the roots of the emotionality over our abortion policy. Can we be proud as a nation of our policy on housing and our policy on abortion? Along with his discussion of these weighty issues, the author throws in interesting facts on some of the cities he has lived in. To find out which American city has an ACE Hardware with 6 different types of silver polish, "Don't Harm the Charm" is required reading. Available on AMAZON.



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