OCTOBER 20, 2026 VOL XVII • ISSUE#10

GRAB MAGAZINE

CHICAGO'S MONTHLY LGBTQ+ PUBLICATION

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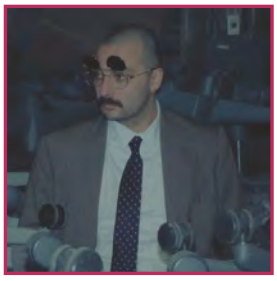

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GRAB MAGAZINE

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GRAB A PLANE

The Secret's Out: Why Mérida Is Mexico's Favorite New Haven for LGBT Expats

By Rick Karlin

Imagine, if you will, a land where LGBTQ people can live freely. Where the temperature averages a balmy 80 degrees and the sun shines for much of the year, only occasionally interrupted by a sun shower. Now imagine that the average cost of living is less than $1,600 a month. All that is possible if you choose to live on the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico.

For years, Puerto Vallarta has been a favorite spot for expats from the U.S. But the bargains that could be had as little as 10 years ago are gone. It's no wonder that LGBTQ people are now moving to the Yucatán, especially the city of Mérida. They are drawn by a combination of high day-to-day safety, a lower cost of living, laws that support LGBTQ people (marriage equality is recognized throughout Mexico), and a welcoming cultural environment. The region also features modern, affordable healthcare options with many English-speaking medical professionals, and most medications are available at a fraction of the cost in the U.S.

Even though cities such as Mérida retain a traditional and Catholic-rooted identity, they feature a thriving, integrated international and local queer community, active social groups, and expanding LGBTQ-inclusive tourism and hospitality efforts. It will help to learn Spanish (and it's much easier when you're immersed in the culture), but until you master it, a large percentage of locals also speak English.

The growing number of LGBTQ expats are sometimes surprised to discover the region's long and complex history of gender and sexuality. Yucatán's Maya heritage has its own traditions and cultural perspectives concerning gender and sexuality, although contemporary attitudes vary widely. Many local Yucatecans don't particularly notice or care whether an expat is gay or straight. Experiences among transgender Yucatecans, however, can vary, and it is best not to assume that everyone has the same experience.

Mérida's LGBTQ scene is genuinely active for a city its size. The city hosts an annual Pride march, usually in June, which has grown significantly in porportion and visibility over the years. It draws participants from across the peninsula and is family-inclusive. LGBTQ bars and clubs exist primarily in the Centro and nearby areas. The scene is smaller than those of Mexico City or Guadalajara but is solidly entrenched. LGBTQ expats are organized and welcoming to newcomers, with social media such as Facebook groups and WhatsApp keeping residents up to date.

There isn't a "gayborhood," as you might expect in a U.S. city, but certain neighborhoods are favorites for LGBTQ+ folks. Among those, the most popular is Centro Histórico, which has long been home to a mix of artists, bohemians, and expats. Mérida is also a center of arts and culture. If you're involved in the arts, you'll find a well-established and welcoming community of visual artists, musicians, and performers. Check out Teatro Peón Contreras and the numerous galleries in town. Renovated colonial homes in the Centro are appealing to LGBTQ+

SATURDAY 10.31
& SUNDAY 11.1

DRAG BRUNCH

STARRING JOAN JULLIAN
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HALLOWEEN PARADE LIVE ON OUR
8K VIDEO WALLS

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1982

KIT KAT
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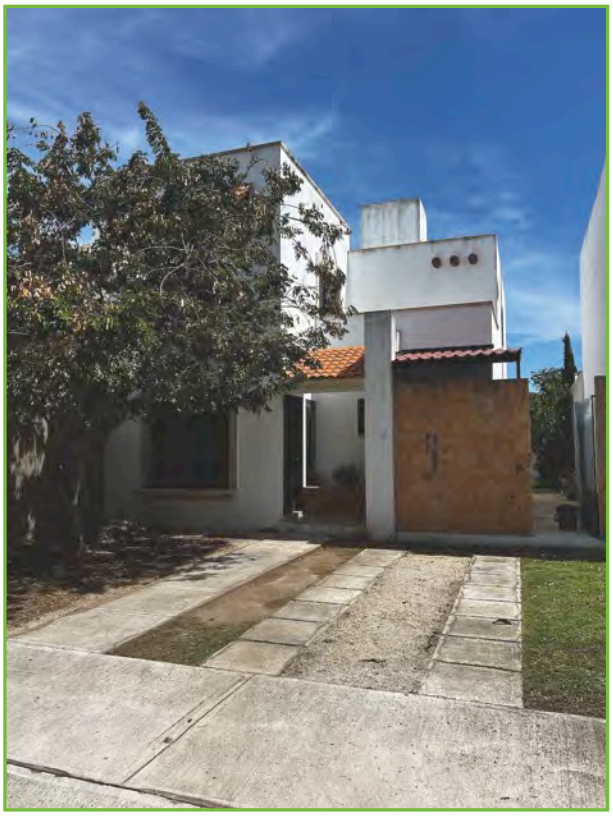
buyers who value the aesthetic and cultural proximity. Expect property prices to be lower than in the States, although many properties require some renovation, the good news is that skilled tradespeople are available and do quality work for a reasonable wage.

García Ginerés and Itzimná are well-established neighborhoods with tree-lined streets, walkability, café culture, and proximity to both Centro and services to the north. If you prefer to be away from the hustle and bustle and prefer newer construction, check out San Antonio Cucul and Montes de Amé. Colonia Alemán also has a strong LGBTQ+ expat community, whose residents appreciate the central location and price accessibility.

Mérida is quite flat, making walking a breeze. It is about 30 feet above sea level, and beaches are about a half-hour drive away. The most popular beaches include Progreso, the biggest beach town near Mérida, and Celestún, west of Mérida, a popular nature preserve and gathering spot for flamingos (and crocodiles). For a different adventure, explore the Ruta Puuc, a journey into the Yucatán's Maya region, with ruins, carvings, and stories left behind by an ancient civilization.

If buying a property seemed out of reach in the U.S., it is still possible in Yucatán, even in Mérida's popular Centro neighborhood. Same-sex married couples in Mexico have the same basic property rights as other married couples, although the specifics of ownership, inheritance, and community-property arrangements depend on how the property is purchased and the applicable legal regime. Unmarried couples can also buy jointly.



There are real estate agents who specialize in working with expats, such as Kip Reynolds and Brent Kuenning, co-founders of Vida Mérida, Mexico International Real Estate. They can guide you through the realities, both positive and challenging, of relocating to Mexico and help you understand what international buyers need to know before moving there. They help clients navigate contracts, escrow, bank accounts, title insurance, attorneys, special regulations for beachfront property, inspections, and closing services.

A recent listing on the Vida Mérida site featured a two-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath home with two covered parking spaces inside a private gated community with 24-hour security for $240,000. The property was offered fully furnished and included new solar panels, an open-concept layout, and a well-equipped kitchen. Both bedrooms had private full baths, and the home also included a dedicated laundry area. A two bedroom one and half bath in North Merida's gated community Privada Gran Santa Fe Norte was listed at $130k.

SATURDAY
OCTOBER 31

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VANYA A. DEE
PIXEL

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RICKY SIXX

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$15 GENERAL ADMISSION

NUTRL BUCKET SPECIAL
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nÜTRL BUD LIGHT KONA BIG WAVE

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GRAB A TRANSVESTITE

Sweet Transvestite, We'll Miss You

Rocky Horror Comes to the Chicago Theatre on Halloween

By Jason Salerno

There was always going to be a night when The Rocky Horror Picture Show felt different. This is that night.

On October 31st, the Chicago Theatre opens its doors to the greatest Halloween party in the city's history — and also to something more: a celebration of a film, a community, and a man whose performance at the center of it all changed queer culture forever. The Rocky Horror Picture Show brings its 40-city "Spooktacular" Tour to Chicago on Halloween night, hosted by three of the film's original stars — ***Barry Bostwick, Nell Campbell***, and ***Patricia Quinn*** — and the evening will include a special tribute to the late, magnificent Tim Curry, who passed away on August 25th at the age of 80.

For fifty years, Rocky Horror has been a sanctuary for the queer community; a dark, glittering, sequin-encrusted castle where gender was fluid, desire was celebrated, and no one was asked to justify themselves. At the center of that castle stood Curry's Dr. Frank-N-Furter: fearless, flamboyant, heartbreaking, and wholly, defiantly himself. For generations of LGBTQ fans who found in that performance a mirror and a permission slip, losing him is losing something irreplaceable. Halloween night at the Chicago Theatre will be a chance to remember and celebrate him, and to remind ourselves what he gave us: together, in the dark, the way he always intended.

Bostwick, Campbell, and Quinn were with Curry just last September at the Academy Museum's 50th anniversary celebration in Los Angeles, one of his final public appearances. They know what this moment means. They will be there on October 31st to carry it.

The evening will feature a live performance of "Once in a While" by Bostwick — Brad's song from the original stage show, cut from the film, rarely performed and genuinely beautiful. Hearing it live, on Halloween night, in the year the world lost Tim Curry, will be an experience that transcends a standard screening. It is the kind of moment that reminds you why this particular circus has kept running for fifty years.

The rest of the evening delivers everything a Rocky Horror Halloween should: the original, unedited film screened alongside a live local Shadow Cast performing in sync on stage; the beloved audience rituals that have been passed down like scripture since 1975; and the "Spooktacular" Costume Contest, in which the audience becomes the show. Prizes go to the top three most spectacular creatures of the night. On Halloween. In Chicago. With all three original stars in the room. The competition will be extraordinary.

Quinn, who once asked her agent what Rocky Horror was about and was told "something to do with a circus," has been in that circus ever since. Campbell cannot quite believe they're still doing this — and means that as the highest possible

compliment. And Bostwick has spent five decades making nerds cool and is very much not finished yet.

Together, on the night when the veil between worlds is thinnest, they will do what Rocky Horror has always done: gather the freaks, the dreamers, the fishnets-and-sequins faithful, and remind them that they are not alone. That they never were. That somewhere in a castle on a hill, Frank-N-Furter is still playing his theremin, still welcoming everyone inside.

Don't dream it. Be it. Do it for Tim.

VIP tickets including meet-and-greet access with Bostwick, Campbell, and Quinn, plus photo opportunities and premium seating are available now alongside general admission.

For tickets and information, visit ***www.scottstander.com/rocky.html***

Photo Courtesy 20th Century Fox

GRAB the newest hookup App *Nightstand*

By Tom Olah

What if one app could help you find a date, a hookup, a new friend, a party—or simply figure out where the gays are going tonight?
Enter Nightstand, a new LGBTQ+ social and dating app created by a Chicago-based founder who thinks gay technology should be a little more fun, a lot more social, and unapologetically ours.

Nightstand brings dating, hookups, friendships, social posts, events, ticketing and a live map together in one place. And unlike apps that seem determined to put every interesting feature behind a paywall, the core Nightstand experience is free and ad-free.

For those who want to take things further, a $6.99 monthly subscription adds perks including international cruising, special promotions, prizes and insider deals—designed to feel more like a bargain than another subscription you forgot you had.

We sat down with Nightstand's founder ***Anthony Carusone*** to talk about the idea behind the app, why gay-owned technology matters, the future of LGBTQ+ nightlife and community, and why, sometimes, you just need an app that can answer the most important question of the night: "Okay gays, where are we going?"

Tom Olah: What inspired you to create Nightstand, and what did you feel was missing?
Anthony Carusone: I felt like gay apps had become very good at helping us find one specific thing, but our lives are so much bigger than that. We hook up, date, make friends, go dancing, discover events, create things, travel and build community—so why shouldn't one gay app celebrate all of it? I wanted to build something fun that felt like it actually belonged to us. Nightstand is my attempt to put the gay back in gay software.

TO: How would you describe Nightstand to someone who has never heard of it?
AC: Imagine if a hookup app, Instagram, Eventbrite and your gay best friend planning Saturday night all had a baby—that's Nightstand. You can meet someone for a date, hookup or friendship, post photos and videos, discover people and events on a live map, and even buy tickets without leaving the app. It's meant to answer both "Who's around?" and "What are we doing tonight?" We like a little versatility around here.

TO: Where did the name Nightstand come from?
AC: I love the name because your nightstand is this surprisingly intimate little piece of your life—it holds the things you reach for when you're going to bed and when you're waking up. The name can be sexy and mischievous, but it can also feel familiar, personal and comforting. That's exactly what I wanted the app to be: unmistakably gay, a little provocative and still warm. Plus, let's be real, "Nightstand" looks fabulous in neon pink.

TO: What do you envision people doing with the map?
AC: The map is where Nightstand really comes alive because you're not just seeing profiles—you're seeing the gay world happening around you. You might notice someone cute nearby, find a new friend, discover a party across town and buy a ticket, all from the same experience. Events can live alongside people on the map, so your city starts feeling like an interactive LGBTQ+ neighborhood. I want someone traveling to a new city to open Nightstand and immediately think, "Okay gays, where are we going?".

TO: How have you designed Nightstand around privacy and safety?
AC: Location should be useful without making someone feel like

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they've surrendered control of themselves, so giving users choices around how they participate and are discovered is incredibly important to us. We're building Nightstand with the understanding that LGBTQ+ people use these tools in very different environments around the world. Safety and privacy aren't features you finish once—they have to keep evolving alongside the community. My goal is to make discovery exciting while continuing to give people meaningful control over their experience.

TO: Why include photos, reels and social media?
AC: Because gay life shouldn't disappear the second you're not looking for a date or hookup. I wanted people to be able to post the funny video, the thirst trap, the vacation photo, the drag performance or whatever piece of themselves they feel like sharing. That gives Nightstand personality and gives people reasons to connect beyond attraction alone. Sometimes the beginning of a friendship is just two gays discovering they have the exact same terrible sense of humor.

TO: What role do events and ticketing play in Nightstand?
AC: This is one of the pieces I'm most excited about because Nightstand can connect the people throwing LGBTQ+ events directly with the people looking for them. We're starting to build that ecosystem in Phoenix, where events can appear right alongside users on the map and tickets can be purchased through Nightstand instead of sending everyone somewhere else. Why should a gay promoter have to build an audience in our community and then hand the transaction off to a generic ticketing platform? I want Nightstand to help keep more of that relationship—and ultimately more of that economic activity—inside our community.

TO: What did you take from Instagram, Eventbrite and Grindr—and what would you do differently?
AC: Those products each proved something powerful: people love sharing their lives, discovering experiences and meeting people nearby. My question was, why are those experiences still living in completely separate worlds when LGBTQ+ nightlife and social life overlap constantly? Nightstand takes pieces of all three and turns them into one experience built specifically around our community. We're not trying to make gay Facebook—we're trying to make something that actually feels fun to open.

TO: Why does the community need another app?
AC: Because consolidation in gay technology should make us ask who ultimately owns the platforms our community depends on and where the money they generate goes. Grindr is publicly traded, and Match Group recently invested $100 million for a significant minority stake in Sniffies with an option to acquire the remaining equity; to me, that makes independent LGBTQ+ technology more important, not less. I want to prove that a gay-founded platform can grow without forgetting who it was built for. A gay dollar is powerful, and whenever possible I'd love to see more of its value circulating back through LGBTQ+ creators, promoters, businesses and causes.

TO: Why keep the basic Nightstand experience free and ad-free?
AC: I don't think opening a gay app should feel like walking through an airport terminal covered in ads or discovering that every interesting button is hiding behind another paywall. The core Nightstand experience is free because meeting people and discovering your community should be accessible. If we ask someone to pay us, I want them to understand exactly what they're getting for it. Software can be a business without making every tap feel like a transaction.

TO: What makes the $6.99 subscription valuable?
AC: We intentionally set Nightstand at $6.99 a month because I want the premium experience to feel like an easy yes, not another bill you resent seeing on your statement. Subscribers get additional experiences such as international cruising along with special deals and promotions, while the core app remains genuinely useful without subscribing. I joke that I want Nightstand to have the Arizona Iced Tea philosophy: build something people love and resist the instinct to squeeze every possible dollar out of them. Gay life is expensive enough—we still have outfits to buy.

TO: How has Chicago influenced Nightstand?
AC: Chicago taught me that gay community is so much more than a row of profile pictures—it's bars, parties, friendships, neighborhoods, promoters, chosen family and those completely unplanned nights that become stories for ten years. Building Nightstand here makes me think about technology as an extension of a real community rather than a replacement for one. Chicago has an incredible LGBTQ+ identity, and I want the app to capture that same feeling in cities around the world. The technology is global, but the magic should always feel local.

TO: What have you learned since launching?
AC: I've learned that people are

hungry for something that feels fresh, but I've also learned that you don't get to dictate how a community uses your product—the users teach you. Someone might download Nightstand expecting a hookup app and end up discovering an event, following someone's content or making a friend instead. That's exciting because it validates the idea that LGBTQ+ connection doesn't fit neatly into one box. The community is helping us figure out what Nightstand becomes.

TO: What's next for Nightstand?
AC: The vision gets much bigger than dating: I want Nightstand to become infrastructure that helps LGBTQ+ people create, gather and make money doing what they love. That means expanding events and ticketing, helping promoters reach audiences, supporting community causes and eventually funding events and partnering with or employing talented LGBTQ+ people who share this vision. As AI changes industries and careers, I think owning technology and creating new economic opportunities within our community becomes even more meaningful. I want Nightstand to help turn queer creativity into real opportunity all over the world.

TO: A year from now, what would you love to say Nightstand accomplished?
AC: I would love to say that we didn't just grow an app—we helped people actually go somewhere, meet somebody, make a friend, sell out an event, raise money for something meaningful or create an opportunity that didn't exist before. Success to me is building a sustainable company where LGBTQ+ users, creators, promoters and businesses all participate in the value being created. I want Nightstand to prove that our community can build and own ambitious technology while still keeping it affordable, weird, sexy and fun. And if a few people find the love of their life—or at least the love of their Saturday night—I'll happily take that too.

Scan the QR code below and join now!
www.nightstandexplore.com

GRAB CONOR

The "Horse" he rode in on: An interview with Conor Murphy of Smidley

By Gregg Shapiro

Conor Murphy is the kind of artist who doesn't want to limit his artistic output to one outlet. Perhaps best known for being in the St. Louis-based band, Foxing, Murphy exercises different musical muscles with his other band Smidley. This includes exploring his dance-floor options on the album "Murphy Horse" (Royal Mountain). Pressed on "Coke Bottle Clear" vinyl, songs on "Murphy Horse" such as "Capstone" (featuring a guest appearance by Lucy Dacus), "Love In Every Direction," "People Like You," "Friendly's," reveal another aspect of Murphy's musical personality, and it's one well worth investigating. Conor generously made time for an interview in advance of Smidley's multi-city concert tour. [Smidley performs on Oct. 15 at City Center in Champaign.]

Gregg Shapiro: For those not in the know, what can you tell us about how the name of the band Smidley came to be?
Conor Murphy: Growing up, our childhood dog was named Smidley. I found the video from the first day we got Smidley. For a Christmas present for my family, I digitized all of our childhood VHS tapes. I found it and it's so sweet. I remembered the day so well. Basically, we tried to come up with a name for our dog, and nobody could agree on anything. Then somebody brought up that when I was a baby, my brother, who is 10 years older than me, would pretend he was a superhero and I was his baby sidekick. He would call me Smidley, and then we named our dog Smidley. (The band) Smidley is named after my dog, but our dog was named after me as a superhero. It felt like the most fitting thing. I had so many other band names, but that's the one that meant the most.
GS: Your previous band, Foxing, is now on hiatus. In what way would you say distinguishes the songs on Smidley's new "Murphy Horse" album from the five you made with Foxing?
CM: From conception, Foxing was always just this extremely serious band that always felt like it was life or death. Everything we did was done in a serious way, and it created so much pressure whenever we wrote songs or toured or recorded. I needed a release valve with it. When you're writing a song and, according to us, it has to be incredible, serious, and innovative, it becomes stressful. When you play a show and you mess something up, you feel like you're letting down everybody and yourself. I created Smidley to be that release valve to have fun making things. So that when I went into writing with Foxing, that I wouldn't feel like if we don't use one of my songs or if we don't use a guitar part I wrote, I wouldn't feel so disappointed because I would be like, "I can do it with this other thing." Smidley is like the exact opposite of Foxing. It's an accurate depiction of the type of music I like, which is a lot more dance-y and also lighthearted. It feels like something that is meant to be enjoyed rather than something meant to be taken so seriously.
GS: I'm glad you mentioned the dance aspect. I love the dance energy of "Capstone." Is there a remix in the works, and if so, what would it mean to you to have the song embraced by club DJs?
CM: It would mean everything to me.

GS: Wow!
CM: [Laughs] I want so badly to have a remix album. I haven't put in

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HAUNTED HALSTED
FEST
SAT OCT 31
11AM
ALL AGES
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VANDA LAROSE
THE BOUKET BROTHERS DRAGULA
DJ SAINT DEVERA
CIRQUES EXPERIENCE
MUFFY FISHBASKET & FRIENDS
TOMMY BRAVOS
DAMSEL.
LIZZIE KANIECKI
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MRS. YUKA'S DRAG STORY HOUR
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the time to actually do it because I've been thinking that that is my goal for when the album comes out. Once the stresses of putting out a record are over, that is what I want to do next. Have a full remix album. I wanted it to be much more dance-y than it already is. I DJ at some places in St. Louis and I love it so much. I've done it since I was in high school. When I was a sophomore in high school, I saved up over a long time to get my first board, which is a Traktor Kontrol S4. That's what I still use today. It's now kind of an archaic, digital board. I got it because I never got invited to the cool parties in high school. When I got it, everybody would invite me to the parties.

GS: That was very smart!
CM: I know! It was a genius move looking back on it. I got embraced by people for the first time in my life. I've been playing in bands since I was 12. Nobody wanted a band to play at their party, but everybody wanted me to come and play music so they could dance. I have a very special place in my heart for dance music and DJing. The songs I've been writing for our next record are even more straight up, four-on-the-floor dance music. Because this is what I love.

GS: Queer singer/songwriter Lucy Dacus provides vocals on the song "Capstone." How did that come to be?
CM: Lucy's partner Julien Baker and Foxing have played shows together. We used to perform house concerts, and play very small DIY venues, together in her previous bands. We've known Julien forever. Dominic Angelella, who plays bass in Lucy's band, we've also played together forever. He was in Smidley for a tour, he played on this (new Smidley) record, and he's one of my best friends in the world. There are countless people that are in between Lucy and I, connective tissue there. Julian turned her on to Foxing and Dominic turned her on to Smidley. When we met, we were such fast friends. We started talking about (the TV show) "Survivor" and we were friends immediately. Every time that we hung out, it became obvious that the only reason we're not best friends is that we don't live in the same city. I hope she would say the same thing about me. I love her very much. She asked me to sing "Bullseye" (from "Forever Is a Feeling") with her in St. Louis at our opera house (Stifel Theatre), which is my favorite place in the world. I was on tour and had a show the same day, so I couldn't do it. I wrote her this novel of a text message that was basically like, "I want to die because I wish I was there." I will never forgive myself for not being able to do it. Then I also mentioned that, "I'm working on an album. If you have any interest in doing something with me, it would be awesome." She immediately was like, "Yeah, let's do a song together."

GS: Lastly, how would you say that your own queerness is or was a presence in your music?
CM: On Foxing's fourth album, "Draw Down the Moon," that's when I came out as being bisexual. It was a very freeing moment. A very big thing for me to be able to do that publicly. It felt like I found much more community from it. They're people that I felt like I could relate to more. A lot more people came to me because of it saying, "Hey, me too. I'm queer." I feel like you can talk to people in a more sincere way when you both realize that about each other. Several of the songs on that album are about that, about being able to find your community and find yourself in those ways. That's kind of a through line from that album to this album. There's this and recognition that AI and the government and capitalism can't take this from you. You can be laid off, but you still have community and you still have love all around you. You have people that will take care of you and that you can take care of. That is one of the most beautiful parts of my life.

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GRAB JOHN

John D'Emilio was in the rooms where it happened

By Gregg Shapiro

Gay historian/activist/writer/educator **John D'Emilio** is someone who can actually say he was in the rooms where it happened. In his new memoir, "Making Gay History: Memoir of a Scholar-Activist" (Duke University Press, 2026), D'Emilio's follow-up to 2022's "Memories of a Gay Catholic Boyhood," D'Emilio invites readers along on his personal and professional journey. Beginning in New York, and including stops in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Greensboro, North Carolina, Washington DC, and Chicago, D'Emilio's odyssey in education, activism, writing and research, and ultimately in love, is as compelling as any you will ever encounter. John graciously made time for an interview during the summer of 2026.

Gregg Shapiro: John, because of your life as a historian, were you a journal keeper during the periods about which you wrote, or did you rely on your memory?
John D'Emilio: I kept a journal on and off during these decades. Sometimes I'd write regularly for several months, and then I'd have a break for a few months. But I also had a lot of other sources to confirm and flesh out my memories. I have all my calendars/ appointment books going back to the 1970s. I have paper files related to my organizational involvement as well as correspondence from friends, and a couple of my friends provided me with copies of the letters I had written them. So, in some ways, writing this book involved doing a lot of "research" in my extensive personal archives.

GS: In the prologue to "Making Gay History: Memoir of a Scholar-Activist," you mention book bans. Are you aware of any of your books being banned?
JD'E: It's possible that this has happened in some locations, but frankly, I'm not aware of any such banning.

GS: In chapter two, you wrote about "young activist-oriented historians-to-be," as well as Roosevelt, the New Deal, and socialism. The subject of socialism also came up again in the ninth chapter. Would you agree that this makes your book timely with the rise of democratic socialism?

JD'E: There was definitely a good number of gay male activists in the 1970s – not only in New York, where I was living, but in several other cities as well – who identified as socialists. We engaged in militant activism as well as efforts at community education. I find it very encouraging that, even in this era of Trump, we are seeing a resurgence of democratic socialist activism. I think one of the ways this current activism is different from what I experienced in the 1970s is that today, they understand the importance of engaging directly with the political system and electoral politics.
GS: By the fourth chapter, you had already begun to have community interactions with significant people, including Jonathan Ned Katz and Sylvia Rivera. In chapters that follow, your encounters with Harry Hay, Frank Kameny, Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, Barbara Gittings, Larry Kramer, Allan Bérubé, Abby Rubenfeld, Ginny Apuzzo, Cleve Jones, and Urvashi Vaid, to mention a few, make the book read like a who's who of LGBTQ history. Is this something you were aware of while it was

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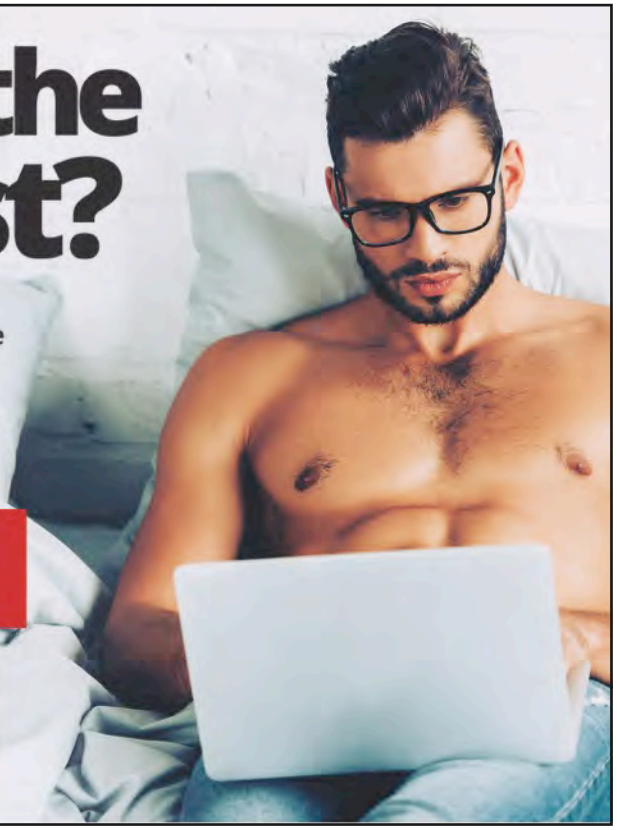


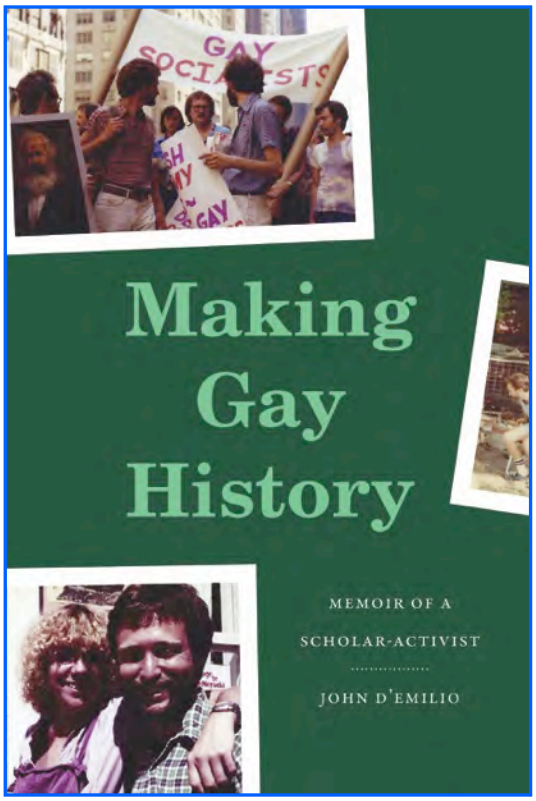
GRAB MAGAZINE

CHICAGO'S MONTHLY LGBTQ PUBLICATION

happening or did that occur later as you reflected on it?
JD'E: I had two different forms of connection with LGBTQ activism. Some were from the pre-Stonewall generation of movement activists, and I had the privilege of interviewing them at length about the pioneering work they had done, and so I was certainly aware then of their significance. And I love the fact that I am making people like Hay, Kameny, Martin, Lyon, and Gittings visible to a generation of readers who might have no knowledge of them. But as to the others, these were individuals who, over the years, I was connecting with on the ground, so to speak, engaging with them in the work of social change, sometimes through our research and writing and sometimes through organizational engagement. I knew, at the time, that people like Cleve and Urvashi and Larry and Ginny were key activists, and it gave me great pleasure to give them recognition through the content of this memoir.

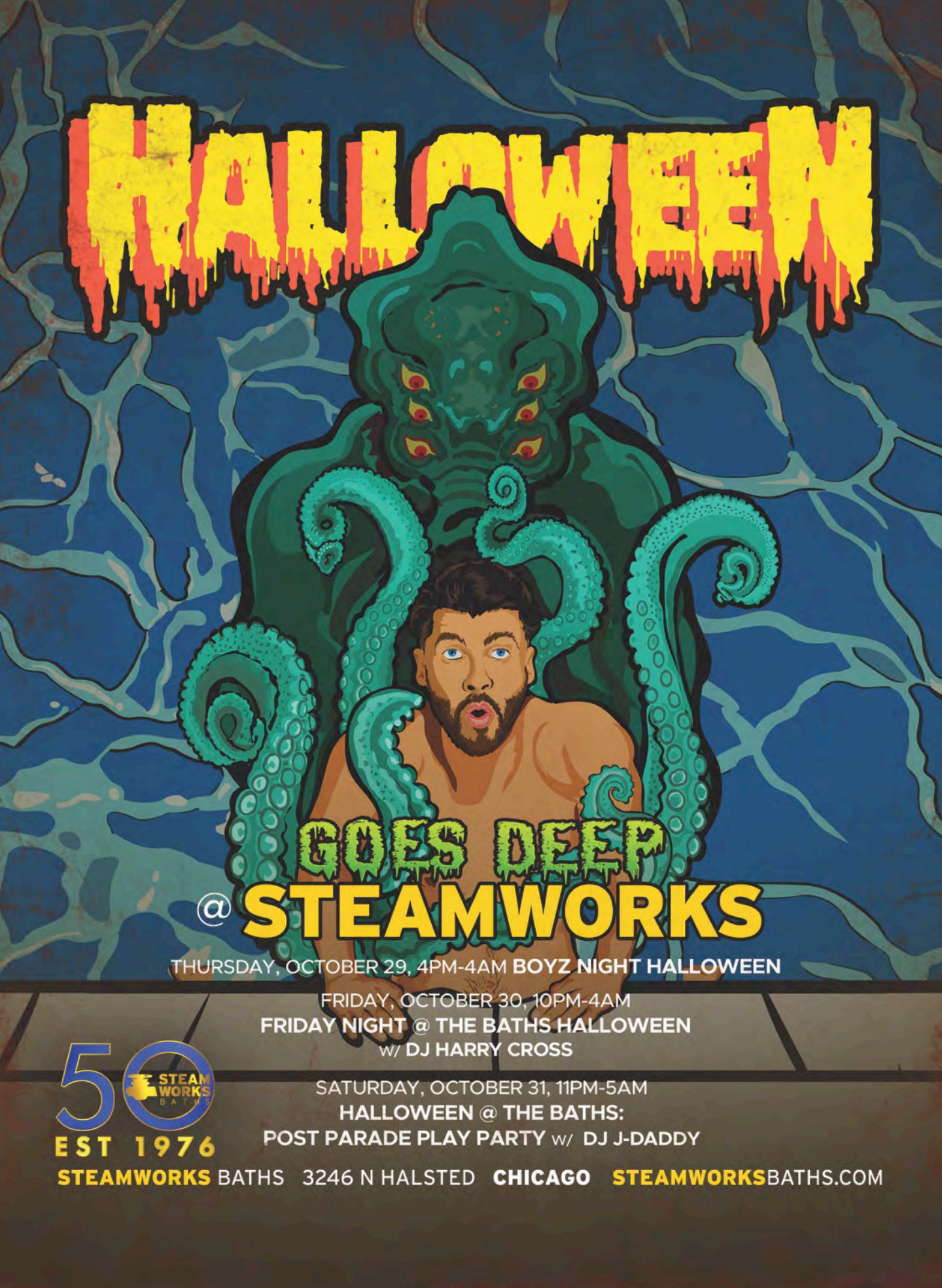
GS: Chapter seven features the story of your coming out to your parents. There are some wonderful quotes, including "Oh, John, no. Not SEX!" followed by "Oh, John, please. Not HOMOSEXUALITY!" Then your parents came out for you to relatives! How would you say that coming out to your parents compared to revisiting the experience in your memoir?
JD'E: It was such an intensely emotional experience when it was happening. It provoked deep feelings and worries: how would they react? Would I lose my connection to them? Would they be condemning and unforgiving? And, given that this was happening in the months after my relationship with Carlos had ended, it would be fair to say that I was an emotional wreck back then. And then, when I needed support, it had this amazingly and unexpectedly happy ending. Writing about it several decades later? Given that I knew what the positive outcome would be, it was a joy to go back to it and recapture the final set of feelings that the experience had provoked – that I would always be their son and we would always have each other.
GS: Throughout the book, you regularly refer to being faced with finding ways to make ends meet. Is this your way of creating a cautionary tale for those considering the life of a historian/ writer/activist/ educator?
JD'E: Actually, I hadn't thought of it as speaking to the present and what some Millennials and Gen Z folks might face. It was more directly meant to be descriptive of the challenges I faced being both openly gay and doing openly gay work back in the '70s and early '80s. Today, technology seems to be having the biggest impact on the challenges that younger generations face economically but – in terms of LGBTQ folks – the opportunities to be one's true self in the work world are so much more expansive than what they once were.Near the end of the book, you wrote about "Christian evangelicals associated with the Republican Party" in the early-to-mid 1990s which is a reminder that they've been coming at us with political backing for a very long time. What do you think it will take to make that change?

GS: Christian evangelicals have been going after LGBTQ folks for half a century, and their relationship with the Republican Party has been strong at least since the Reagan era in the 1980s. I don't think that will change any time soon. But it is worth pointing out and acknowledging that, even though there have been some stretches of time when the anti-LGBTQ backlash has been both strong and successful, we have continued to progress as a movement and community. Despite them, for instance, we succeeded for instance in achieving marriage equality, something unimaginable back in the period that the memoir covers.
JD'E: Are there audiobook versions of your memoirs, or plans for them in the works? It would be great to hear



you telling your own story. There aren't audio books of either of the two memoirs, and I'm not aware of any plans to make that happen. But your asking this question will lead me to asking folks at Duke University Press about the possibility of doing this.

GS: Lastly, you have now been living in Chicago for many years. In 2005 you were inducted into the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame. Please say something about what that distinction means to you.
JD'E: I've been in Chicago since 1999. As I mention in the epilogue, the very fact that I was recruited to come to UIC (University of Illinois – Chicago) was a measure of how much had changed since I made the decision to do gay history in the mid-1970s. Colleges and universities across the country were starting to include LGBTQ studies courses in their curriculum. So, my hire, as well as the induction into the Hall of Fame a few years later, brought a tremendous amount of emotional satisfaction – realizing that my work was recognized as significant and that I – along with others – had really made a positive difference.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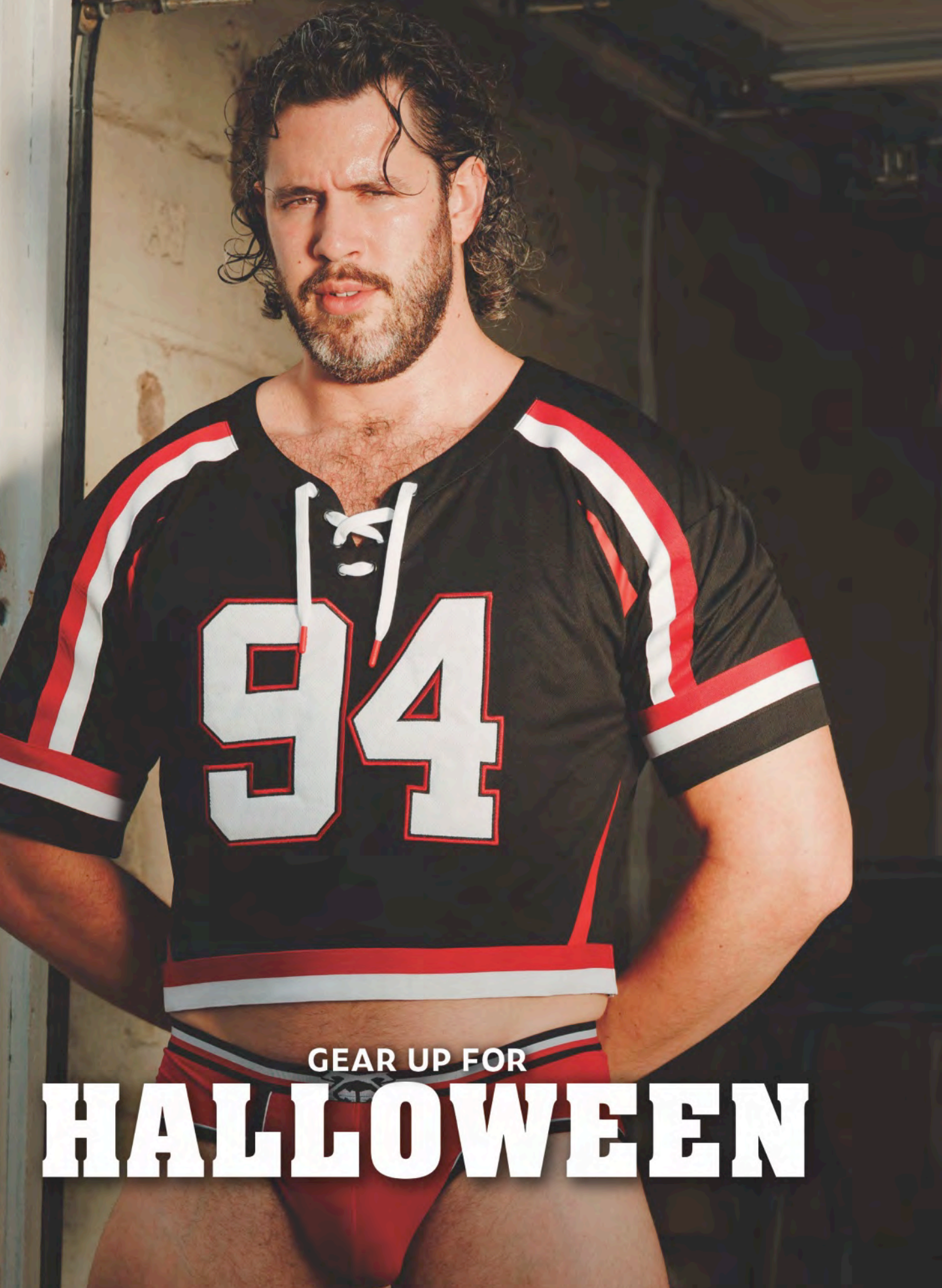

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Daily Specials;

MONDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: $5 Stoli Cocktails (Any Flavors), EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts***.@mosphere:*** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm. ***Cell Block:*** Open 1pm-2am. ***Charlies:*** Half off Hennessy and Patron 7pm - 11pm ABC Bingo, 11pm Charlie's Live. ***Hydrate:*** Lips and Mascara Doors at 8pm Show at 10pm. ***North End:*** Open at 11am, $5 Well Drinks.***Shakers on Clark:*** Comedy Night $1 off Well Drinks and Well Shots. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at 3pm, Musical Monday Show Tunes 8pm-2am. ***Steamworks:*** Every 3rd Monday TM4M (Trans Men For Men) 8pm-2am. ***The Sofo Tap:*** $5 Whiskeys, Ryes & Bourbons, $5 Tecate Tallboys, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts. ***Touche:*** Open 5pm-4am. Horny Bastards A Night for those who just didn't get enough over the weekend. 10/26 Rocky Horror Full Moon Party Let's Do the time warp again,Club Room Open.

TUESDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: $3 House Shots, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts***@mosphere:*** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Game Night with Tony. ***Cell Block:*** Open 1pm-2am. ***Charlie's:*** $4 You Call It's 5pm - 9pm, 7pm - 11pm BS Karaoke, 11pm Baddies Block Party. ***dB/Decibel: Open*** 8pm-4am Industry & Friends Night All Night Drink Specials$2 Well Cocktails, $2 PBR, $3 Bombs, $4 Deep Eddy Flavored Vodka Cocktails, $4 High Noon. ***Hydrate:*** TatTuesday XXL Doors open at 8pm. ***Kit Kat Lounge:*** Happy Hour 4-6pm $8 WINE, $9 APPS, $10 Martinis. Live Instrumentalists. ***Lucky Horseshoe:*** Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. Open auditions for male dancers 7pm. $5 drink specials. ***Meeting House Tavern:*** $3 House Shots, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, $5 Premium Well Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts & Pool. ***North End:*** Open at 11am, $5 Canned Beers, Seltzers & Ciders. ***Shakers on Clark:*** $3 Domestic Beers. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at 3pm, Trivia Tuesday 8-10pm, TRL Tuesday: Totally Rad Line-up of 90's-to-Now Music Videos 10pm-2am, OUTspoken LGBTQ+ Storytelling 1st Tuesday of the month from 7-9pm. ***Steamworks:*** Every Tuesday 4 pm – 4 am Guys Under 25 Get In Free* (*Free 30 day membership and free locker). ***The Sofo Tap:*** $5 New Amsterdam Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts ***Touche:*** Open 5pm - 4am.Hardcore Cruisin' No Cell Phones/ Wifi, 6-9pm $3 Well Drinks $1 Off call-imports, $3 PBR/Rolling Rock. 10/27 Pumpkin Perversions Carving Contest. 11/3 Get Oujt And Vote

WEDNESDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: $5 Premium Well Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts. ***Cell Block:*** Open 1pm-2am. ***Charlie's:*** $4 You Call it's 5pm - 9pm, 7pm - 11pm SCCDA Country Dancing, 11pm Boys and Booze. ***Jackhammer:*** $4 Premium Well Cocktails, $3 House Shots, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pool & Darts. ***Kit Kat Lounge:*** Happy Hour 4-6pm $8 WINE, $9 APPS, $10 Martinis. Live Broadway Vocalists. ***Lucky Horseshoe:*** Open at 6pm Dancers at 8pm. $5 drink specials. ***North End:*** Open at 11am $5 Lagunitas Draft & Cans. ***Shakers on Clark***: Karaoke Night $1 Off Long Islands. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at 3pm, All Things Taylor 1st Wed of month, All Things Beyoncé 2nd Wed of month, All Things Gaga 3rd Wed of month, All Things Dua & Ariana last Wed of month: all 9pm-2am. ***Steamworks:*** Bear Hump Every second Wednesday 6-9pm A monthly mid-week gathering of Furry Men. ***The Sofo Tap:*** $3 House Shots, $5 Stoli Cocktails (All Flavors), $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts. ***Touche:*** **Open 5pm-4am** Jockstrap Night Free Clothing Check, 10/28 Jack-O-Lantern Jockstrap Night BNC7:30pm.11/4Touche 49th Anniversary PartyLaunching Year 50!

THURSDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: $5 Premium Well Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts. ***@mosphere:*** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, RuPaul Drag Race All Stars 6 Viewing Party - 7pm. ***Cell Block:*** Open 1pm-2am. ***Charlie's:*** 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month:$4 You Call it's 5pm - 9pm, 8pm - 10pm Mother Rebirth, 10pm - Power up Reloaded. 2nd Thursday of the Month: $4 You Call it's 5pm - 9pm, 8pm - 10pm the Pop Ball, 10pm Scissor Sisters. 4th Thursday of the Month: $4 You Call it's 5pm - 9pm, 8pm - 10pm the Pop Ball, 10pm Vinyl. ***dB/Decibel:*** Open8pm-4am All Night Drink Specials $3 Well Cocktails, $3 Bombs, $3 PBR, $4 Deep Eddy Flavored Vodka Cocktails, $4 High Noon, $5 Titos, Altos, Jameson, Hendricks, Bacardi. ***Kit Kat Lounge:*** Happy Hour 4-6pm $8 WINE, $9 APPS, $10 Martinis.Live Ballet.***Lucky Horseshoe:*** Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. $5 drink specials. ***Meeting House Tavern:*** $4 Premium Well Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts & Pool. ***North End:*** Open at 11am, $5 Deep Eddy Cocktails. ***Shakers on Clark:*** $1 off All Call Liquor Mixed Drinks,Karaoke 10pm-1am. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at 3pm, "Let's Go! Thursday" Pop Music Videos in Glass/Side Bars 9pm-2am. In Main Bar: Pink Pony Club 1st Thur of month, other Thursdays are "Let's Go! Latin" or "All Things K-Pop. ***Steamworks:*** Lights Out Thursdays, The Club goes Dark Every Thursday 4pm-4am. ***The Sofo Tap:*** $5 New Amsterdam Cocktails, $5 Stoli Mules (All Flavors), EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts ***Touche:*** Open 5pm - 4am.Throwback Thursdays 70's & 80's Music & Porn By Bijou Video. 10/29 Pumpkin Fisting Contest.

Daily Specials;

FRIDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: HAPPY HOUR (3-7 PM): $4 New Amsterdam Cocktails, $5 Chicago Handshakes, ALL DAY SPECIALS: $3 House Shots, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts. **@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Dancers 10pm-1am. **Cell Block:** Open 1pm-2am. **Charlie's**: 1st Friday of the Month 8pm - 11pm Cage Fight Allstars, 11pm Charlie's Presents. 2nd Friday:8pm - 11pm Cage Fight Allstars, 11pm Glow Up. 3rd Friday 8pm - 11pm Cage Fight Allstars, 11pm Thirst Trap. 4th Friday 8pm - 11pm Cage Fight Allstars 11pm Haus of Charlie's. ***dB/Decibel:*** HAPPY HOUR 8pm-10pm. $5 Titos, Altos, Jameson, Hendricks, Bacardi, $5 High Noon, $4 Deep Eddy Flavored Vodka Cocktails, $4 PBR. **Jackhammer:** $8 New Amsterdam & Red Bulls, $8 WYNK THC, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pool & Darts. **Kit Kat Lounge:** All Day Brunch All Drag,Brunch Seating Times 11am and 1:30PM. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, TGIF Show Tunes 4-9pm, Friday Night Dance Party 9pm-2am. ***Meeting House Tavern:*** HAPPY HOUR (5-8 PM): $5 Chicago Handshakes, ALL DAY SPECIALS: $6 Tito's Cocktails, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts & Pool. **The Sofo Tap:** HAPPY HOUR (3-6 PM): $4 Signature Margaritas, ALL DAY SPECIALS: $5 Premium Well Cocktails, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts. **Touche:** Open 5pm - 4am. 10/23 Halloween Maze Opens in the lub Room 10/30 Halloweek Glow Party. 11/6 Man 'Nipple'ate nipple fetish play night. 11/13 Ray Dalton Presents Forplay. 11/20 Round Up with ILGRA Harvest

SATURDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: HAPPY HOUR (3-7 PM): 1/2 Off All Draft Beers, ALL DAY SPECIALS: $5 Premium Well Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts. ***@mosphere:*** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 3pm-5pm, Dancers 10pm -1am. ***Cell Block:*** Open 12pm-3am. ***Charlie's:*** 7pm - 11pm SCCDA Country Dancing, 11pm Under the boots tonight. ***dB/Decibel:*** HAPPY HOUR 8pm-10pm. $5 Titos, Altos, Jameson, Hendricks, Bacardi, $5 High Noon, $4 Deep Eddy Flavored Vodka Cocktails, $4 PBR. ***Jackhammer:*** $3 House Shots, $8 New Amsterdam & Red Bulls, $8 WYNK THC, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pool & Darts. **Kit Kat Lounge:** All Day Brunch All Drag,Brunch Seating Times 11am and 1:30PM. ***Lucky Horseshoe:*** Open with dancers at 3pm. $5 drink specials. ***North End:*** Open at 11am, $3 Miller Lite Drafts 11am-2pm. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at 1pm, Post-Brunch SaturGay Fun 1pm-6pm, Saturday Night Dance Party 9pm-3am, Dog Day 1st Saturday of the month 1-5pm. ***The Sofo Tap:*** HAPPY HOUR: (12-3 PM): 1/2 Off All Draft Beers, ALL DAY SPECIALS: $5 Miller Lite Drafts, $5 Signature Margaritas, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts ***Touche:*** Open 2pm - 5am. 10/31 Halloween Party Costume Contest. 11/7 Chicago's Bear Night Midnight Pizza Panic 11/14 Dungeon Master Night S&M demo @ Midnight CWB 5pm.

SUNDAY FUNDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: $5 Premium Well Cocktails, $6 Chicago Handshakes, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts. ***@mosphere:*** $6 Jack Products, $4 Domestic Draft, House Shots $2. ***Cell Block:*** Open 12pm-2am ***Charlie's:*** 1st and 3rd Sunday of the Month5pm - 7pm Queeriod, 7pm - 11pm Starlight Karaoke, 11pm Estrellas, Ritmo, y Perreo. 2nd Sunday 5pm -7pm Queeriod Presents Drag U 7pm - 11pm Starlight Karaoke, 11pm Estrellas, Ritmo y Perreo. 4th Sunday 5pm - 7pm Queeriod Presents Boyfriend Material, 7pm - 11pm Starlight Karaoke, 11pm Estrellas, Ritmo y Perreo. ***Hydrate:*** Doors open at 2pm Northalsted's Official after Brunch party. ***Jackhammer:*** HAPPY HOUR (3-7 PM): $3 House Shots, $5 New Amsterdam Cocktails, $7 Jackhammered Long Islands, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pool & Darts. **Kit Kat Lounge:** All Day Brunch All Drag,Brunch Seating Times 11am and 1:30PM. Sunday Tea Dance DJ Janky and Friends 4pm-10pm $9 Martinis. ***.Lucky Horseshoe:*** Open with dancers at 3pm. $5 drink specials. ***Meeting House Tavern:*** $5 Premium Well Cocktails, $12 Mimosa Carafes, $3 House Shots, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts & Pool. ***North End:*** Open at 11am, $3 Miller Lite Drafts 7-10pm ***Shakers on Clark***: $1 off Bloody Mary's, $1 off Tito's Mules, and $1 off all Revolution beers.. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at Noon, Sunday Funday Show Tunes 4-9pm, Sunday Funday After Dark Dance Party 9pm-2am . ***The Sofo Tap:*** HAPPY HOUR (1-3 PM): $3 House Shots, FREE Hotdogs (while supplies last) ALL DAY SPECIALS: $6 New Amsterdam Cocktails, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts. ***Touche:*** Open 2pm - 4am**.** Beer Bust $2 Draughts & Sodas Clubroom opens 6pm Movie Night 7pm. 10/25 Big Boo Beer Bust

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	Artist	Title
1	Arty	Love To Forget
2	Madonna x Charli XCX	Danceteria (Afterhours Mix)
3	Aname	Sirens ft. Emelie Hollow
4	Rose Gray	Club To Your Arms
5	Krewella	Without You
6	Avello & Jordin Sparks	We Own The Night
7	Halo	Live Again
8	Boehm	August
9	Kungs x Boys Noize	Get Away
10	Nikolauss & Conor Holohan	Never Be The Same
11	DancingFaraZ	Surrender To The Sound ft. Viiq
12	Slayyyter	DANCE...
13	James Hype	Serotonin
14	Clean Bandit	Company ft. Chloe & OMAH LAY
15	Ellie Goulding	Ravers
16	Dancingfaraz	Where We Belong
17	Timmy Trumpet x Alle Farben	Chase The Feeling Ft. Alexx
18	Brooks x Vikkstar x Jex	Call My Bluff
19	HUGEL x Imael Angel x Ultra Nate	Movin' To The Sun
20	Marshmello x Illenium	Close My Eyes Ft. Sacha
21	Swedish House Mafia x Lykke Li	Happiness Is So Sad
22	Ariel Music	Fading Shadows
23	Lucas & Steve	All I Know
24	Icona Pop	Yellow Top
25	Ave	Meet Me In The Dark
26	Das Pharaoh x JES	Right To Love
27	D.O.D x Malarkey & Marlo Rex	R U Mine
28	Old Jim x Arty x Alexandra Stan x Ceres	In My Head
29	Punctual & Beachcrimes	Angel City
30	Vassy x BustR	Day N Night

TRICKS AND TREATS AT TOUCHÉ

FRIDAY 10/23
HALLOWEEN WEEK KICKOFF PARTY
HALLOWEEN MAZE OPENS IN CLUB ROOM
BE READY FOR THINGS THAT
GO BUMP IN THE DARK

SATURDAY 10/24
HALLOWEEN WEEK RIPE PARTY
GET DOWN & DIRTY WITH OUR GHOULISH GO GO DUDES

SUNDAY 10/25
BIG BOO BEER BUST
$2.50 DRAUGHTS $2 SODAS
SUNDAY MOVIE NIGHT FRIGHT FLICK 7PM

MONDAY 10/26
ROCKY HORROR FULL MOON PARTY
"LET'S DO THE TIME WARP AGAIN" 10PM
"SHOOT THE MOON" CONTEST AT MIDNIGHT

TUESDAY 10/27
PUMPKIN PERVERSIONS CARVING CONTEST
PUMPKINS PROVIDED / JUDGING 11PM

WEDNESDAY 10/28
JACK-O-LANTERN JOCKSTRAP CONTEST
DECORATING SUPPLIES PROVIDED
JUDGING AT MIDNIGHT

THURSDAY 10/29
PUMPKIN FISTING PARTY
HANDS IN AT MIDNIGHT

FRIDAY 10/30
HOLLOWEEN GLOW PARTY
FREE GLOW IN THE DARK BODY PAINT
& MAKEUP TO DARE THE DARK

SATURDAY 10/31
TRICKS AND TREATS HALLOWEEN PARTY
LAST NIGHT TO CRUISE THE MAZE
COSTUME CONTEST AT MIDNIGHT

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GRAB ROGER

Co-Signers on Debts – The Risks Involved

By Roger V. McCaffre-Boss, Esq.

Q: I allowed my former lover to use several of my credit cards by making him an authorized signatory on my Visa and Mastercard accounts. I also agreed to co-sign a bank loan so he could buy a new car. After we broke up last year, he promised not to use the credit cards and said he would make all the monthly payments on the car loan. I learned from the bank that he is behind on the car loan and the bank wants me to make the loan current even though I don't have the car. What are my legal rights and obligations?

A: If your former lover hasn't made the payments on the car loan, there is also a good chance that he could use your credit accounts and run up new charges, leaving you legally responsible for payment of all those debts.

While you are going through the process of a separation from your lover, one of the first things you should do is write to all your creditors, where he is authorized to sign, close those accounts and ask for a new account in your name alone. Tell your lover you're doing it so he can write for his own personal account at the same time. It's rotten to leave a lover with an invalid credit card.

You will need to make sure that the cancellation takes effect. Even though you wrote to the creditor, canceled the account, sent back the cut-up card and got an acknowledgment, the account may still appear open on your report. Even though the account may be closed with the creditor if it appears open on your credit report it may cause you to be turned down for credit elsewhere if your credit report shows too many open accounts even though they are actually canceled.

To make sure that your canceled accounts have in fact been closed get a copy of your credit report. It's free if you were turned down for credit based on information it contained. If your credit report shows a closed account as open, follow the bureaus' procedures for reporting an error. They will then have to verify your claim with the creditor within a reasonable time, usually 30 days, and advise you of the results. If the creditor agrees that you did close the account, it will be so listed. If the creditor is still showing the account as open you will have to go through the whole cancellation process again.

Regarding the debts that you co-signed for your former lover, it is a common practice for family members or friends to co-sign on large debts for family members and lovers without being aware of the legal problems they can face. The drawback to guaranteeing a loan is that the guarantor can be fully obligated for the entire loan amount, not just the portion due, if there is a default in payment of the loan. Because you co-signed on the car loan, you are legally responsible to pay the loan if your former lover fails to make the payments even though you don't have use of the car.

There could also be a problem if the bank repossess the car. Usually when a bank repossess a car for non-payment, they will sell the car trying to get the highest price possible. If the sales price is less than the amount due on the loan there is a deficiency. You, as guarantor of the loan, will be liable to pay that deficiency.

Another drawback to co-signing on a loan is the effect it has on the guarantor's own credit access. If the person in the question wanted to buy his own new car, he might be turned down because the full amount of the payments on the first car when factored into his income debt ratio could disqualify him. This means that the bank would add up all his existing debt, add in the new car loan with the loan he guaranteed and if it were greater than their guidelines they could turn down the loan for the new car.

Roger McCaffrey-Boss is a gradute of Hamline University School of Law, St. Paul, Minnesota, and is a member of the Chicago Bar Association. You can email him at ***RVMLawyer@aol.com****. He suggests that you consult your own lawyer for any specific questions regarding the issues raised in this column.*

SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS FOR YOUTH

You Are Not Alone

It's time to take action if you notice these signs in family or friends:

1. Talking about or making plans for suicide.
2. Expressing hopelessness about the future.
3. Displaying severe/overwhelming emotional pain or distress.
4. Showing worrisome changes in behavior, particularly in combination with the warning signs above, including significant:
   - Withdrawal from or changing social connections/situations.
   - Changes in sleep (increased or decreased).
   - Anger or hostility that seems out of character or out of context.
   - Recent increased agitation or irritability.

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available.

Text or call 988 or chat 988lifeline.org, or reach out to a mental health professional.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

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FANTASY NIGHT CLUB

Photos By Anthony Meade

GRAB HOLLY

Attacked by Wolves

By Holly Maholm

I was stunned. Here I stood, cast in the role of Defendant in this, the Court of All Animals, I having been summoned to appear before my own Queen Penelope, who – in this court – acts as Chief Judge and Final Arbiter of Guilt. The She-Wolf of the local pack had brought a Complaint against the Species Human, and I, but one insignificant representative of that species, felt that my very existence, my right to draw breath, was being called into question.

The She-Wolf had just finished giving testimony which, if true, revealed my species to be guilty of Murder, Falsehood and Slander. I turned to Penelope, hoping for deliverance from what I feared would be an inescapable verdict. Nevertheless, she pronounced judgment against me.

"The testimony which this court has heard – being unrebutted – confirms the guilt of the Species Human, at least in this one case, which we might hereafter refer to using its ancient title, 'Never Cry Wolf.' If I am not mistaken, I believe the Complainant may be satisfied to have publicly aired her grievance here, in my court, where animals of all species might hear and find satisfaction in my final and unappealable verdict in this case."

Penelope turned to me, "Now, in the interest of justice, I will give you, Holly, the opportunity, if you so desire, to make your own complaint - on behalf of your own species – against the Species Canis Lupus. Having been forced to acknowledge a crime done by one of your species-mates, perhaps you have your own grievance against the Complainant."

I sat in silence, searching my memory for instances in which innocent humans suffered at the hands (the teeth and jaws) of wolves. Being well-read, one story came to mind, which I was not too shy to recount. I started in.

"If it please your Majesty, there is one story which I believe demonstrates that the Species Human is, in relation to the Species Canis Lupus, 'More Sinned Against than Sinning.' Here is the story: This takes place in Russia, during the winter, and involves a wedding. That day, after the ceremony and the wedding feast that followed, the bridegroom brought around his sleigh, by which he and his bride intended to return home. He helped his bride into the sleigh, covering her lap with a lap-blanket, and arranging another blanket around her shoulders.

"They drove off, but it was not long before the couple heard the baying of a pack of wolves, which followed closer and closer and threatened to attack the horses, which would have caused the sleigh to overturn and deliver both bride and groom into the jaws of the wolves.

"What happened next is – admittedly – an unthinkable crime, but let us not lose sight of what species was the sole provocation for that crime. The groom – panicking, and realizing that if he did not take action both he and his bride would die - took hold of his bride and threw her out of the sleigh to the wolves. The wolf pack being thus distracted, the groom returned safely home.

"Nevertheless, however cowardly and inexcusable his action, the actual guilty party, here, is the wolf pack, which had every intention of killing and eating both humans. Thus, the Species Wolf must accept guilt for this tragic event."

There was silence in the Court, as all considered my testimony. I could see Penelope was preparing herself to declare, "I think we are done here" when the She-Wolf spoke up.

"Your Majesty, this story is not unknown to our species, but if you will permit me to provide some rebuttal testimony, I think I might clarify one or two points." Penelope nodded her assent, and the She-Wolf continued.

"Those of our species have heard this story, but there is one aspect that we know differently. You said that the groom provided blankets, including a 'lap-blanket,' to keep his bride warm. But, in fact, at that time and place in Russia, those humans did not commonly use 'blankets' to keep warm. No. What they used, instead, were pelts of fur; in fact, they used wolf-pelts, taken from innocent wolves they had slaughtered. And the pack chasing that sleigh were not seeking 'dinner,' they were seeking 'revenge.'

We wolves will defer to you, Your Majesty, to decide which species bears the greater burden of guilt for the crime you have heard described."

Penelope - a look of exasperation on her face - pronounced her verdict: "Oh, for Heaven's sake! You both waste this Court's time and patience when you bring before me these ancient grievances, based upon even more ancient folktales, which are likely to be entirely fictional.

"Henceforth, when one of you Predator Species has a Complaint against another such species, just do what you have always done: Trial by Combat, and Only the Winner Leaves the Court Alive."

(To be continued)

Holly Maholm is a transgender woman living in Cleveland, Ohio. Look for Holly's book Offered Magic: My Life Among the Unicorns (now available on Amazon) which collects the first 126 episodes of Holly's adventures involving both magical unicorns and her LGBTQ friends. Send a message to Holly at ***www.hollymaholm.com.***

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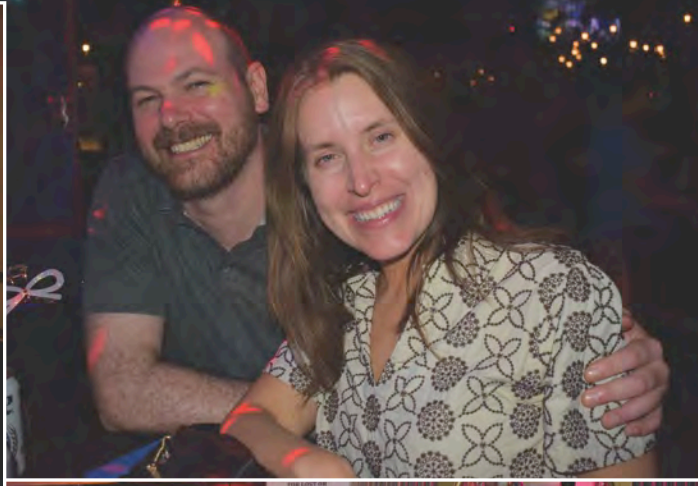

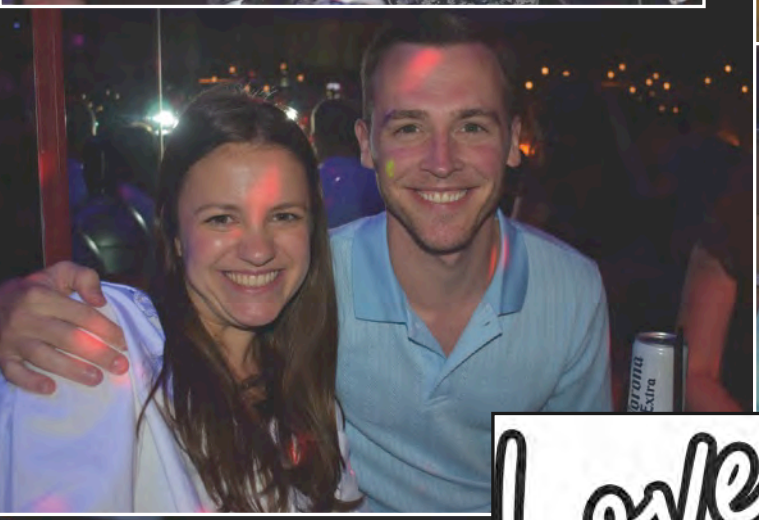

Loves

Photos By Anthony Meade

GRAB A BOOK

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

"The Girl Who Would Be Marilyn Monroe: An Intimate Portrait of the Young Norma Jeane" *by Tony Castro c.2026, Bloomsbury*
$32.00 248 pages

You can trace her career by the dresses.

There's the pink one that gentlemen preferred along with platinum tresses, and a millionaire's delight wrapped in fur. A not-so-itchy number danced around a subway grate, and a sparkling dress scandalized America on a Presidential birthday. All these gowns were as spectacular as the woman who wore them but, as you'll see in "The Girl Who Would Be Marilyn Monroe" by Tony Castro, there was more to Marilyn than just her beauty.

So much has been written about Marilyn Monroe, that you might almost feel as though you knew her. But, says Castro, there was a younger, troubled, more vulnerable Marilyn that few understood.

She was born Norma Jeane Mortenson in 1926, the youngest daughter of a mother who suffered from mental illness. Gladys Baker was a serial romantic and though she had other children that were taken from her, she clearly wanted Norma Jeane. Still, she often left the girl in orphanages or with a series of foster families.

That was a chaos that Norma Jeane never got over, and she never forgot.

At sixteen, she was relieved to be rescued from the constant turmoil of her childhood through marriage to a boy she thought she loved; as a teenage wife, she seemed to feel as if she was playing at being a grown-up. Norma Jeane loved mirrors, was intrigued by photography, and she "understood the power of appearances." When her husband went away to fight in World War II, she began to work as a model to make some spending money...

Crack open "The Girl Who Would Be Marilyn Monroe," and here's what you get: a preface and acknowledgments and an author's note and notes on sources and method and a prologue. That's all before you even get to Chapter One, which is an aggravation that doesn't really make you want to get to Chapter One very much.

When you do, you'll be even more irritated.

Author Tony Castro says in one of those preludes that he used extensive interviews and documents to get this story, which is quite possibly the best news you'll get here – then he admits that he doesn't tell the story in a formal timeline, which is a very severe understatement. To try to follow along with Monroe's childhood and early life as presented here is like trying to follow a single kernel of popcorn in a pan of hot oil. Names crop up out of the blue, never to be seen again. Stories start, then don't totally end. The prose is so floral and arty that you may find yourself laughing out loud. And the repetition? Without it – and there's a lot of it - this might've been a better book, albeit a mighty skinny one.

One could suppose that if you're a foam-at-the-mouth, die-hard fan of Marilyn Monroe, you might enjoy untangling the details inside "The Girl Who Would Be Marilyn Monroe." The truth is, though, that gentlemen might prefer blondes but few readers will prefer this book.

"The Lost Brontë" *by Catherine Friend c.2026, Bywater Books*
$22.95 335 pages

Mom always said to tell the truth. One lie leads to another and another and you have to remember them all until pretty soon, you're caught. Fibs are hard, mistruths are messy, even little white social lies can destroy trust. Worst of all, as in the new novel, "The Lost Brontë" by Catherine Friend, a complicated lie can lead to danger. Though Lilianne Loxley was very young when she lost her parents, she understood that her uncle didn't really want her. As time passed, though, Lily made herself useful to Uncle, writing and signing letters for him and she became a good companion, helping him with his collection of Brontë memorabilia. Uncle was a keen enthusiast.

She had no idea that his obsession was out of control and he was deeply in arrears. The day Lily learned of his debt was the day she learned that he'd agreed to send her to his debtor's home, to work off the money owed.

It was so sudden. One minute, Lily was at Loxley House, happy and loved by Uncle's staff… and five hours later, she was at Crag Thorn Manor, home of Lord Bexton, who informed her that she'd be working on his ledgers - work that seemed routine, but Lily tackled it.

Uncle always did say she was headstrong.

But would headstrong be enough to survive, when she was restricted from most of the Manor, when she was forced to dine with Brexton and his slimy friend, or – the worst! - when Brexton told Lily that her next task was to forge a letter from Emily Brontë? And then an entire manuscript?

Lily struggled to do what was right. She had to get Uncle out of debt but this last order horrified her. Did she dare refuse Brexton's orders and commit a crime? It was unthinkable! The only brightness in the whole situation was Wren, the ladies' maid assigned to Lily's room. Wren was adorable with freckles and the sweetest smile. But with everything else happening at Crag Thorn Manner, could Lily act upon her feelings?

This time of year, you may come to crave dark, spooky stories, and "The Last Brontë" fits those needs perfectly with its Gothic deliciousness. Think: Daphne du Maurier-type, stormy-night squirms with a dangerously chaste, sweetly romantic girl-meets-girl twist for fun.

If it's been awhile since you've read a Gothic novel, you're in for a nice reminder of why you love them here. You can almost tick off the must-haves: a novel like this is nothing without a foreboding stone manor with damp walls; stone steps to a dank basement; a mysterious portrait; and a nearby bog, and author Catherine Friend gives readers every one of them. You'd be disappointed if there was no ghost, wouldn't you? Ha. You can practically feel the cold blow through the attic, right? Yeah, it's that kind of book.

If you're a fan of the Brontës, you'll like this novel. If you love Gothic mysteries or Victorian romances, ditto. "The Lost Brontë" is good, no lie..

Photos By Anthony Meade

Charlie's

THE LOGAN'S ANNUAL HALLOWEEN PARTY FRIDAY OCTOBER 23RD@ 8 PM

The Logan Theatre's Annual Halloween costume party returns for a pre-holiday celebration. Dress up, come out! Costumed revelers and spectators both welcome. Judging begins at 9:30 pm, and the top 3 will be announced just before 10:30 pm, when late night horror classics get started. This year, the party paired with two feature screenings: The Exorcist (1973) and A Nightmare on Elm Street (1984). The Logan Theatre 2646 N. Milwaukee Ave. For more information visit ***http://www.TheLoganTheatre.com*** or Call **773-342-5555.**

12TH ANNUAL ARTS IN THE DARK HALLOWEEN PARADE SATURDAY OCTOBER 24TH 6-8pm

They are moving the parade back to its original location on Columbus Drive! Having outgrown the State Street footprint, the parade will take place on Columbus Drive moving north from Balbo to Jackson.

Don't miss your chance to experience this magical parade with the backdrop of the Chicago skyline and Buckingham Fountain!

For more information visit: **http://www.artsinthedark.com**

HAUNTED HALSTED HALLOWEEN FEST & PARADE SATURDAY OCTOBER 31

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Haunted Halsted Halloween Parade and to celebrate, they're making it an all-day affair! On Saturday, October 31st, 2026, on Halsted Street between Aldine Avenue and Addison Avenue come have a ghoulish good time with food, drinks, music, local vendors, live performances and more! That then leads directly into Chicago's only Halloween Night parade, where more than 300 costumed participants show off their creativity and Halloween spirit!

Schedule11:00am to 6:00pm: ***Haunted Halsted Fest***
7:00pm to 8:00pm: Haunted Halsted ***Halloween Parade***
8:00pm to 10:00pm: Haunted Halsted Costume Contest & Post-Parade Party.

The Haunted Halsted Fest features food, drinks, live entertainment, street performers and dedicated areas/activities for kids and families throughout the day, leading right into our fantastic Halloween Parade, ranked one of the top ten in the US by Fodor's Travel, and featuring a spectacular Costume Contest with hundreds of entrants (register here) vying for $4,000 in total cash prizes at its conclusion.

The Parade also features the ***Chicago Full Moon Jam fire performers, Windy City Jeep Club, Chicago Thriller, Lakeside Pride Marching Band, The Windy City Rollers,*** and ***Chicago Spirit Brigade*** pep squad…with more to come!

The costume competition covers 5 categories: Character, Creative, Scary, Youth (<13) and Group. Each category will have a $500/$200/$100 prize winner for 1st place/2nd place/3rd place, respectively.

Northalsted has a ton of Halloween events throughout October: Parade after parties and contests, the Northalsted Halloween Pup Crawl, Drag Competitions, Trick or Treating, our Movies in the Parking Lot series, and more.For Parade & Costume Contest Registration visit ***https://northalsted.com***

DOUGLAS HALLOWEEN PARADE FOR ADULTS SATURDAY OCTOBER 31 AT 10PM DOWNTOWN DOUGLAS, MICHIGAN

For one night each year, downtown Douglas transforms into the stage for one of the most distinctive Halloween events in the midwest.

As night falls, downtown is transformed into a theatrical, highly visual spectacle filled with creativity, costumes, performance, and surprises around every corner.

For more information visit ***http://www.douglashalloween.com***

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PRIDE CHICAGO OPENED NOMINATIONS FOR 2027 COMMUNITY GRAND MARSHALS

Nominations remain open through December 31 for the 57th Annual Chicago Pride Parade, continuing a tradition of honoring grassroots leaders and local trailblazers.

PRIDEChicago, the volunteer-powered nonprofit organization behind the historic Chicago Pride Parade, announced that nominations opened October 1 and remain open through December 31 for the Community Grand Marshals who will be honored during the 57th annual Chicago Pride Parade on June 27, 2027.

Beginning with the 2025 parade, PRIDEChicago launched a public nomination process to honor individuals who embody the spirit of Pride, elevate voices, and expand opportunity for all. That tradition continues for 2027, inviting the community once again to help recognize those whose leadership, advocacy, and dedication reflect the values at the heart of the Chicago Pride Parade.

"Our community thrives because of the people who show up and do the work every single day," said Terra Campbell, Director of Community Engagement at PRIDEChicago. "As we look toward 2027, we're asking Chicagoans to help us recognize the local leaders across healthcare, education, and civil rights who are creating meaningful change."

Nominations for this meaningful recognition opened on October 1, 2026, marking the start of LGBTQ+ History Month, and remain open through December 31, 2026, via the form at pridechicago.org/nominate. Self-nominations are welcome, as are nominations submitted by others, whether individuals or organizations.

The final selection for Community Grand Marshals will be made by the PRIDEChicago Board of Directors and announced in spring 2027, ahead of the June 27 parade.

"Showing up for one another is at the core of what Pride truly means," said Steve Long, PRIDEChicago Board Chair. "By nominating a Community Grand Marshal, you're helping us celebrate the everyday champions who move our community forward."

Honoring Recent Trailblazers

In a historic first, a local community organization served as the inaugural "Out Front" parade leader in 2025: TaskForce Prevention & Community Services, a West Side–based LGBTQ+ youth health and wellness group recognized for decades of critical service and advocacy. Marching after TaskForce were the 2025 Community Grand Marshals, Dr. Maya Green and Dr. Catherine Creticos—two trailblazers in healthcare and LGBTQ+ advocacy selected through the public nomination process. Dr. Creticos was the first ally ever to serve as Grand Marshal in the parade's history.

In 2026, the Puerto Rican Cultural Center was honored as the "Out Front" community group for its tireless work in Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood to dismantle homophobia and transphobia while integrating LGBTQ+ advocacy into the core of public health and housing justice. Following them were the 2026 Community Grand Marshals: journalist and historian Tracy Baim, civil rights leader Mona Noriega, philanthropist and community advocate Evette Cardona, and the Alliance of Illinois Judges. They were selected for their extraordinary leadership, service, and impact—each embodying what it means to be Free to Be Proud.

57 Years of Pride

The 57th Annual Chicago Pride Parade will take place on Sunday, June 27, 2027, at 11 a.m. in Chicago's landmark LGBTQ+ Northalsted neighborhood.

For updates, participation details, and opportunities to support the Chicago Pride Parade, visit ***pridechicago.org.***

PALM SPRINGS PRIDE PARADE SUNDAY NOVEMBER 8, 2026

The colorful parade steps off 10:00 a.min the Uptown Design District at Tachevah and Palm Canyon Dr. and travels south through downtown, ending at the entrance to the Pride Festival at Amado.

Known for its crystal blue skies and year-round sunshine, the city of Palm Springs comes alive during the annual Pride celebration. Thousands of spectators will gather along palm tree-lined streets to cheer and support local organizations, activists, and themed floats along historic Palm Canyon Dr. The parade is expected to last two hours.

2026 GRAND MARSHALS

Fortune Feimster - National Grand Marshal
Cheyenne Jackson - Celebrity Grand Marshal
Marshall Pearcy - Pride Royalty for Life
Gary Moline - Community Grand Marshal

Enjoy emcee commentary as parade contingents pass by official reviewing stands:

- Reviewing stand #1, located at E Granvia Valmonte and N Palm Canyon Drive, starting at 9:30 a.m.
- Broadcast reviewing stand is near Eight4Nine Restaurant & Lounge at 849 N. Palm Canyon Drive. Host and emcee Nicholas Snow.
- KESQ Television Broadcast location at Aleja and Palm Canyon Dr.
- The Deaf Pride reviewing stand is north of Amado Road at N. Palm Canyon Drive and features sign language interpretation. Seating for the Deaf community is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information visit ***http://www.pspride.org***

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BEFORE WE ARE HISTORY AT OPEN SPACE ARTS FROM OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 8TH

BEFORE WE ARE HISTORY is a series of four plays from the AIDS crisis era, presented by Open Space Arts October 23–November 8. These powerful works revisit the fear, loss, friendship, anger, and resilience of a generation confronting an epidemic that changed LGBTQ+ history.

• ONE by Jeff Hagedorn and BLOOD SPILL by Lee Raines — October 23–25 (presented together)

In ONE, Jeff Hagedorn's groundbreaking solo play, a young man struggles to understand and confront his AIDS diagnosis at a time when the disease itself was frighteningly new.

Set in New York in 1992, BLOOD SPILL follows HIV-positive playwright Kenny King as he confronts Angela Turner, an old college friend who now runs a major theater company. Kenny brings her a deeply personal play about AIDS, only to discover that her theater has chosen work it considers safer and more accessible.

• JERKER by Robert Chesley — October 29–November 8

Two gay men, J.R. and Bert, develop an increasingly intimate relationship entirely through telephone calls. What begins as anonymous sexual fantasy gradually becomes affection, friendship, and emotional dependence as AIDS transforms the world around them.

• A QUIET END by Robin Swados — November 3 only (staged reading)

A deeply human drama about three gay men living together during the early years of AIDS. The play explores friendship, chosen family, anger, illness, love, and mortality as the men confront an epidemic reshaping their lives.

Open Space Arts 1411 W. Wilson Avenue, Chicago. Tickets and complete performance information: ***OpenSpaceArts.org***

KABARETT DIRECT FROM BERLIN! ON NOVEMBER 4TH AT DANK HAUS

Why sit alone in a room? Come to the KABARETT! Step into a relaxed nightclub atmosphere as three German cabaret artists, actors, and singers—Anne Fromm, Thomas Kellner, and Johanna Paliege —invite you on a wild ride through the history of German cabaret. This witty, frivolous, yet deeply touching showcase weaves together songs, anecdotes, and mini-scenes into a captivating historical mosaic.

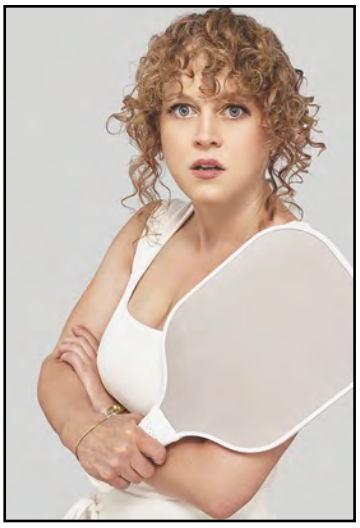
The journey begins at the dawn of the 20th century. Heavily inspired by the Parisian avant-garde of Montmartre and Montparnasse, these early artistic experiments paved the way for the Golden Twenties and Thirties—a roaring heyday of variety shows in Berlin and Munich that sparked an explosion of creativity, originality, and diversity.

This open-minded, critical golden age met a brutal end under the Nazi regime. The forced emigration and deportation of Jewish, queer, and labeled "degenerate" (Entartete Kunst) artists stripped the art form of its bite, weaponizing it into mere wartime propaganda and distraction. Yet, small glimmers of hope endured through underground resistance and exile in Zurich and overseas.

Wednesday, November 4th @ 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm DANK Haus, 4740 N. Western Ave., Chicago.

Visit ***cabaretconnexion.org/rsvp2026 f***or the complete Cabaret Connexion lineup.

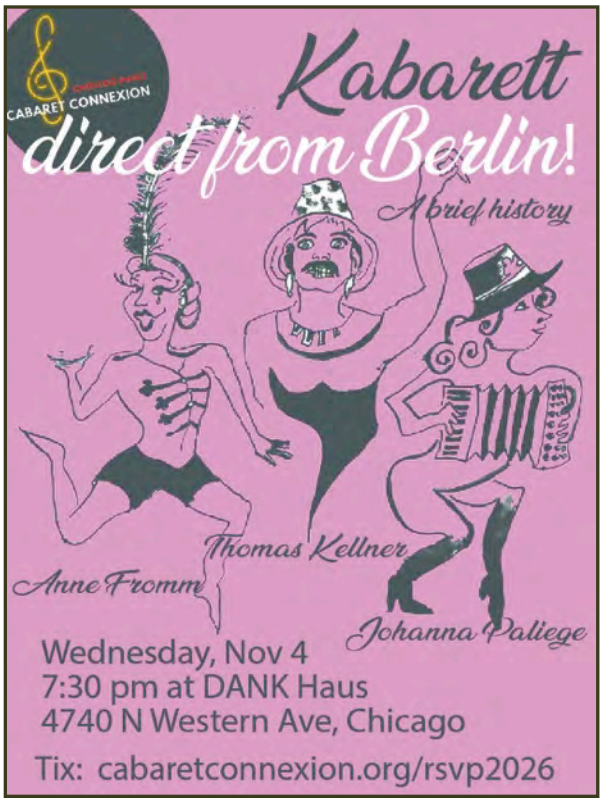
STEPPENWOLF THEATRE CONTINUES 51ST SEASON WITH WORLD PREMIERE OF ADIRONDACK CHAIR CIRCLE PLAYING OCTOBER 22-DECEMBER 6 IN STEPPENWOLF'S ENSEMBLE THEATER



Steppenwolf Theatre Company, the nation's premier ensemble theater company, will launch its 51st Season with the world premiere of Chicago playwright ***Stephanie Alison Walker***'s biting satire *Adirondack Chair Circle*, directed by Tony Award winner ***Pam MacKinnon*** (*Downstate, Edward Albee's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*), playing October 22 — December 6, 2026 in Steppenwolf's Ensemble Theater, 1646 N. Halsted St. in Chicago.

A gaggle of suburban moms, armed with pickleball paddles and hard kombucha, are ready to take on the school board in the fight of their lives: attempting to ban the controversial books available to their kids in the school library. But is this trusted inner circle all on the same page? A piercing world premiere from a Chicago playwright, Stephanie Alison Walker's Adirondack Chair Circle exposes the hilarious hypocrisy of the causes we claim and the company we keep. And has a damn good time doing it.

Tickets are now on sale at ***steppenwolf.org*** or the Box Office at ***(312) 335-1650.***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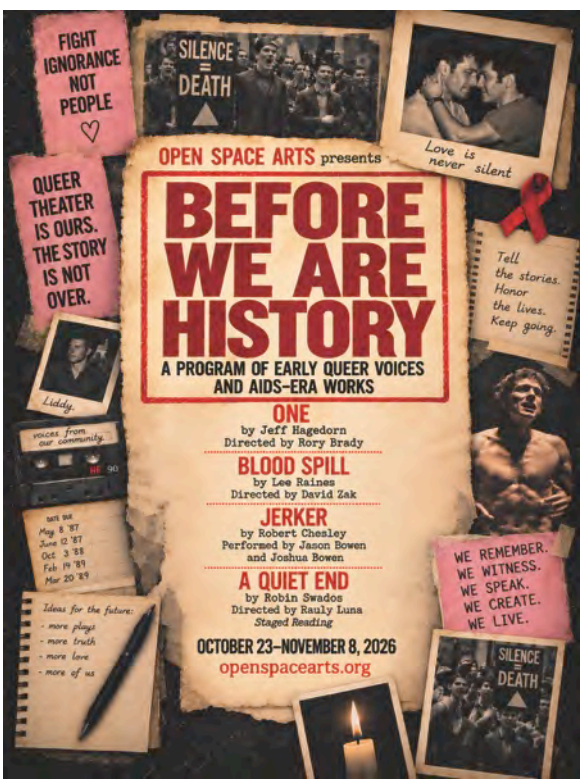
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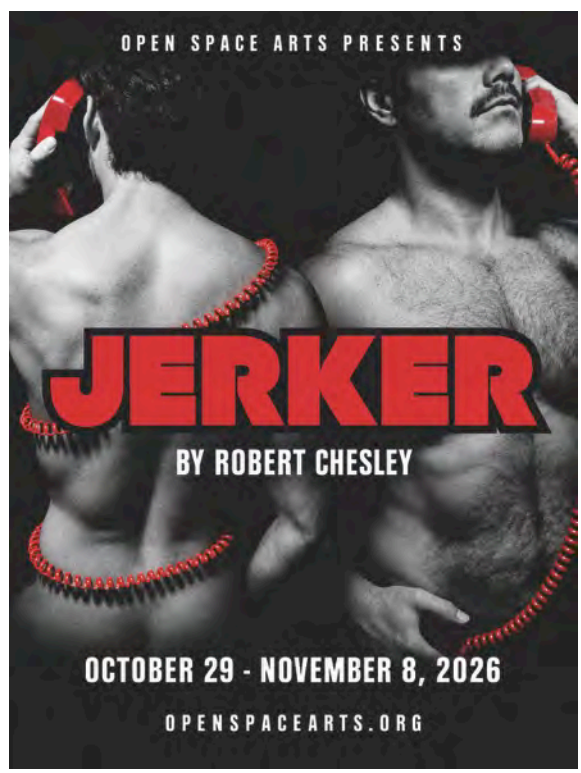
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GRAB TROY

Under Locke and Key

Troy Locke stars in "Caged Meat"

By Anthony Valenti

Troy Locke didn't come to adult film the way people assume. Before there was a camera in the room, there was a Midwestern small town, a stack of degrees, and a career in education: a life, by his own account, built on doing everything "right." Somewhere along the way, that life stopped fitting, and Locke walked away from it to chase something closer to the truth: a sexuality rooted in kink that he says he recognized in himself before he ever recognized he was gay.

That thread runs straight into "Caged Meat," Locke's first BDSM release and his debut for KinkMen.com. Co-starring Marco Napoli, a performer Locke had already known and played with off camera for years, "Caged Meat" marks the moment a private dynamic between two friends became a public scene. We sat down with Locke to talk about the negotiation process, the traffic-light system that kept the shoot safe, and why he says BDSM has been his "forever home" all along.

Anthony Valenti : Where did you grow up?
Troy Locke: I grew up in the Midwest, in a small town. It was nice, but pretty isolated from other gay people. I think growing up there makes me appreciate the queer friendships and chosen family I make along the way even more.

AV: Looking back, were there early signs that you'd end up in adult film?
TL: I used to love making movies with my friends, back in middle school. Behave! Not those kinds of movies!

AV:What's the real story of how you got into the industry?
TL: I grew up doing everything "right." Obedient and dutiful… I went to college, graduated with multiple degrees, had a career in education, but at some point, I realized I'd traded freedom for acceptance. One day I woke up and didn't recognize the path I was on as what I wanted. Life is short, so I upended everything to explore myself deeper and follow my dreams.

AV: What went into the decision to step it up and dive into kink porn?
TL: Kink has been my sexuality from the start. I knew I was into leather and bondage before I even knew I was gay. And KinkMen.com has been synonymous with kink for as long as I can remember. I remember when I first discovered the site and realized I wasn't as alone as I thought. Getting the chance to work with them has been quite the full-circle moment.

AV: "Caged Meat" is your first KinkMen project. Walk us through the negotiation process with Marco before cameras rolled.
TL: Marco and I have actually known each other for a few years, so there was already a base of trust we could build on. Slipping into a more intense dynamic felt pretty natural. Before the shoot, we did a formal exchange of limits and safe words to set boundaries, but the trust was already there. That made it really easy to let go.

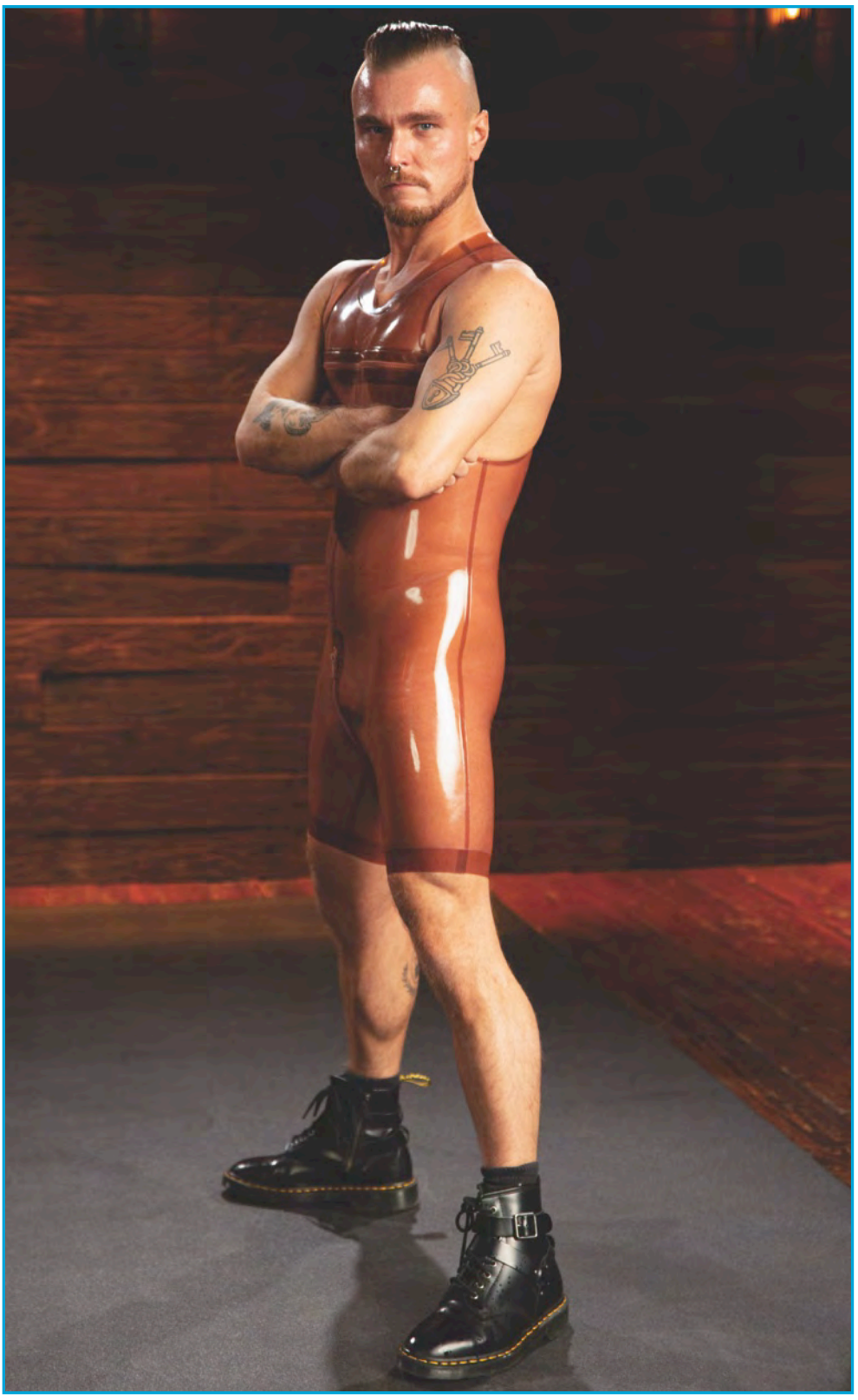
AV: Did you rehearse before the scene, or did most of it get worked out live?
TL: There was no rehearsal. We got right into it. Everything you see on screen is the natural dynamic that evolved in the session.

AV: Did you set any personal limits or safe words going in?
TL: We used a traffic light system on set, which is fairly universal. There were two verbal cues: "Red" meant stop all action immediately. "Yellow" or "Mercy" meant we would stop to have a check-in, discuss what was wrong, and make sure that everyone was okay to continue.

AV: What are some kinks you might be interested in exploring next, on camera or off?
TL: You don't have to edge me like that… if you want to keep me pushing the extremes, all you have to do is ask! I'm always up for exploring and pushing my limits further. Huge fan of predicament bondage, heavy pain, humiliation, and more — on both sides.

AV: What's one thing fans would be surprised to learn about Troy Locke?
TL: I'm a bit of a Midwestern cliché. I like to play my guitar, on the porch, with my two cats. I also have another pet… a live-in slave/servant.

AV: For viewers who are kink-curious but nervous to explore it themselves, what would you want them to take from watching "Caged Meat"?
TL: I'd say go for it. Life is short and we only get one, so you might as well explore your desires while we're here.



*"Caged Meat," starring Troy Locke and Marco Napoli, is available now on **KinkMen.com.***

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