

JANUARY 20, 2026 VOL XVII • ISSUE#1

GRAB

MAGAZINE

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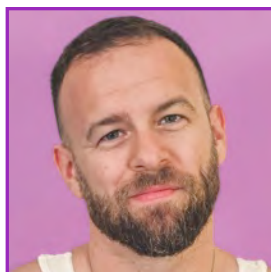
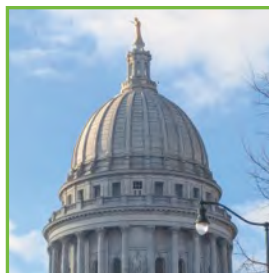
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In Memorium

Mark Nagel (Co-Founder)
1961 - 2019

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GRAB YOUR SKIS



Pride & Ski Day on Sunday, February 8

For 88 seasons, Wilmot Mountain located in Wilmot Wisconsin has been the heart of the heartland, the warm hug on a cold day, the place for thousands to play, ski, learn, and tube and toast each other of a hot toddy and relax over a warm fire. Wilmot Mountain offers 22 lanes of tubing, each lane over 1,000 ft long.

This year Wilmot Mountain will host a Pride & Ski Day on Sunday, February 8, 2026, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. This special event celebrates Wilmot Mountain's dedication to fostering a sense of belonging for every guest. Pride & Ski Day offers a chance for individuals and families to come together, enjoy winter activities, and share in the vibrant culture of the LGBTQIA+ community.

This year's highlights will include:

- S'mores on the Patio – Cozy up with a sweet treat by the fire.
- Kringle Time – Indulge in Wisconsin's favorite pastry.
- \$5 Equipment Rentals after 3 PM – Affordable access to winter fun.
- Cookie Decorating – A fun activity for kids and adults alike.
- Party Favors & Pride Flags – Complimentary mementos to mark

the day.

- Photo Opportunities – Capture your memories with vibrant backdrops.
- Ski Pride Parade – A colorful procession on the slopes.

Guests are encouraged to wear their favorite family-friendly Pride outfits to showcase their spirit in this inclusive celebration.

"Wilmot Mountain is proud to be a place where everyone feels welcome," said **Chuck Randles**, General Manager at Wilmot Mountain. "Pride & Ski Day is a testament to our commitment to inclusivity and creating memorable experiences for all our guests."

NEW FOR 25/26: Get ready for a season of nonstop fun at Wilmot Mountain!

Join the Wilmot community at one of our Community Nights where we offer \$39 Lift Tickets and \$12 rental to all guests after 3pm on Select Fridays.

Walt's Tavern is now the newest Brunch spot! Try out our new menu and indulge in a classic brunch mimosa or try out a new coffee cocktail. Open 11am-4pm on Saturdays & Sundays.

The Main Lodge Bar is back and

open 7 days a week. This beloved landmark is the best place to chill between runs and enjoy some après!

Walt's Tavern – now serving BRUNCH! Walt's will be open on weekends and holiday periods, providing an upbeat, fun, family-friendly atmosphere with classic brunch options and a variety of espressos. Walt's Tavern is a casual dine in or take out restaurant. We can't think of a 'heartier' way to warm up during one of our brisk ski days than a loaded cinnamon roll. Open 9am-4pm on Saturdays & Sundays.

The Ski Hill Grill offers a variety of quick serve options including pizza, soup and chili, poutine, cheese curds, and delicious burgers.

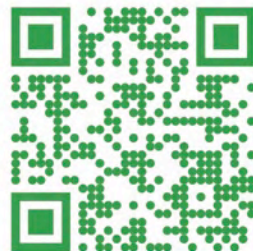
Lessons - Wilmot Ski and Ride School is the perfect choice for first-timers and beginners looking to learn how to ski or snowboard. The school offers group lessons and private one-on-one instruction, allowing you to learn at your own pace in a fun and safe environment.

Wilmot offers a variety of options for lift tickets. Pricing is based on age grouping, day of the week, and time of day. They are happy to offer



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reduced price night tickets this season as well as specialty nights (Community Nights & College Nights).

Rentals - They have you covered. No need to rush out and buy all new equipment, simply come to the mountain and use their rentals. Their rental associates will get you set up with the right equipment for the best experience possible. Rental Packages include skis/snowboard, boots, and helmet (poles included as well for ski packages). Purchase online in advance!

Mountain Stats-
Skiable Acres: 120
Top Elevation – 960 feet
Vertical – 200 feet
Trails – 25

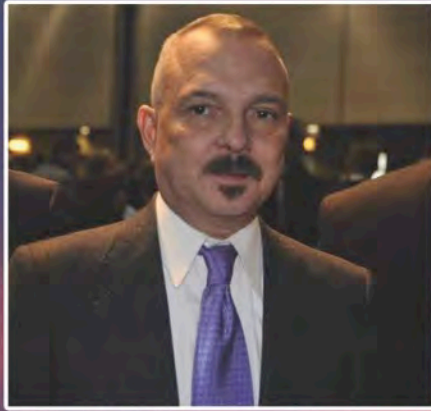
Retail - Stop in the Wilmot Mountain Retail shop and check out the wide selection of winter gear. From helmets and goggles to jackets and snow pants, they've got you covered... from head to toe.

For more information visit <http://www.wilmotmountain.com>

Wilmot Pride & Ski Day



IN LOVING MEMORY RICK GARCIA



-SEPTEMBER 15, 1956 - JANUARY 12, 2026

"Ricky was my leader in the fight for human rights, a legend. He was also my best friend. We sang, danced and celebrated life together while battling the LGBTQ+ community's enemies and winning rights and justice for all."

-Richard Streetman

"The very first time I met Rick speaking at a transgender event he said, 'Girls, let me tell you something, sisters. I am digging my stilettos in to fight for trans rights!'"

-Jackie Richter

"Rick was a force to be reckoned with and a dear friend that always made me laugh so hard. Some of the things that would come out of his mouth would sometimes leave me in shock. I will truly cherish the memories we shared together and will miss him dearly."

-John Zmuda

Rick was my mentor and friend. Love him or hate him—and some did—he was passionate about getting equality for our community.

-Joey McDonald

"Rick had not only an innate ability to see to the core of every issue, but also to see through to the core of every person

Nothing made him angrier or more passionate than to see people judged, undervalued or treated unfairly. He understood the human condition. And that, to me, was his strength—it motivated him, it gave him strength, it helped him tackle the most difficult human rights issues of our times—it made him nearly invincible."

-Rocco Claps

Rick was such a brilliant political strategist and absolutely selfless when it came to lgbtq rights. He had a wicked sense of humor and nothing stopped him from advocating for our community. He is now in heaven with his long time partner Ernie. He accomplished so much for us and remained focused on the goal for equality until the end.

-Ellen Meyers

GRAB MUSIC

Q-Music: Solo-a-go-go

By Gregg Shapiro

What a year 2025 was for **Stevie Nicks** fans! At the beginning of the year, the box set "Fleetwood Mac: 1975 to 1987" compiled the five albums by the band on which Nicks appeared. In late summer, the long-awaited CD and vinyl reissues of the long out-of-print 1973 album "Buckingham Nicks" by Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham was finally released. At the end of the year, Nicks' multi-platinum 1981 solo album "Bella Donna" (MoFi) was reissued in a beautifully boxed, limited edition (numbered), double LP, Ultradisc One-Step pressing by Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab, as part of the Original Master Recording series. Spinning at 45 RPM, the songs from the album, including the massive hit singles "Edge of Seventeen," the Tom Petty duet "Stop Dragging My Heart Around," the Don Henley duet "Leather and Lace," and the dramatic title track, have never sounded so good. Your turntable will thank you.

Chicago's very own **Jeff Tweedy** is one of those musicians who simply has too much music in

him to be contained in one musical unit. Still at the helm of the Grammy Award-winning Wilco, he also has connections to multiple musical acts, including Uncle Tupelo, Golden Smog, The Minus 5, and others. He's also released solo albums with the triple disc set "Twilight Override" (dBpm) being the latest. Thirty songs in total, Tweedy draws on his various musical influences, including alternative country ("Betrayed," "KC Rain," the title track), folk ("Throwaway Lines," "Amar Bharati"), modern rock ("Lou Reed Was My Babysitter," "Enough,"



"No One's Moving On," "Out In The Dark," "Caught Up In The Past") experimentation ("Better Song"), and there's even a spoken word track ("Parking Lot"). "Twilight Override" is an ambitious project that succeeds. **[Jeff Tweedy performs at The Vic on May 29 + 30. Get your tickets now!]**

Like Tweedy, **Juliana Hatfield** is a musical artist who can't be confined to just one group. Her CV, which includes Blake Babies, The Lemonheads, Some Girls, The Juliana Hatfield Three, and others, confirms that. "Blood," her previous solo album of all-original material, was one of the best of 2021. Following a few difficult years in her personal life, Hatfield returns with "Lightning Might Strike" (American Laundromat). A testament to her resilience, in which she sings about loss ("Constant Companion," "Ashes"), depression ("Long Slow Nervous Breakdown," "I Fall Apart"), resolve ("Scratchers," "My House is Not My Dream House"), and loneliness ("Harmonizing With Myself"). To her credit, Hatfield does so in musical settings that are unexpectedly catchy and inviting.

There are some people who never got over TV on the Radio going on hiatus in the late 2010s.



Jeff Tweedy (Full Band) Photo by Rachel Bartz



Tunde Adebimpe
Photo By Xaviera Simmons

The band did regroup for some tour dates in 2024 and 2025 (minus Dave Sitek), but there's no word on a new album yet. Thankfully, lead vocalist

Tunde Adebimpe released his first solo album, "Thee Black

Boltz" (Sub Pop) in 2025. Hearing Adebimpe's instantly recognizable voice will no doubt provide some comfort to TOTR fans, and songs such as "God Knows," "Magnetic," "Drop," "Ate The Moon," "Pinstack," "Streetlight Nueve," and the electro banger "Somebody Knew" prove that he can flourish on his own.

In the early 1980s, **Peter Holsapple** was a member of The dB's, one of the seminal college rock bands, along with R.E.M., The Feelies, The Bongos, Let's Active, Hüsker Dü, Mission of Burma, and others. He also played with Continental

Drifters, as well as the above-mentioned R.E.M., and released a few albums with former dB's bandmate Chris Stamey. On his new solo album, "The Face of 68" (Label 51), produced by college rock hero

Don Dixon, Holsapple addresses aging (the title track), crate digging ("That Kind of Guy"), and loss ("So Sad About Sam" and "Larger Than Life"), among other subjects.

Robert Forster has released almost as many solo albums as he did as a member of beloved Australian band The Go-Betweens ("Streets of Your Town"), a group he co-founded with the late Grant McLennan in 1977. Not since William Carlos Williams ate the plums has there been a confession as delicious at the title track of Forster's new album "Strawberries" (Tapete), a song on which he is joined by his forgiving wife Karin. The erotic (and humorous) mini-epic "Breakfast On The Train" is something to which anyone who stayed in a hotel with thin walls can relate. "All Of This Time" would sound good on Sirius XMU and "Diamonds" sparkles ominously.

KARAOKE

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GRAB A GETAWAY

Your Madison Weekend: Foodie's Heaven On an Isthmus Between Two Lakes

By Bill Malcom

Put Madison, Wisconsin on your radar for a fun winter weekend getaway. Situated between two lakes, it is the one of only two cities on an isthmus. And it has become a foodie's heaven with lots of new restaurants around the Capitol Square downtown.

GETTING THERE

The Amtrak train runs six round trips daily, makes three stops and goes ninety mph. And has new cars to boot.

WHAT TO DO

I took a tour of the beautiful and historic Wisconsin State Capitol. The walls are adorned with the European marble, there is even a museum in the dome. Free guided 45 minutes tours are offered daily. The Badger State is so named as the early settlers thought the miners in southwest Wisconsin lived underground like badgers.

Walk around the shops and restaurants of Capitol Square and State Street, the one-mile pedestrian mall that runs to the University of Wisconsin campus.

Enjoy the frozen winter lakes. Head out to Olbrich Gardens.

WHAT TO EAT

Pick up some Wisconsin cheese at Fromagination on the Capitol Square. Grab some mini cheese "orphans" for just a dollar to three. I liked the Black Betty Gouda and the Goat Pepper Jack cheese. They also have great sandwiches. Try the signature sandwich which features smoked turkey breast, creamy French brie, and cranberry relish on sunflower honey wheat bread. You will find them at 12 South Carroll Street. They are LGBTQ-owned. Order online (cheese for shipping) at fromagination.com.

Have lunch at Casetta at 222

West Washington. The specialty sandwiches made with homemade bread are to die for. As is the soup, Pasta E Fagioli (pasta, beans and sausage). Get there early to avoid the cult-like lunchtime following.

Enjoy the many dining choices at the UW Memorial Union with magnificent views overlooking Lake Mendota. I had a breakfast sandwich at Peet's. The Italian Street food stand looked good. Have a beer in the Rathskeller (the only university union to serve beer.) And for dessert, you can enjoy a scoop or two of ice cream made on campus at Babcock Hall. You are in America's Dairyland after all.

Merchant Madison Restaurant is an industrial-chic gastropub serving farm to table New American fare and craft cocktails. Located at 121 S. Pickney just off the Capitol Square, Merchant has a great chopped salad with bacon. Tuesday is date night where for \$60 you get a shared starter, two entrees and a shared desert plus a bottle of wine all for just \$60.

D'Vino (next door to Woof's (same owner)) is great and is LGBTQ + owned.

The Old Fashioned on the Square has great food and signature drinks. Wisconsinites love their old-fashioned cocktails. It's all my niece drinks. (Sorry, wine snobs.)

Try some pizza at Lucille. Located at 101 King Street, it bills

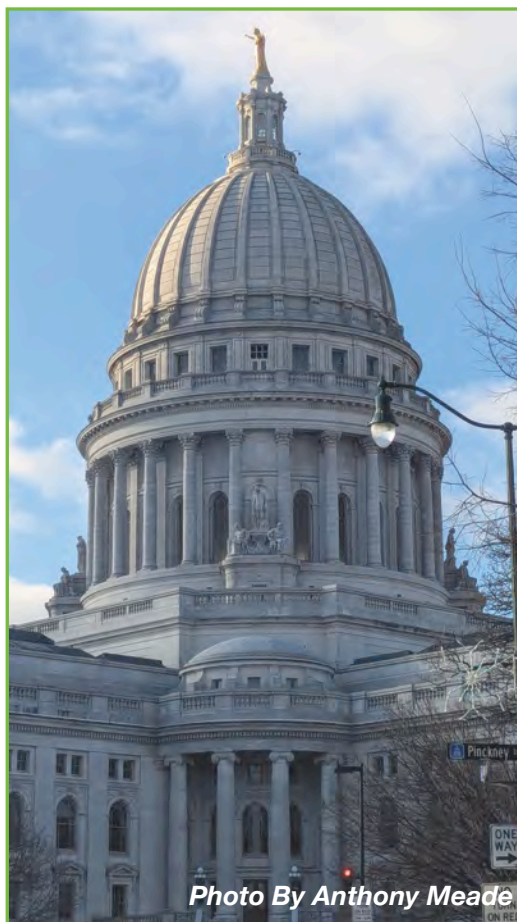


Photo By Anthony Meade

itself as a vintage industrial-chic tavern with three floors serving both wood-fired and steel pan pizzas. There was a two-hour wait the night we were there. Its cheap date nights include a disco dance party, a cocktail class, and drag bingo. Its date night is Wednesday and is just \$50 for two.

The King Street/Capitol Square area is filled with lots of restaurants and has given Madison a new foodie destination reputation.

NIGHTLIFE

Woofs on King Street is the leather mainstay. You will find them at 114 S. King. Also on the Square is the iconic Shamrock, a friendly local crowd.

Out on the Beltline (Madison speak for their one freeway) is Club V which features drag shows and more.

WHERE TO STAY

You cannot beat the Doubletree downtown (525 W. Johnson). Great



rates. Handy location. Friendly staff. They answer the phone when you call for an airport pick-up. And its shuttle will take you within a two-mile radius. The Edgewater overlooking Lake Mendota is a gem. Complete with winter ice skating rink. I also like Hampton downtown. Very handy. The Concourse Hotel just off State Street is also nice with splendid views of the Capitol. I also have stayed at the new Embassy Suites just off the Square.

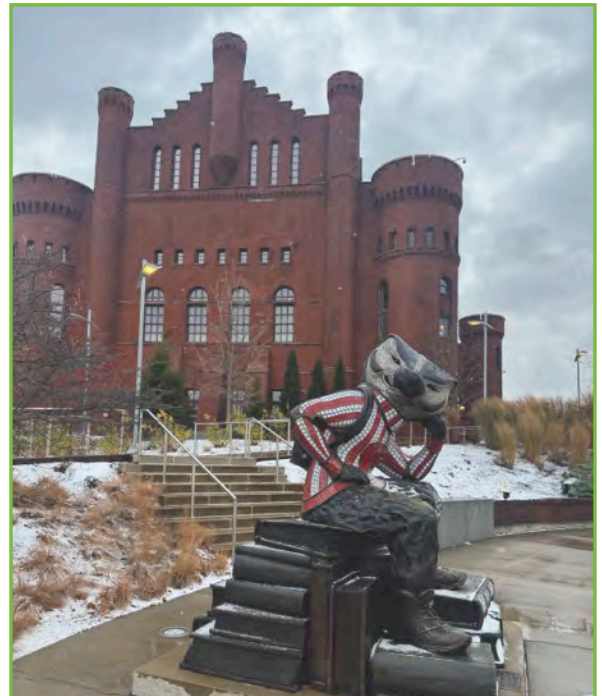
OTHER TIPS

Our Lives is the bimonthly gay magazine. *Isthmus* is the monthly alternative. Madison is very LGBTQ-friendly; a Midwest gem.

I never tire of a visit to my hometown which is booming thanks to the rapid growth of Epic, the medical software company. No longer just a hippie haven, an overgrown college town, or the state capitol, the new Madison is a jewel which constantly is winning awards. Madison has grown up. Put it on your radar for a long weekend any time of year.

Special thanks to Sarah Warner of Destination for her edits to my column.

Bill Malcolm is a native of Madison, graduating from Vel Phillips High School (formerly Memorial). He went to the UW for one year. His opinions are his own. He received no remuneration from anyone for his trip.



UW's Bucky Badger at the UW Memorial Union along Lake Mendota in Madison

GRAB MIKE



“Guess” again: An interview with gay singer/songwriter Mike Maimone

By Gregg Shapiro

Gay singer/songwriter **Mike Maimone** has a soul-crushing story to tell. What better way to do it than in song? Maimone and the late, legendary, gay public relations whiz Howard Bragman, who was renowned for his crisis management skills, met in 2022. The pair began a whirlwind, long-distance relationship, marrying in early 2023, shortly before Bragman died of acute myeloid leukemia. Maimone's two most recent albums, 2023's "Mookie's Big Gay Mixtape," and his latest, 2025's "Guess What? I Love You" (8Eat8), address the relationship with a broad range of emotions. Listeners can expect to be taken on a roller-coaster ride of feelings, concluding on an unexpectedly uplifting note with "Waiting In The Light," which closes the new album. Mike was gracious enough to make time for an interview regarding the album before its early 2026 release.

Gregg Shapiro: Mike, the dedication on your 2023 album "Mookie's Big Gay Mixtape" reads "In loving memory of my husband, Howard Benjamin Bragman." It was released the year Howard passed, and your new album,

"Guess What? I Love You," arriving a couple of years later, is also dedicated to Howard, whom you call "my forever guy." Were any of the songs on the new album originally intended for its predecessor, or were they all written specifically for the current project?

Mike Maimone: The songs on "Guess What? I Love You" were all written specifically for the album. The only exceptions are "Forever Again," which I wrote for Howard when we first got engaged, "Big Kiss," which I started writing after Howard and I returned from a road trip through the Southwest, and "Paranoid in Paradise," which I wrote after a misguided attempt to get high with him. Those three ended up on Side A of the record, chronicling our love story from first meeting through our wedding.

GS: There's a certain blush to the songs written for and about Howard, on both albums, that made me wonder if he was your first serious relationship.

MM: I'm glad to hear you say that, because no, this was not my first serious relationship. In fact, "Forever Again" was written because I'd been

previously engaged, and Howard had been divorced, and I wanted to ease any trepidation about putting our hearts on the line again. I was in that prior relationship for seven years, before that I was with a man for six years, and had a yearlong relationship before that. Because Howard and I met later in life, we had the experience to recognize what an incredible thing we had from the moment we met. It made us giddy. We were genuinely grateful for each other. I'm glad that shines through the songs.

GS: There is a distinctive shift in tone from the "Mixtape" to "Guess What?," although the new album does open with more upbeat numbers, including "On My Way," "Big Kiss," and "Meet Me." Was it important to you that you ease the listener in for what was to come later?

MM: Similar to "Mixtape," I added interlude tracks to guide the narrative, including some voicemails. The new record flows chronologically, so it starts with songs about those first exciting trips to see each other, falling in love, and deciding to spend the rest of our lives together. On the vinyl, "Forever

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Again" closes Side A, about our love story. Side B begins with "Beautiful Mess" about being by Howard's side through his diagnosis and, ultimately, holding him as he passed away. It took me about two years to write and record, and eventually I realized that the album needed to be about beginning to heal, as well, so there is a trio of hopeful songs to close the album.

GS: You mention "the Windy City" in "Meet Me." Being that you lived in the Chicago area for 12 years, and Howard was also from the Great Lakes Region, how much would you say that sharing that Midwestern sensibility played a part in your mutual attraction?

MM: It was a large part of what made me comfortable with Howard in the beginning. We met on Scruff and immediately moved off the app to phone calls and FaceTime. We had a lot of differences on paper, not the least of which was that he lived in LA and I was in Nashville. But we talked several times a day, falling in love long-distance as we discovered our commonalities.

GS: The songs on "Guess What? I Love You" are propelled by a combination of retro and regional musical styles. Please say a few words about how those kinds of influences work their way into your music.

MM: Having loved all kinds of music, I've never wanted to stick to a specific style in my own songwriting. My first band was called Mutts for that reason. I'm a '90s kid, which may be the most eclectic decade for popular music. The Billboard charts had everything from Dr. Dre to Enya to Nine Inch Nails to the Benedictine Monks of Santo Domingo de Silos. I'm not saying those are my influences on this record; I just mean that we're in this algorithmic era where new artists blow up by sounding exactly like every other song on a playlist. And if you deviate from that sound on your next track, the algorithm doesn't know what to do with you anymore. You only get one life, so why limit your creativity to placate an algorithm? I guess if you only want to make one style of music, that works out great. For me, that's been a challenge. I don't question whether one song fits with another. I just try

to make them flow together on the album.

GS: The transition from joy to despair comes across about halfway through "Guess What? I Love You" on songs such as "Beautiful Mess," "So Hard To Let Go," and "Oh How Lucky." How do you prepare yourself to sing such deeply personal tunes for an audience?

MM: It's difficult. It leaves me emotionally drained to keep going back through that pain. But these songs have brought with them the most powerful connection my music has ever had. Grief is a horrible thing that we all eventually have to go through, and an unfortunate bond we all have. I first played "Oh How Lucky" for my Patreon subscribers. Afterwards, several people messaged me saying how much the song meant to them. It reminded them of their own departed loved ones and helped them realize their own gratitude for the love they shared.

GS: In the midst of all the sadness, there is also a healthy dose of humor, especially on what sounds like an anti-drug song: "Paranoid In Paradise."

MM: I'd like to clarify that it's not an anti-drug song - I like marijuana, I'm just allergic to it. But yeah, I wanted to make sure the album reflected how much fun Howard and I had. "Paranoid in Paradise" is about a night when I tried to get high with Howard. I knew I couldn't handle weed, but we were having a relaxing evening, just the two of us, and I figured it was a good environment to try again. I was so wrong. At first, Howard thought it was hilarious that I thought he was trying to kill me. Eventually, he got tired of my BS and went to sleep, leaving me to spiral out on my own.

GS: In recent years, albums by queer artists, including Sufjan Stevens and cabaret artist Frank Dain, have addressed the loss of a life partner. Did you listen to these kinds of albums while working on your own?

MM: I didn't. But after Howard's Celebration of Life, I outlined a documentary about him. He had produced a number of docs and had



a lot of friends in that world, all of whom loved the treatment but said they were too swamped with other projects. One of them suggested I write a book first, as that wouldn't require funding, and if successful, it could open the door for a film on Howard's legacy. He suggested that I read "Spoiler Alert: The Hero Dies." It was a brutal read just months after losing Howard, but helpful in visualizing how to make art about my grief.

GS: Even though this is a very personal album, was it your intention for "Guess What? I Love You" to be helpful to others grieving the loss of a life partner?

MM: That was one of the intentions. First was to document the love for my own memory. I needed to capture it through music, or I'd start to second-guess if it happened at all. The next was to honor Howard's legacy and make sure he'd always be remembered. Channeling my grief into the music helped me begin my healing journey, and as I started sharing it with people close to me, the third intention emerged. Although it's very specific lyrically, it seems to speak to the universal as well.

GS: In addition to this album, you have also written a memoir about your experience. What can you tell the readers about the book?

MM: The book is my story about love, loss, grief, and healing. It started as a way for me to memorialize Howard's contributions to the world through the lens of our love story. But it ended up describing the ways Howard changed my life upon entering it, and again upon leaving it one year later. Howard was an enormous personality, and there were a lot of funny moments. There are a lot of sexy stories, too. And some interesting insights due to our culture clash, as he was a Hollywood publicist and celebrity in his own right, while I was a scrappy independent musician living in Nashville. It, of course, gets very heavy. In the writing and editing process, I've had to pause many times to allow myself to break down. But I didn't want to leave the reader - or myself - in sadness. In the two years it took to write, a lot of things changed in my life. I grew as a person. And my beliefs evolved. So it closes with some perspective



Photo By Scott E Schwimer

on hope and healing. I got a fantastic literary agent and a publisher, and we're looking at February 2026 for release. I've

pushed the album back so we can put out both at the same time.

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GRAB ROGER

Buried In Debt – Part I

By Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss, Esq.



Q: I was laid off from my job over two years ago and used my credit cards to pay my bills and groceries. I haven't been able to find a job since. Last month I started collecting my social security to get by. The stress of worrying about my credit card bills is keeping me awake at night. What should I do?

A: To the individual in the question, the answer may be to do nothing. Many individuals who worry about debts are, in fact, judgment-proof. If someone is unemployed and owns only personal property such as household furnishings, a car with a low market value and a small amount of money in the bank they are probably judgment-proof. Same applies if they are receiving social security and social security disability benefits.

Judgment-proof means that even if a creditor sues you in court and obtains a judgment, the creditor

will be unable to collect on the debt because your assets are exempt from seizure under state law. In Illinois the following personal property is exempt from attachment or judgment (which means no one can take the following property no matter how many lawsuits or judgments there are).

- Your clothing, schoolbooks and family pictures; Wages (exempt in part) – 85 percent of an individual debtor's wages are exempt. Creditors may seek satisfaction of a debt from the remaining 15 percent. This wage exemption is automatic, so the debtor need not assert it.

- Certain retirement funds – Pension and individual retirement account (IRA) funds and individual retirement annuities are fully exempt from collections.

- Certain real property (exempt in part) – A debtor may exempt up to \$15,000 in equity on their individually owned residence or farmland. The exemption doubles to \$30,000 if the eligible property is jointly owned.

- Motor vehicle (exempt in part) – A debtor may exempt up to \$2,400 in equity in a single motor vehicle.

- Life Insurance and annuities – Certain insurance benefits, endowments, annuities and disability payments are exempt if the debtor's spouse is the loss payee, or if the loss payee is a non-spouse dependent upon the debtor.

- Wild card exemption – A debtor may exempt up to \$4,000 in value on any type of property owned.

This means that if someone obtained a judgment against you and you only had \$2,000 in the bank, furniture with a value of \$2,000 and a car with equity of \$2,400 or less, your creditor would

obtain nothing because the value of what you own is within the exemptions created by Illinois law. Your property is exempt and you are judgment-proof.

Although a creditor may turn your debt over to a collection agency, the agency will usually write off the debt if you are judgment-proof. You will need to tell the collection agency of this fact and may need assistance from a lawyer who will so advise the collection agency. Taxes and secured debts (house mortgage or car loan) cause special problems which may lead to forfeiture of your property even if you are otherwise judgment-proof. You may require the remedies that bankruptcy affords.

A creditor may challenge the validity of an exemption that appears questionable and to obtain court orders to compel the debtor to deliver up any nonexempt assets. An experienced debtor and creditor attorney can be invaluable in helping creditors enforce their rights.

Creditors and collection agents must also navigate a multitude of federal laws governing debt collections. Creditors must comply with the U.S. Bankruptcy Code and the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, which restricts debt collectors' actions to enforce consumer debts. Non-compliance with applicable laws can expose the creditor and/or its agents to sanctions and other potential liability.

Roger McCaffrey-Boss is a graduate 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.

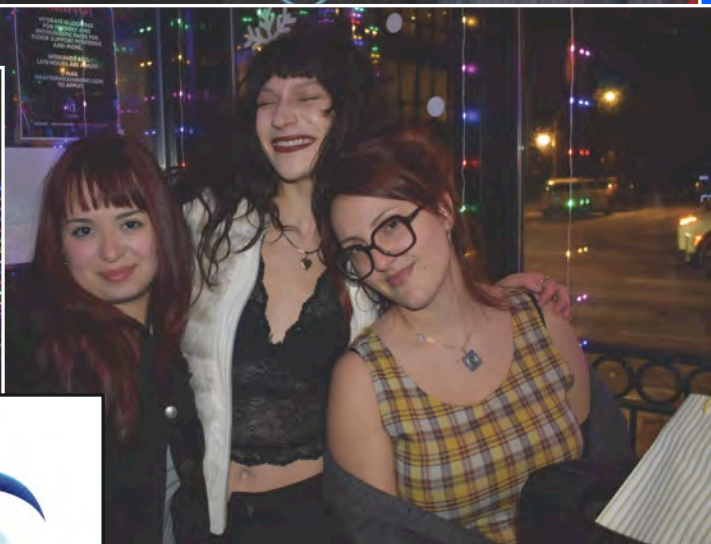
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Daily Specials;

MONDAY	<p>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.</p>
	<p>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. Hydrate: Tat Tuesday 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. 2/17 Mardi Gras Weekend Kick Off Party!</p>
	<p>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. Meeting House Tavern: \$4 Miller Lite Drafts, \$5 Stoli Cocktails (All Flavors), EVERYDAY SPECIALS: \$4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), \$5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts & Pool. 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,</p>
	<p>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. Jackhammer: \$3 House Shots, \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails, \$5 Miller Lite Tallboys, 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 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, Pink Pony Club 1st Thur of month in Main Bar, All Things K-Pop other Thursdays in Main Bar. 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.</p>

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. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **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. **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. 1/30 MCL 2026 Weekend Welcome Party. 2/6 Man'Nipple'ate nipple Fetish Play Night. 2/3 Winter Underwear Fetish Party & Mr. Union Suit Contest.

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. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 12pm-3am. **Charlie's:** 7pm - 11pm SCCDA Country Dancing, 11pm Under the boots tonight. **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. **Meeting House Tavern:** HAPPY HOUR (2-5 PM): \$5 New Amsterdam Cocktails, ALL DAY SPECIALS: \$5 Lost Coast Tangerine Wheat Drafts, \$5 Signature Margaritas, \$8 WYNK THC, \$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 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. 1/24 RIPE PARTY Dim Lights, Deep Beats Go-Go Dudes DJ Harry T. 1/31 MCL 2026 Gear Swap @nonn MCL CONTEST @9PM Victory Party Follows. 2/7 BEASTIAL BEAR NIGHT. 2/14 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. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors Open at 11am, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 12pm-2am. **Charlie's:** 1st and 3rd Sunday of the Month 5pm - 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 1pm, 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. 2/8 Super Bowl Beer Bust.

The Next Issue of GRAB hits the streets and online Tuesday February 17th, 2026. Reserve your space today www.GRABChicago.com Call 773-707-2660 or email GRABStacy@gmail.com

GRAB A HIT

Top 30 Dance Chart For the First week of January 2026



Visit nexusradio.fm

	Artist	Title
1	Robyn	Dopamine (Radio Edit)
2	Frank Walker x Josh Ross x Norma Jean Martine	Lay It On Me
3	Kaskade	Dncr
4	Sonny Fodera x D.O.D. & Poppy Baskcomb	Think About Us
5	Manyfew	The One For Me
6	Armnhmr & Lockbox	Free Ft. Sara Benyo & Gabriel Eli
7	Taylor Swift	The Fate Of Ophelia (Loud Luxury Remix)
8	Jared Lee x Disco Fries	Collide
9	Loud Luxury	R U Down
10	Jonas Blue & Malive	Edge Of Desire (Radio Mix)
11	Richard Durand x York x Lea Key	Sunrise (Radio)
12	Le Manou	Make It Pop
13	Jus Jack	If I Go
14	Gil Glaze & Afrojack	Hold On Ft. Evie
15	Two Friends ft. Natalie Jane	Waiting 4 U
16	ILLENIUM	Forever ft. Tom Grennan & Alna
17	Swanky Tunes X Shapov	Favela
18	RscL	Lighter (Radio Edit)
19	Dancingfaraz	Never Looking Back
20	Sidepiece Cry For You	Radio
21	Marshmello & Inji	Kissin My Friends
22	33 Below x RL Grime	LOOK4MYLOVE
23	Arco x Sistek	Sound Of The Sunrise
24	Jes	Forever Young
25	Allegra	Red (Giuseppe D. Remix)
26	Loud Luxury X Emily Roberts	Love You For Life
27	Elephante & X.O.Anne	Dreaming Season
28	Emma Louise & Flume	Whenever You Want
29	Lucas & Steve x Oaks x Jaimes	Love On Hold
30	Dancingfaraz	Space From You


Touche

MCL 

**2026 MR. CHICAGO
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JANUARY 30 - FEBRUARY 1



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SATURDAY
MCL GEAR SWAP NOON-4PM
MCL 2026 CONTEST 9PM

SUNDAY
FAREWELL BRUNCH 11AM
ALL DAY BEER BUST 2PM

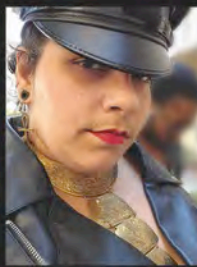
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GRAB A CRUSH

Call Him Daddy

By Frank Doll

Crush Daddy is a commanding presence wherever he goes. This month, he steps into a new role as one of KinkMen.com's dominant tops where he exudes the confidence of someone who has spent years mastering both body and mind. A former basketball player, Crush brings disciplined athleticism to his performances. Sports once defined his world, and that foundation, later refined through years as a personal trainer focused on physique as much as performance, now fuels his on-screen authority. Speaking with us from his home in Houston, Texas, Crush opens up about his global upbringing, sexual fluidity, and his evolving relationship with kink.

Frank Doll: Tell us about your early childhood.

CrushDaddy: I grew up in South Africa and Germany. It was difficult and lonely, especially dealing with new languages and vastly different cultures.

FD: What prompted your family's move to the United States?

CrushDaddy: I think it's everyone's dream to move to the U.S. When my dad was offered a work opportunity, we did everything we could to make it happen.

FD: What role did sports play in your young life?

CrushDaddy: Sports were pretty much my entire life. It's what I did all day, every day, especially basketball.

FD: How did your basketball journey transition into a lucrative career as a male stripper?

CrushDaddy: Basketball didn't actually play much of a role. The real shift happened after I retired from sports and became a personal trainer. As an athlete, I trained for performance. As a trainer, I learned how to train for physique and

performance, which changed everything.

FD: Outside of performing, what are your favorite non-sexual hobbies or activities?

CrushDaddy: I'm a big gamer. I love challenging video games that push me mentally. I also build my own computers to play on.

FD: When did you first begin exploring kink on camera, and what inspired that step?

CrushDaddy: Honestly, my work with KinkMen was my first experience with kink—on or off camera. I'm open to almost anything, so I tried it and ended up loving it.

FD: You've said, "I'm a dom top, but never say never." How does that mindset shape the roles you're open to exploring?

CrushDaddy: Being open-minded is something I really try to stick to. I don't know how I'll feel on any given day, so I avoid setting ironclad rules for myself.

FD: Your gay fans were especially intrigued by that comment. Are there boundaries or role reversals you'd consider under the right circumstances?

CrushDaddy: I'm sure I'll explore almost everything at some point—before I'm too old to explore anything anymore.

FD: As a bisexual performer working with both men and women, what excites you most about bringing that fluidity into kink-focused projects?

CrushDaddy: Fluidity really excites me because it makes my mind and body feel so much at once—it's almost overwhelming. Bisexual



experiences are still pretty rare on camera, and that uniqueness really motivates me.

FD: What aspects of kink align most naturally with the persona fans know as Crush Daddy?

CrushDaddy: The overall daddy vibe. I enjoy it, and my fans enjoy seeing it. I'm always going to be myself and only do what I want to do. That's why, on my OnlyFans livestreams, I don't use a tip menu. I'm not a vending machine where you put money in and get a specific result. I do what I want—if people want to tip, great. If not, they're still welcome to enjoy the show.

FD: Are there specific dynamics or roles you're curious about but haven't yet explored?

CrushDaddy: I want to explore more bisexual and sexually fluid experiences. Not enough of that has been done, and I think there's a real audience for it.

FD: How do you balance your established stripper persona with the deeper psychological elements of kink performance?

CrushDaddy: Kink performance is much deeper than stripping, honestly. That's why I've gravitated away from stripping and more toward adult content—it offers more to explore and is way more fascinating to me.

FD: As you begin filming with partners of all genders, how important are chemistry, trust, and negotiation?

CrushDaddy: Chemistry is everything. Someone can be a perfect ten, but if there's no chemistry, I won't feel anything sexually.

FD: How do you approach consent and communication when preparing for kink-heavy scenes?

CrushDaddy: The same way with everyone. I like to have a real conversation about what everyone's comfortable with. I start slow and let my partner guide me on how far I can push things.

FD: What do you hope audiences take away from your kink performances?

CrushDaddy: I hope they see multiple sides of me. I can be a gentle giant or a very dominant top. I can be soft and loving, or overpowering—it all depends on the dynamic.

FD: Looking ahead, do you see kink as a long-term evolution of your brand or a bold experiment?

CrushDaddy: I think kink is something I'll always want to keep exploring. I don't see 2026 as my last year doing it at all.

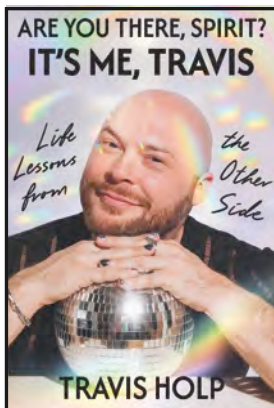
For more on Crush Daddy Visit KinkMen.com



GRAB A BOOK

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

"Are You There Spirit? It's Me, Travis: Life Lessons from the Other Side" by Travis Holp
c.2025, Spiegel and Grau
\$28.00 240 pages



Your dad sent you a penny the other day, minted in his birth year.

They say pennies from heaven are a sign of some sort, and that makes sense: you've been thinking about him a lot lately. Some might scoff, but the idea that a lost loved one is trying to tell you he's okay is comforting. So read the new book "Are You There, Spirit? It's Me, Travis" by Travis Holp, and keep your eyes open.

Ever since he was a young boy growing up just outside Dayton, Ohio, Travis Holp wanted to be a writer. He also wanted to say that he was gay but his conservative parents believed his gayness was some sort of phase. That, and bullying made him hide who he was.

He also had to hide his nascent ability to communicate with people who had died, through an entity he calls "Spirit." Eventually, though it left him with psychological scars and a drinking problem he's since overcome, Holp was finally able to talk about his gayness and reveal his otherworldly ability.

Getting some people to believe that he speaks to the dead is still a tall order but whatever, Holp indicates. Spirit helps naysayers, as well as Holp himself.

Spirit, he says, isn't a person or an essence; Spirit is love. Spirit is a conduit of healing and energy, speaking through Holp in symbolic messages, feelings, and through synchronistic events. For example, Holp says coincidences are not coincidental; they're ways for loved ones to convey messages of healing and energy.

To tap into your own healing Spirit, Holp says to trust yourself when you think you've received a healing

message. Ignore your ego, but listen to your inner voice. Remember that Spirit won't work on any fixed timeline, and its only purpose is to exist.

And keep in mind that "anything is possible because you are an unlimited being."

You're going to want very much to like "Are You There, Spirit? It's Me, Travis." The cover photo of author Travis Holp will make you smile. Alas, what you'll find in here is hard to read, not due to content but for lack of focus.

What's inside this book is scattered and quite repetitious. Love, energy, healing, faith, and fear are words that are used often – so often, in fact, that many pages feel like they've been recycled, or like you've entered a time warp that moves you backward, page-wise. Yes, there are uplifting accounts of readings that Holp has done with clients here, and they're exciting but there are too few of them. When you find them, you'll love them. They may make you cry. They're exactly what you need, if you grieve. Just not enough.

This isn't a terrible book, but its audience might be narrow. It absolutely needs more stories, less sentiment; more tales, less transcendence and if that's your aim, go elsewhere. But if your soul cries for comfort after loss, "Are You There, Spirit? It's Me, Travis" might still make cents.

Books for Mental Health by various authors c.2025, various publishers
\$29.99 - \$34.95 various page counts



For months, your brain has been full.

Full of holidaying and end-of-year-ing and remembering all the things that needed done by the new month. Full of gifts and celebrations and news and weather. Now, maybe it's time to see what else goes on inside your cranium with these great new books about mental health...

If you struggle to know what's truth these days and what's not, then **"The Gaslit Brain: Protect Your Brain from the Lies of Bullying, Gaslighting, and Institutional Complicity"** by Jennifer

Fraser, PhD (Prometheus Books, \$34.95) might be the book you need.

Using stories to show, not tell, Fraser helps readers put themselves in situations, so they can learn how to identify a gaslighter. She then looks at the personality traits of someone who gaslights before teaching readers how to deal with the person who tries to lie to you. This is an especially helpful book for anyone who relies on the truth, and accepts nothing less.

Worldwide strife is on everyone's mind these days, and **"Warhead: How the Brain Shapes War and War Shapes the Brain"** by Nicolas Wright (St. Martin's Press, \$30.00) is a science-based book that will help you understand long-term ramifications of conflict. It takes you from wars and warriors throughout history, to modern warfare and why it might seem like the world is constantly at battle.

This not just a book for warriors on the field, though. Wright says that we are wired to do battle – whether its overseas, in your neighborhood, or sitting at your workstation. You'll be fascinated by this book.

So how do you know what you know? Is it because someone else knows it? Do they know that you know? Ach, so confusing, so relax your mind a little and read **"When Everyone Knows That Everyone Knows... Common Knowledge and the Mysteries of Money, Power, and Everyday Life"** by Steven Pinker (Scribner, \$30.00), and it'll all make sense.

In this book, you'll see how "common knowledge" is uncommonly necessary for human society, and how we naturally slip right into using it – until we don't, and then all kinds of bad things can happen. This is a book that may boggle your mind sometimes, but it'll also open your eyes to how our society works.

If this all enough to keep you awake at night, well, then you need **"Nightmare Obscura: A Dream Engineer's Guide Through the Sleeping Mind"** by Michelle Carr (Henry Holt & Company, \$29.99).

Your alarm goes off, you're wide awake, but what do you remember about your dreams? Carr says that you can learn to "harness" the dreams you have for better mental health, including problem-solving, and you can learn to avoid those bad, troubling dreams that ruin your rest – and the rest of your day.

Not enough reading for your mental health? Then ask a librarian or bookseller for more, and they'll usher you to a section filled with self-help. Grab these four great books and others, then open your mind with good information, and fill it up.

A close-up photograph of a man's waist and hips. He is wearing a white thong with a pattern of pink lip prints. A tattoo is visible on his right arm. The background is blurred.

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GRAB HOLLY

In the Court of the Unicorn Queen

By Holly Maholm

If you were to launch a drone from the sidewalk in front of Donut Time (something I have seen done), and if you were to pilot that drone due west for about six miles (which is, granted, beyond the limit of any drone I could afford), you would arrive at a green and (formally) protected State Forest, the primary feature of which is a large "hill" (not much more than a glorified "promontory" and altogether lacking any aspiration to be designated a "mountain"). The name of that hill (known to all residents of our little village) is "Mt. Whiskey." So named due to the multiple illegal whiskey stills located there during Prohibition. Now that I have told you about Mt. Whiskey, I must introduce you to yet another species of animal that is present in numbers in our locality, a species that is much relied upon by Our Majesty Queen Penelope, Queen of the Unicorns, and Chief Justice of the Court of All Animals (when that court is called into session). And that species, known for its loyalty – and utility – to Our Queen, is the Species Fox. And that talent of foxes which is of unique value to Our Queen is their ability to communicate with animal species of every size and description.

You see, though Penelope can converse freely with members of the local wolf pack, as well as deer, coyote, groundhogs, skunk, rabbits, raccoons and opossums, it is nevertheless an unavoidable fact that Our Majesty is wholly prevented from communicating with any species smaller than those listed (including field mice, rats, turtles, snakes and birds), because – though they can make noises appropriate to their species – they cannot form words. Accordingly, the Species Fox will usually act as "interpreter" for Our Queen when she wishes to converse with any of those creatures. I received instructions that Queen Penelope desired my presence out in the apple orchard behind the barn at the Horse Rescue, where I hastened to present myself. Arriving there, I was rendered speechless by what I saw! My Queen was visible lounging languidly in the long grass, her Chief Defender, Victor, sitting close by her side. But what shocked me was this: Arrayed in ranks in a semi-circle in front of her were no fewer than two dozen foxes! It was such a novel sight that at first all I could make out was an undulating carpet of vivid red, sprinkled here and there with pairs of eyes (alert and quizzical), all looking up attentively at the Unicorn Queen.

But even more unexpected was what I saw in the branches of the trees surrounding us on all sides. Perched with self-evident dignity and unspoken menace were dozens and dozens of predatory birds! One tree featured two dozen Red-Tailed Hawks; another hosted a similar number of Goshawks; there was one tree given over to Barn Owls, Screech Owls and Great Horned Owls; and one tree bent its limbs under the weight of a dozen Bald Eagles! Finally, I noticed one tree that appeared to have been draped in black, as if in mourning, but then I saw that the branches hosted several dozen crows and ravens, uncharacteristically silent on this solemn occasion. You will thus appreciate: this session of the Court of the Unicorn Queen was



under the closest possible scrutiny. The Queen nodded in the direction of one of the foxes, who stepped forward and began to speak. "May it please Your Majesty. I and my brothers and sisters have come to petition you on behalf of all those avian species you see gathered around. They are suffering greatly, and many of their number have been killed in a most cruel and unjustified manner. "Here is the cause: A year ago, humans visited that prominent hill which is located due west from here, where they used powerful machines to cut down all the trees to their roots. Then, they dug out and burned off all the remaining vegetation, so that the soil was exposed to the sun. "Next, they brought in many more machines and erected three tall metallic towers, each one having a deep foundation made of steel bars and stone. And at the top of each tower are three enormous knife blades mounted equidistant around the center, so that as the wind blows, those blades spin faster and faster, slicing the air violently and indiscriminately, thereby killing or maiming any bird that may unknowingly fly within their reach." The fox bowed his head and concluded, "Trusting always in the wisdom and compassion of you, Queen of the Unicorns and Beloved of All Animals, those of your subjects who are possessed of the power of flight now place their fate in your care." I remained there for some time, silently observing as the Queen considered what solution she might offer.

(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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Photos By
Anthony Meade



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The annual GRABBYS Award Show highlighting top talent and performances in the gay erotic film industry will take place in Chicago on Saturday, May 23rd.

Celebrating its 27th anniversary, the GRABBYS are excited to announce cohosts ChiChi LaRue and returning again this year the incredible Morgan McMichaels from "RuPaul's Drag Race." A new category is also being presented this year: Best Content Creator.

At www.GrabbyAwards.com, nominations will launch on January 15th and run through February 15th. Voting for the award nominees will be open March 5th, and run through April 2nd.

Tickets will be available for purchase online at www.GrabbyAwards.com or by calling 773-707-2660 beginning April 15th.

This years host hotel will be The



Wade located at 644 N. Lakeshore Drive with rates starting at \$169+ Tax. www.AwardsShowHotel.com

The show will once again be held at the Metro Theater, 3730 N. Clark Street. Doors open at 6 p.m. with The Red Carpet beginning at that time with the show starting promptly at 7 p.m. There will be a cash bar prior to and during the show.

Numerous parties and events surround the GRABBYS and will be announced this spring.

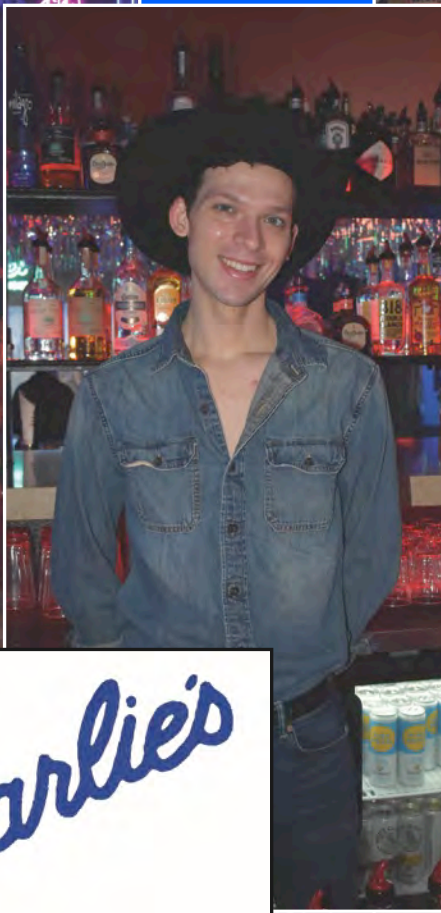
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Charlie's

Photos By Anthony Meade





THE TREVOR PROJECT

THE TREVOR PROJECT RECEIVES HISTORIC \$45 MILLION GIFT FROM MACKENZIE SCOT

San Francisco, CA—The Trevor Project has announced that philanthropist **MacKenzie Scott** has made a transformational \$45 million gift, an investment to support the organization's long-term sustainability and impact for LGBTQ+ young people. This extraordinary contribution — the single largest one-time donation in our 27-year history — comes at a pivotal moment for our organization and the LGBTQ+ young people we serve.

Major gifts of this magnitude are backed by rigorous vetting and thoughtful approaches to philanthropy. A \$45 million investment in The Trevor Project reflects deep confidence in our mission, impact, operations, and long-term vision. We were also fortunate to receive a \$6 million gift from MacKenzie Scott in 2020, and remain grateful for the continued trust this new donation represents.

While this historic contribution strengthens our ability to plan for long-term sustainability, it does not change the reality that our work is far from finished.

The Trevor Project operates in the U.S. and Mexico, and LGBTQ+ youth across the globe use our safe space social networking site, TrevorSpace. Every year, an estimated 1.8 million LGBTQ+ young people in the United States seriously consider suicide. In Mexico, more than half of LGBTQ+ young people reported considering suicide in the past year. Globally, we estimate 40 million LGBTQ+ youth seriously consider suicide each year. Even at our highest reach, The Trevor Project has only been able to serve a fraction of those youth. That means that hundreds of thousands of young people each year still go without the life-saving support they deserve.

This gift is a powerful step toward building on our sustainable

capacity — but our organization will continue to face one of the largest public health crises of our time: LGBTQ+ youth suicide. Research shows that LGBTQ+ young people are more than four times as likely to attempt suicide than their peers. The Trevor Project's latest study found that, sadly, the mental health crisis among LGBTQ+ youth in the U.S. is getting worse, showing increasing rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidality for these young people over time. Our organization must continue to innovate and connect with more LGBTQ+ young people in crisis. And that requires ongoing support from those who believe in our mission.

Investing This Gift Responsibly

We are committed to investing this funding with great care. Over the coming months, we will roadmap a strategic and thoughtful investment plan focused on strengthening our core crisis services, improving long-term sustainability, and accelerating our progress toward a world where every LGBTQ+ young person knows they are loved and supported.

We will continue to rely on the generosity of supporters to expand our 24/7 crisis services, build new technology solutions, advance crucial research, and advocate for safer communities. Every donation — regardless of size — directly helps us reach the next young person who needs us.

Moving Forward with Hope

At a time when many LGBTQ+ young people are facing heightened stigma, political hostility, and mental health challenges, MacKenzie Scott's support sends a powerful message: LGBTQ+ young people matter, and the world is full of people fighting for their safety and well-being.

To everyone who makes this work possible — our staff, volunteers, donors, partners, and community supporters — thank you. This gift strengthens our foundation,

but you help build the future.

Together, we will continue working toward a world where every LGBTQ+ young person knows they are never alone.

Statement from Jaymes Black, CEO of The Trevor Project

"This historic donation from MacKenzie Scott comes at a time when The Trevor Project has never needed it more. LGBTQ+ youth in the U.S. are facing a growing mental health crisis, and the resources they have for support continue to be politicized and jeopardized. This gift provides a safety net for our life-saving suicide prevention and crisis intervention work, offering stability during a period of immense economic and political uncertainty. Our team is thrilled by the opportunity to strategically invest this donation, not only to meet the current moment for our organization and the LGBTQ+ youth we serve, but also to strengthen and sustain The Trevor Project for years to come. Thanks to MacKenzie Scott's extraordinary generosity, we are well-positioned to continue working toward a world where every LGBTQ+ young person feels safe, seen, and supported exactly as they are."

For more information on The Trevor Project **visit <http://www.TheTrevorProject.org>**

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A person wearing a bright red jacket is seen from behind, sitting on a large, snow-dusted log. They are looking towards a large waterfall that is partially frozen, with thick ice formations on the sides. The scene is set in a winter landscape with a blue sky and snow-covered ground. The entire image is framed within a circular shape on a blue background.

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