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GRAB

MAGAZINE

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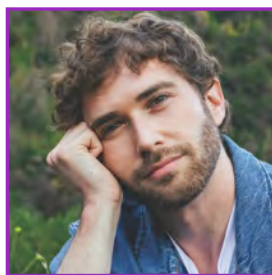
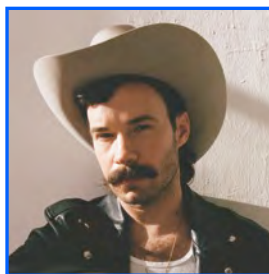
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GRAB ANDREW



Photo By by Alexa Viscus

Andrew Sa's "American Rough" is a gorgeous thing

By Gregg Shapiro

Released during Pride Month 2026, "American Rough" (Bloodshot) by queer singer/songwriter Andrew Sa isn't just one of the best LGBTQ albums released this year; it's also one of the best country albums. Possessing one of the most distinctive voices you're likely to hear, Sa sings as if he were born to be crooning country tunes. Sa, who wrote or co-wrote nine of his debut album's 10 tracks, infuses his performance with a nostalgic quality while unequivocally addressing contemporary romantic queer themes. It's an unforgettable combination and one that should appeal to a broad range of listeners. Andrew generously made time for an interview shortly after the release of "American Rough."

Gregg Shapiro: How long have you been living in Chicago?

Andrew Sa: Since September of '09.

GS: What brought you to Chicago?

AS: At that time, I was living in Portland, Oregon, and I was in love. He and I both had friends in

Chicago, and we both wanted something a little more exciting than the very romantic, calm life that Portland was offering us.

GS: When you got to Chicago, did you immediately connect with the music scene?

SA: When I first moved here. I was toying with the idea of jumping into a sing/songwriter sort of career. But I was still very much interested in doing theater. I did a theater show at that time with a theater company that's now defunct called Sideshow Theater Company. I did a modern retelling of "Medea." I didn't hook up with the music community until I started taking songwriting classes at the Old Town School of Folk Music.

GS: Such a great place!

SA: Yeah, I love it there.

GS: Your new album, "American Rough," was released at the end of Pride Month on Bloodshot Records, a label that was founded in Chicago and was at the forefront of the alternative country

scene in the 1990s. Bloodshot's roster included notable LGBTQ artists such as Neko Case, J.B. Brooks, and Laura Jane Grace. Did that play a part in your signing to Bloodshot?

SA: That's a good question. I had loved so many of the records that had come out on Bloodshot before I even knew of the label. This was probably before I was paying attention to what label people were on. Then, of course, there's Lydia Loveless, who's on the label as well as being a lovely singer/songwriter. I would say no; Bloodshot was something my friend Kelly Hogan recommended.

GS: Oh, I love Hogan!

AS: Don't we all! That voice! She and I became fast friends after we met at a music festival in Wisconsin. She had been telling me about Bloodshot. I'm really happy that I found Bloodshot and that they have embraced and championed this record to the extent that they have.

GS: "American Rough" was co-

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produced by queer singer/songwriter H.C. McEntire, who also co-wrote a few of the songs on the album with you, and can be heard playing on it. How did your creative relationship come about?

AS: Before we knew each other, we were interviewed separately for the same article in *No Depression Magazine*. It was about the intersection of queerness, cosmic country music, and astrology [laughs]. I saw her name, and I thought "McEntire. I wonder if she's related to Reba." Turns out she's not. I dove into her catalog of music and fell in love with her songwriting, her poetic lyrics, and her stunningly beautiful, authentic country voice. The rest is history. My manager and I reached out to her to see if she'd be interested in producing my record. She had never produced another person's music. She jumped in head-first. I feel like a better writer having had that experience with her.

GS: In addition to McEntire, drummer Spencer Tweedy, son of Wilco's Jeff Tweedy and the lovely Sue Miller of the legendary Chicago music venue Lounge Ax, is a member of the band. What can you tell the readers about working with Spencer?

AS: Oh, my goodness, what a consummate professional. When he was tracking for my record, he flew with me to North Carolina, where H.C. had already tapped a bass player and her amazing guitar player Luke Norton. Spencer rounded out the mix as the drummer. I remember talking to him on the flight down there. He hadn't even turned 30 yet, and he said he'd already played on over 30 albums. That should give you an indication that the guy knows what he's doing. He had played with me for some years at that point with the cosmic country showcase, so he was well-aware of my style of singing and how to best support that. Working with Spencer is a dream. For someone who comes from indie rock royalty, he's probably the sweetest, most humble person I've ever met.

GS: That's great to hear. I love the way Chicago is a presence on "American Rough." You sing about "Sweeping Halsted like a broom" in "You Turned Me On," and in "Fightin' to be Fightin'," the CTA's

Red Line gets a mention. What role does place play in your music?

AS: A lot of "American Rough" is about my sexual awakening, especially on a song like "You Turned Me On." I do attribute that awakening to my experiences to being in the gay communities here in Chicago. This album is my experiences in Chicago to the nth degree.

GS: Queerness permeates the album from start to finish, from the mention of "the luckiest queen" in the title track and hollering like a queen in "Lavender Cowboy" to same gender steam rising from erotic songs such as "Follow," "Your Whisper," and "Where It Lands." Are these songs directed to someone special in your life or someone you'd like to have in your life?

AS: Every song that you just mentioned in that string of songs is quite specifically about my fiancée, Jacob Strayer. We've been together for 12 years, and just recently engaged...

GS: Congratulations!

AS: Thank you so much. He is the love of my life. There are so many of our personal experiences woven through all those songs you mentioned.

GS: In April of this year, the New York Times published a piece about "The 30 Greatest Living American Songwriters," and included a trio of country songwriters, two of whom – Brandy Clark and Shane McAnally – are openly queer. At this time when our community is under constant threat, do you think the presence of LGBTQ musicians in the country genre has the power to change hearts and minds?

AS: Oh, yeah. Absolutely. I think that it's very possible. Everyone approaches it differently, and my approach is through tenderness. I hope to build a bridge, if I can, for people who don't understand the



Photo By by Alexa Viscus

queer lifestyle or my particular queer lifestyle through the music. I really hope I can offer them an in to see themselves within it and maybe recognize that we're not so different.

GS: In October, you will be among the performers taking part in the tribute concert *Souvenirs: 80 Years of John Prine*. What does it mean to you to be involved in that event?

AS: Oh man, I was floored when they asked me to do that. I love John's music, especially his lyrics. He learned how to play guitar at The Old Town School of Folk Music, so he certainly has a legacy there. I've worked at the front desk there for 13 years. At the beginning of my musical career here in Chicago, my good friend Dylan Matraccia, who was a collaborator for a long time, we forged our way together by starting an acoustic, queer, songwriters night at Wang's bar on Broadway. We had that show there for maybe two and a half years. Dylan's parents asked us if we wanted to go down to Nashville to see John Prine play at The Ryman Auditorium. This might have been 2011. That experience...I was a fan ever since. He just seemed without ego, like a true troubadour. I am honored to be a part of that show, and I hope to do him proud.



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GRAB SAMMY



Interview with Sammy Founder Clark Samuel

By Anthony Valenti

Clark Samuel didn't set out to fill a gap in fashion. He set out to find a pair of jeans that fit — and when he couldn't, he bought women's denim, cut it himself, and hemmed it at home. That instinct, dressing for the body you have rather than the body the industry designed for, became the foundation of SAMMY.

The Miami-based menswear brand has built a devoted international following around what Samuel calls "sensual minimalism" — a middle path between the blandly utilitarian and the aggressively loud. Under his mantra, "Men's essentials, without limits," every piece is engineered to let the body do the talking.

Now, with its Summer 2026 swim collection, SAMMY is pushing further than ever. New cuts including adjustable G-Strings and sheer Brazilians arrive alongside a three-world color story spanning quiet luxury earth tones, Miami brights, and the season's boldest statement: Red Hot.

We spoke with Clark from his home in sunny Miami.

Anthony Valenti: Most brands are either "very basic" or "very loud". SAMMY somehow lives in the

middle.

Clark Samuel: We give you the full range, from classic to revealing, but even the sexiest pieces feel understated and chic. The structure of the garment is the statement. Unique colors, premium fabric, perfect proportions. The fit lets the body do the talking. The SAMMY guy does stand out. He just doesn't look like he's trying.

AV: The G-String and low-rise Brazilian are daring cuts. Where's the line between restrained and provocative?

CS: The line lies in the details. Cut, fabric, color, and print. Tiny things make the difference. The width of a strap. The weight of a fabric. The angle of a leg opening. That's what separates sensual from just bare. Daring is easy. Daring that still looks expensive is the hard part.

AV: How many iterations does a single silhouette go through before it earns the SAMMY label?

CS: On average, eight to twelve rounds of sampling. One round might shift the rise by two millimeters. The next might adjust a seam for glute enhancement, or the tension on a waistband so it sits smooth without digging in. We'll kill

a prototype entirely if it looks great but feels restrictive, or if the fabric doesn't hold its four-way stretch after stress tests.

AV: Color in the new collection is organized into three distinct "worlds": quiet luxury, Miami brights, and Red Hot. How did those emerge?

CS: The quieter shades came from places I'm always drawn to — a mahogany chair in a hotel lobby, sage oil at a spa, an onyx bar top at golden hour. Warm, grounded, expensive-feeling. The brights are the other side of the city: Mango, Caribbean, Baby Blue. Sunny, playful, vacation-minded. And Red Hot is its own thing. Less poolside, more private. Miami has all three worlds living side by side, and the palette just reflects that.

AV: How do you translate Miami's very specific local energy into pieces that will resonate with guys in, say, Chicago?

CS: The confidence that comes with dressing for your body is universal. A guy in Chicago wants the same things Miami guys want: a tee that makes his chest look good, underwear that fits right and does

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something for him, swimwear he can wear to the pool, to Pride, to a party, and keep on long after he leaves the water.

AV: You chose Italian performance fabrics for the swim line.

CS: Our main fabric is a recycled Italian nylon with a semi-gloss finish and high shape retention. It holds up against chlorine, oils, and sun while still feeling soft and looking expensive.

AV: How closely do you listen to customers?

CS: Very closely. Almost the entire new collection came from DMs, emails, and repeat requests. The expanded Brazilians, the G-Strings, the sheer versions — those exist because our guys asked.

AV: Have you ever pushed back on requests?

CS: I push back on requests that pull the brand too far from itself. Busy all-over graphics, neon clashing prints; we're firm on that. If the fit is doing its job, the body is the statement.

AV: The long-term vision is a "full wardrobe." What category are you most excited to crack?

CS: Denim. I aim to make the

perfect pair of SAMMY jeans that make the body look better without being too tight, too baggy, or over-designed. Denim is unforgiving, and I won't release the line until I find pieces that match our standards. When SAMMY does denim, it has to

actually be better than what's already out there.

Sammy's Summer 2026 Swim collection is available now at sammymenswear.com



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GRAB CLAYBOURN

If the stars were his: An interview with queer renaissance man Claybourne Elder

By Gregg Shapiro

Onstage, onscreen, on CD and vinyl, there doesn't seem to be anything that Claybourne Elder can't do. He's even a dad to a young son! Elder is also having a good 2026, beginning with the release of his debut album, "If The Stars Were Mine" (Center Stage) in April. Comprised of songs from Broadway, new and familiar, as well as some contemporary pop chestnuts, the album presents Elder's full range of interpretive talents. Additionally, since late May, he can also be seen as high-flying dentist Dr. Orin Scrivello in "Little Shop of Horrors" at New York's Westside Theatre. As busy as he is, Elder was kind enough to make time for a phone interview.

Gregg Shapiro: Clay, at what age did you discover that you had a gift for singing?

Claybourne Elder: That's a good question. I come from a family that's musical in a very recreational sense. Nobody was doing it as a job. But my mom played the piano and the guitar, and my dad played the guitar. I learned to play the violin when I was young. Then, when I was in the 4th grade, we were doing a school play and there was a big solo part that we all had to audition for. I remember thinking, "Oh, well, I'm not a good singer, so I'm not going to do that." Then I got it, I got the part. I specifically remember thinking, "Oh, my gosh, am I good at singing?" [laughs]. Then I started getting parts in the school plays, and I was like, "I think I might be good at this."

GS: Did you do theater in high school, as well?

CE: I worked at two different

community theaters during high school. It sounds hyperbolic to say that theater saved my life as a kid. I wasn't a troubled kid or anything, but I didn't have my thing. I wasn't great at school, and I wasn't great at math. But I loved theater, and I found these communities of people working at the community theaters where I lived through high school. I was at the theater every single night from my freshman year of high school on. Either working the concessions, in a show, or helping with the lights and sound.

GS: Do you also think it was a sort of coming out in a way? Because there are obviously a lot of queer people in theater. Do you think that was also a way to find community?

CE: 100%! There was a part of me that was maybe like, "That's where the weirdos are." Somewhere in high school I think I finally heard that trope of like "the musical theater gay." [Laughs] I was like, "Oh, my gosh. That's where I belong."

GS: Your debut album, "If the Stars Were Mine," was released in April. Why was now the time to make this record?

CE: I started touring this solo show

after I finished "Company" on Broadway. My son was getting older, and I didn't know if I wanted to be in a show every single night for a little while. I was looking for other things to do, and everyone said, "Put together a solo show." I sort of expected to do it for just a few months and tour it to some places. I had done cabaret-style shows before, but I decided that I wanted to really write something, about something I wanted to say. It's sort of like a stand-up comedy show combined with my TED Talk, and then I sing. Because it was somewhere between a piece of theater and a cabaret show, theater spaces were booking me, but then also cabaret venues were booking me, and then music halls were booking me. I ended up doing it a lot. It got passed around between the artistic directors of those different things. I ended up doing it for 2½ years. People kept asking me where they could hear the arrangements of the songs that I did, because I also tried to reimagine the



Photo By M Cooper

songs I was singing so that if I was going to sing them, I was going to say something about them rather than just, "And here's a song from 'Les Miz.'" When people asked if they could hear it anywhere, I said, "No, not really." People said if it was an album, they would buy it. I was thinking about it, and then, also, since becoming a dad, I feel like I think a lot more about what we leave behind. I thought about my son having this for his whole life and maybe playing it for his kids. I was also like, "But it's a weird, little, musical theater nerd album. Who's going to listen to it?" Then, talking to some friends and colleagues, somebody said, "Yeah, but I bet Clay Elder at 20 years old would have loved this album." You know what? I would have.

GS: Because it was a show, was there a conscious decision to go into the studio to record versus recording one of your live sets?

CE: That's a great question. Because I did think about that. In the end, what I decided was that if I was going to make an album, I wanted it to be a real album of music. Not that those (live) albums are not real. I do my show with (just) a piano and if I'm going to record it, I want to do it with a band. I want to capture it in that sort of way. There is talk about doing a deluxe version that is the studio recorded songs, and then you get the tracks of me speaking the show in front of people in between. The liner notes of the album are important because it really gives the context around why I chose each song.

GS: I want to thank you for covering underrated – I think she's underrated – singer/songwriter Melody Gardot's song "If The Stars Were Mine," which is the

album's title track. Why did you choose this song?

CE: I sang that song before my son was born. Moises Kaufman, who's a playwright and a friend of mine, asked me to do all the music for his wedding. He asked me to sing them down the aisle. I found that song, and it was perfect. It's upbeat, it's about love, and it's such a beautiful song. When my son was born, I found myself singing lullabies to him. I was trying to think of a lullaby that I

haven't continued to converse because I am too shy [laughs], but I do know that she had a baby recently. I love that she had a child, and I'm singing her song as a lullaby, and I recorded it.

GS: You perform a ballad version of Whitney Houston's dance classic "I Wanna Dance With Somebody." Gay singer Calum Scott also performs a ballad version of the song on his new

album. What do you think it is about the song that not only makes it worthy of this kind of reinterpretation but also attractive to gay male singers?

CE: I don't know how old he is [laughs], but for me, when I was a kid, and I heard that song, there was, like many love songs, a sort of innate sadness about it. I remember thinking, "I don't know that that will ever happen to me." I think that the lyrics of the song have so much longing in them that it's easy to reinterpret in that way because there's a sense of melancholy about it, if you read the words. It's "I wanna dance with somebody," it's not "I'm gonna." I hope one day I'll get to... I think that rings true for a lot of queer people.



Photo By M Cooper

know. I started singing that song to him. It's been a lullaby that I sang to him his whole life. Also, I'm a huge fan of Melody Gardot's. I think she's a genius. Randomly, after theater started coming back after the pandemic, I started this nonprofit, and out of nowhere, Melody reached out to me on Instagram, just to say, "Hey, this is such a cool thing that you're doing, and I support you." I wrote her back and said, "You have no idea what an enormous fan of you I am. A huge fan of yours, and that you wrote me that is really amazing." She was so sweet. We

GS: You mentioned the liner notes, and I got a lot out of reading them. You wrote about fatherhood and your son, subjects that appear to have played a role in the album's selection of material, including the songs "Hey, Kid," "How Glory Goes," and "Paving The Runway." Do you think your son appreciates having a talented father singing to him?

CE: [Laughs] Because if it were my father, may he rest in peace, he couldn't carry a tune in a bag. It's such a funny thing. No, he does not. I sort of love that he doesn't. I don't want him growing up thinking, "Oh,

this incredibly special thing!" At our house, it's our family job. There's part of me that loves that he doesn't get how special it is that he used to go hang out in Patti Lupone's dressing room during "Company," and things like that. He's just like, this is just what I do. Like any kid whose dad works or who thinks, "I wish you didn't have to work because I wish you were hanging out with me." I think to him it's my job. That said, I do try to impress on him how lucky it is to get to do this. He knows it's something I love to do. That I've chosen to be a creative, and that was a big and important decision for me. When I'd just finished the final tracks of the album, I was listening to it a lot in the car to take notes on it and things as we were working on it. One day, we got in the car, and I said, "I'm gonna turn on some music. What do you want to listen to?" And he asked, "Can we listen to your album?" I was like, "Oh, my gosh!" It was amazing to me. He actually likes to listen to it, which is really fun.

GS: Are there music artists that you listen to for your own enjoyment that you think might surprise your followers?

CE: There are so many that would not surprise them, like Jamie Cullum and Melody Gardot, obviously. Do you know what my Spotify is full of? I listen to a lot of comedy shows. I listen to a lot of stand-up comedy albums. I love listening to the science of the comedy that people do in those sorts of environments. How they craft things. Maria Bamford is my very favorite. I have every Maria Bamford special. I've listened to all of them many times. I just think she is so funny, interesting, and vulnerable. I think it's fascinating.

GS: You played the character of John Adams in twelve episodes of the HBO period series "The Gilded Age." My husband still mourns your character's death. What was that experience like for you?

CE: It was so thrilling to be part of, not just because I was such a big fan of "Downton Abbey." First of all, getting to work on a Julian Fellowes

episodes of things and working on films occasionally, it can be a very bro-ey environment. This was just lovely. Showing up to set, you know the work that people are doing. You can trust each other in a different way because you all have a similar background and care about similar things. That's what was most special about it to me: to be with a group of people making something in a different medium that we all cared about.

GS: You can currently be seen in the role of Dr. Orin Scrivello D.D.S. in "Little Shop of Horrors" at the Westside Theatre in New York. I know it's only been a couple of days, but how is it going so far?

CE: I'm having the best time! I have played different roles in my life, but I think that doing comedy is my favorite. This is a broad role. Replacing somebody in a show, especially in a comedic track like this, you hope that they're like, "Yeah, do whatever you want to do," within bounds, make it your own with your own funny things. They have been totally open to me getting to play and do my own thing. Also, playing a person who is on edge and a little bit crazy is just fun because it allows you this freedom to be spontaneous in a really fun way. I'm having a blast. I'm only three performances in, and

I'm still learning a lot, but having such a great time.

GS: Are there any other TV, movie, or stage projects in the works that you'd like to mention?

CE: I'm actually shooting a film next month. I'm taking off some performances of "Little Shop," so if people are coming, look on the website because the website will tell you what show I'm in. For about five weeks, I'm taking off random shows here and there, and then I have one week when I'm completely out. I'm shooting this movie that Douglas Carter Beane wrote. It's a really beautiful little film about a down-on-its-luck town in Pennsylvania and a group of community theater actors who live there. Santino Fontana's in it, and a lot of theater people.



Photo By M Cooper

show was like, "I can't believe I'm working on a Julian Fellowes show! This is incredible." Also, very purposefully, the original show runner sought out theater actors to do the roles. People say it was because of the pandemic, and they were just trying to give theater actors jobs. We were cast in 2019, and it was very purposeful to cast theater people because he felt like theater people could handle the language and style of the time period better than a lot of contemporary actors. Everyone in the theater who went to theater school has some sort of training in period speech, but manners and mannerisms and things. I think it was a smart decision to do that. Also, it made for such a lovely cast environment. I only had one other stint on a TV show, and then doing



MARKET DAYS WEEKEND
AUGUST 8, 9, 2026. CHICAGO

Magic Queendom

Dani Toro G S P Ana Paula

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Saturday



Sunday



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GRAB A PLANE



Your Affordable Palm Springs Getaway

By Bill Malcolm

There is always something new to explore in Palm Springs and the Coachella Valley. With a stunning view of snow-capped peaks from the desert floor, there is nowhere else quite as stunning. It also has a fun bar scene, lots of outdoor activities, a great art museum, swimming at the Swim Center, and more. It has also gotten expensive, especially during festivals and on the weekend. But there are ways to enjoy this desert oasis without breaking the bank. Like Wilton Manors, Florida, it is a magnet for gay seniors who have retired here.

GETTING THERE

I took United Airlines, my new favorite airline after Southwest reversed course and stabbed loyal "transparency" passengers in the back. I flew via SFO, a great airport in a great city, notwithstanding its "employee benefit fee" 5 percent sales tax adder. Once in Palm Springs, I took the #2 bus to the motel. The stop is across the street from the airport and is just a \$1. You can also take it to the Swim Center and Frontrunners meeting location.

Rental cars are extremely expensive here (third highest in the country) and not needed. Bike, UBER, walk, and Sunline Transit better.

WHERE TO STAY

I always stay at the Motel 6 Downtown. Rates are cheap – especially during the week (Sunday-Thursday). It has a great pool and has steps to great bars (including the Toolshed and the bars on Arenas) as well as downtown. There is a great French bakery (the Peninsula Bakery) across the street in a cute strip mall which also features an excellent restaurant (The Palms). You will pay more for resort fees and other junk charges at some hotels than the weekday rate at the Motel 6 Downtown.

Other options include Twin Palms www.twinpalmsresort.com Descanso www.descansoresort.com and **Santiago Resort** www.santiagoresort.com (men's resorts). And be sure and avoid hotels with resort charges (which many have).

WHAT TO DO

Walk with the Frontrunners every

day at 8 a.m. in the Mizzel Center Parking Lot.

Rent a bike (or just walk) and head out to the new CV Link Trail which runs throughout the Valley.

Enjoy Village Fest Thursday evenings downtown where the Art Museum (psmuseum.org) is also free. Details at villagefest.org. Pick up some dates or other fresh fruits and veggies as well as enjoy live music and more.

Swim at the Swim Center, a great outdoor city pool with mountain views. They are located at 401 S. Pavillion Way. Just \$10 for non-residents.

Hike on the Prescott Reserve, Palm Springs Central Park which was formerly a golf course.

The Agua Caliente Cultural Center downtown has a great museum (140 N. Indian Canyon Drive and acmuseum.org). Learn about the history of the area from the perspective of the First Nations.

The Plaza Theatre downtown has re-opened and features shows almost nightly.

KARAOKE

WEDNESDAYS 10PM-1AM

THURSDAYS 10PM-1AM

FRIDAYS 9:30PM-1:30AM

SATURDAYS 10:30PM-2:30AM

SUNDAYS 8PM-MIDNIGHT

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Palm Springs City Pool

WHERE TO EAT

Natures Health Food and Café at 555 S. Sunrise has fresh juices and vegetarian fare.

Fresh Juice Bar (at 425 Palm Springs) has great juices. I liked the carrot juice.

Peninsula Pastries has great French pastries, cakes, and bread. They can be found at 611 S. Palm Canyon Drive. The shop owner bakes her goods and is from Paris.

Townie Bagel is great for breakfast and has a cult like following. You will find them at 650 E. Sunny Dunes.

The Agua Caliente Cultural Center downtown has a great museum (140 N. Indian Canyon Drive and acmuseum.org). Learn about the history of the area from the perspective of the First Nations.

Bongo Johnny's, north of

downtown, has an amazing patio and great burgers.

NIGHTLIFE

The Toolshed is around the corner from the Motel 6 on Sunny Dunes. They have events every night, including a Sunday beer bust.

Dick's has great happy hour prices. It is one of the many bars on Arenas Road downtown. You will find it at 301 E Arenas. Hunters (yes, they have one in Wilton Manors, FL) is also fun. Happy hours run until 7 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION/ HELPFUL HINTS

GED Magazine has local events and stories. KGAY (kgaypalmsprings.com) and the *Gay Desert Guide* (gaydesertguide.lgbt) has a calendar, bar listing, and more.

(KGAY is a popular FM station.)

The Coachella Valley Independent is the weekly. Input has hiking ideas. (cvindependent.com).

Do not take a taxi at the airport. There is a new \$25 minimum charge. And the airport tacks on \$4 for taking an UBER. Walk across the street and catch the #2 Sunline bus or take an UBER from there.

I never tire of visiting Palm Springs. You cannot beat it for a winter getaway.

Bill Malcolm's syndicated travel column has appeared in LGBTQ+ publications and websites across North America. He focuses on value and does not receive freebies from travel providers, making his columns unbiased. He lives in Indianapolis and does this for a hobby. He does not stay in hotels with resort or other junk fees.



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GET AT TWISTED STREAMWORKS MARKET DAYS WEEKEND

THURS, AUG 6, 4PM-4AM **BOYZ NIGHT** MARKET DAYS EDITION
FEAT **DJ Randle*L** GUYS UNDER 25 GET IN FREE

FRI, AUG 7, 10PM-4AM **POPSICLE** PRESENTED BY SECOND RING PARTIES
WITH XXX HOSTS: **BOE JACK RYAN, NICK HALDEN & BRODY MEYER**
& FEAT **DJ CLUB CHOW**

SAT, AUG 8, 10PM-6AM **CARNAL SATURDAY** THE MARKET DAYS PLAY PARTY
WITH CARNAL MEDIA EXCLUSIVE XXX HOSTS:

GUY SPENCER, TONY GENIUS, & LANCE WOODS & FEAT **DJ J-DADDY**

SUN, AUG 9, 2PM-8PM **SUNDAY SERVICE** MARKET DAYS EDITION
FEAT **DJ HARRY CROSS**

SUN, AUG 9, 10PM-4AM **CARNAL SUNDAY** POST MARKET DAYS PLAY PARTY
WITH CARNAL MEDIA EXCLUSIVE XXX HOSTS: **ADAM SNOW & OLIVER LAMB**
& FEAT **DJ J-DADDY**

MON, AUG 10, 8PM-2AM **CUMUNION** MARKET DAYS EDITION

WITH OUR PARTNERS



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Twin Palms

A man with a beard and sunglasses, wearing blue swim trunks, is sitting on the edge of a swimming pool. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. A white cup is on the pool deck next to him. In the background, there are yellow lounge chairs, yellow umbrellas, and two tall palm trees under a clear blue sky. Other people are visible relaxing in the background.

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HOT SUMMER NIGHTS AT TOUCHE



FRI 7.31

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FOR TIMES WHEN YOU JUST HAVE TO TAKE MATTERS INTO
YOUR OWN HAND! / WHITE HANKIES & LUBE RAFFLES

SAT 8.1

CHICAGO'S BEAR NIGHT

BEARS, CUBS & FANS OF BOTH
MIDNIGHT PIZZA PANIC / DJ JESSE R



WELCOME MARKET DAYS WEEKEND

CHICAGO'S LEATHER BAR SINCE 1977

NO COVER / NO DRESS CODE



FRI 8.7

MAN'NIPPLE'ATE NIGHT

NIPPLE FETISH NIGHT

SAT 8.8

DUNGEON MASTER NIGHT

S&M DEMO AT MIDNIGHT



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AUG 7-9



KERI
HILSON



JORDY



DAYA



DAWN
RICHARD



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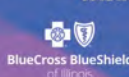


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GRAB



RYZE

FRIDAY

ADDISON STAGE

WITH DJ LAURA B

5:30 • MARKET DAYS DRAG SHOW
FEATURING AURA MAYARI
7:00 • FRANKIE GRANDE
7:45 • MARKET DAYS DRAG SHOW
9:00 • KERI HILSON

ROSCOE STAGE

HOSTED BY ROBYN BANKS FIERCE

5:00 • RYAN GOREY
6:30 • MARY K
8:00 • DOGGPOUND

VIIV DANCE STAGE

POWERED BY HYDRATE

5:00 • ED WOOD
7:30 • DEANNE

BELMONT STAGE

WITH DJ X-TASY

5:45 • S@NIC HEALINNG
7:30 • LITTLE MONSTERS:
A TRIBUTE TO LADY GAGA

SATURDAY

ADDISON STAGE

WITH DJ LAURA B

1:00 • WEEKEND RUN CLUB
2:30 • MYKI MEEKS
3:05 • CAMILA RAMÓN
3:30 • CHICAGO SPIRIT BRIGADE
4:00 • THE DIVAS
5:30 • SIZZY ROCKET
6:30 • CAIN CULTO
7:20 • SARAH POTENZA
8:00 • RIC WILSON
9:00 • DAWN RICHARD

ROSCOE STAGE

HOSTED BY ROBYN BANKS FIERCE

12:00 • BARRYCE FERSHER
2:00 • DADS OF LOVE DEREK
4:00 • RYAN WILLING
5:30 • DJ CASH ERA
7:00 • MARTIN
8:30 • DJ X-TASY

VIIV DANCE STAGE

POWERED BY HYDRATE

12:30 • DRAGLICIOUS
FEAT MIMI MARKS & DIDA RITZ
3:30 • CHRIS COX
5:30 • JEREMY DAVA
7:30 • OREL SABAG

BELMONT STAGE

WITH DJ X-TASY

1:00 • PLANET CLAIRE
2:15 • CHICAGO SPIRIT BRIGADE
2:45 • MELISSA & THE BLACKSTARS
4:15 • SECOND CITY OUTLAWS
4:45 • PINK SQUEEZE
6:15 • BEV RAGE & THE DRINKS
8:00 • TOO MUCH MOLLY BAND

SUNDAY

ADDISON STAGE

WITH DJ LAURA B

12:30 • BEYOND THE BLONDE
1:45 • CHICAGO SPIRIT BRIGADE
2:15 • DAYA
3:15 • GRANT KNOCHÉ
4:30 • DANCING QUEEN:
AN ABBA SALUTE
6:30 • JESSICA KIRSON
7:30 • CURE FOR PARANOIA
8:15 • KAMERON ROSS
9:00 • JORDY

ROSCOE STAGE

HOSTED BY ROBYN BANKS FIERCE

12:00 • MOBEETHICC
1:30 • GEO DIAMOND
3:00 • DJ ZEL
4:30 • JANKY B2B GLAMOUR CADAVER
6:30 • MISS TOTO
8:00 • VIRAGO B2B JENNY FOX

VIIV DANCE STAGE

POWERED BY HYDRATE

12:30 • DRAGLICIOUS:
FEAT KHLÖE PARK & VANDA LAROSE
3:30 • DAWNA MONTEL
5:30 • LIZA RODRIGUEZ
7:30 • DAN SLATER

BELMONT STAGE

WITH DJ X-TASY

1:00 • CHICAGO GAY MEN'S CHORUS
2:00 • FIREBRAND
2:30 • KAT & THE HURRICANES
3:30 • CHICAGO SPIRIT BRIGADE
4:00 • OLIVIA & THE LOVERS
5:30 • HELLO WEEKEND
8:00 • SIXTEEN CANDLES

GRAB YOUR FRIENDS

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.
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. Charlies: \$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: 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.
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. Charlies: \$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, 7/29 FULL MOON Jockstrap Party & Contest.
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. Charlies: 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: Open 8pm-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.

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. 7/31 STROKIN' a j/o Fetish Party sometimes you gotta take matters in yur own hands, 8/7 Man'Nipple'ate nipple fetish play night, 8/14 These Boots Are Made For Walkin' Boot Fetish Party.

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. **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. 8/1 Chicago's Bear Night Midnight Pizza Panic. 8/8 Dungeon Master Night S&M Demo @ Midnight CWB 5 pm. 8/15 GEAR Night with BLUF/ChicagoBarbers & Bootblack on duty dress code in Club Room, BNC 6pm.

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 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 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.

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GRAB A HIT

Top 30 Dance Chart For the First week of July 2026

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	Artist	Title
1	Disco Fries x Mintd & Kayrae	Elevate
2	Cahill x Kimberley Locke	Feel The Love
3	Milky	Just The Way You Are (David Guetta Remix)
4	Meduza & Rani	Silence
5	Harshil Kamdar	Do It All Again
6	GUDFELLA	Morning Coffee
7	HUGEL x Imael Angel x Ultra Nate	Movin' To The Sun
8	Dvbbs x Nelly Furtado	Torture Of The Heart
9	Alexandra Stan x FAULHABER	No Sleep
10	ManyFew	Your Love Is All I Need (VIP MIX)
11	DJ Pauly D	Lost Ft. Capri Everitt
12	i4u	Memories
13	Peking Duk	Thrills Ft. Rico Nasty
14	Madonna & Sabrina Carpenter	Bring Your Love
15	Honeyluv x Muni Long	Don't Stop
16	Tritonal x Harlee	Walk Away
17	Seven Lions & Brianna Grace	Free
18	Paul Rudd	Chasing Midnight
19	Lumine	Here For Us
20	DJ Pauly D	Feel It
21	The Second Voice	Let Me Be (Uptempo Mix)
22	Danny L Harle & Dua Lipa	Two Hearts
23	Kshmr x Jason Ross x Brianna Grace	Ultra Love
24	Bebe Rexha x David Guetta	Sad Girls
25	Dancingfaraz	It's A Vibe Ft. Viiq
26	Jonas Dufrasne	Holding On
27	Open Till L8	Hold Onto Me Ft. Jay Sean
28	Krewella	Without You
29	Ave	Meet Me In The Dark
30	Karrion x Kaden Meza x Disco Fries	Smooth

Lark



MARKETDAYS WEEKEND

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SATURDAY + SUNDAY 🍷 AUGUST 8 + 9

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GRAB HOLLY

Our Data Deemed Dismal, Dull and Deficient

By Holly Maholm

It was two weeks after Donut Time closed and the new ChatCafe opened for business. Xandra, Cindy and I – former co-owners of Donut Time – had been carried over as employees at the new coffee shop, but all the others who had been employed at Donut Time lost their jobs.

I had finished my work for the day, and as I walked across the green on my way to see Dot at the Horse Rescue, I passed by the old Donut Time building, where I saw someone had used red spray paint to record their plaintive cry “Come Back! We Miss You!” across the sheets of plywood nailed up across the front.

My most immediate crisis was this: Though Queen Penelope had commanded me to repudiate that Contract of Sale by which Xandra, Cindy and I had agreed to close down Donut Time, I did not see any legal means by which I might reopen Donut Time and re-employ my friends without thereby being in default of the contract (and even if I were so clever a lawyer as to find grounds to void that contract, we would certainly be required to repay that Windfall sales price we had received as part of the

deal).

When I reached the old farmhouse at the Horse Rescue, I found Dot sitting out in her rocker on the front porch. I threw myself down on the glider near her and let out a heartfelt sigh. She turned and spoke.

“I hope you’re not blaming yourself for the demise of Donut Time. Nothing lasts forever, Holly, and while it was open, it did a lot of good for the town.” She went on, “You’re taking all this on your own shoulders, which is wrong. Donut Time was something created and sustained by many people, including your friends who worked there, the farmers who produced the ingredients Xandra used to bake the donuts, and your loyal customers who kept coming back day after day. If you want to solve your problem, you need to get everybody involved.”

The next morning, in an effort to activate the former workers and loyal customers of Donut Time, I instituted a Free Refills promotion at ChatCafe. This policy instantly infused a double-shot of caffeine into our customers. The retirees pushed the couches together into the middle of the room, where the male retirees shared multiple hoary stories of life in the military, while the female retirees brought out countless photos of

infants and toddlers, each of which kindled a chorus of coos that went on and on.

At my suggestion, Dot invited Chet and his workers from the feed store to visit. Upon arrival, they gathered into a circle to sip coffee and graze on donuts while they shared hot items of “farmer-gossip” (“Did you hear what Clem sprayed on his radishes? Crazy!”)

Cindy and Xandra sat in a corner, where Cindy whispered conspiratorially to several Gen-Zers that... although the four astronauts who lifted off in Artemis II were indeed human, and everyone knows the spacecraft was hidden from Earth for forty minutes as it orbited the moon’s dark side, it is nevertheless a secret known to only a few that during those forty



minutes, the Shapeshifting Reptilians who live in the interior of the moon seized that opportunity to replace the human crew with four of their own shapeshifting lizardmen.

It was early the next day when I saw Eric, the local rep for the Private Equity entity that owned ChatCafe. He rushed up to me and spoke. “Look, Holly, things have changed. The PE people are closing down ChatCafe. So you and Xandra and Cindy can pick up your last check later today.” I must have looked shocked, because he went on.

“Here’s the problem. The PE people don’t like your data. Every day the retirees camp out in the shop, but all they do is tell – and rehash and retell – the same old stories about ‘what it was like in NAM,’ or how cute their new grandchildren are. Nobody in this town is going on the internet to shop for EVs or luxury handbags or other big-ticket items. All the data we get for our AI database is about farmers and fertilizer and cures for colic. So do what you want with your old donut shop. We’re going to sell the new building to Apple.”

He paused, then added, “One thing I gotta ask, Holly. You know we record all the conversations in ChatCafé, and then we feed them into our AI database. But a funny thing... it recorded you and somebody named ‘Dot’ discussing what you would do to satisfy somebody you called ‘Her Majesty Queen Penelope and all the other unicorns.’” So maybe that was just a bit of AI-slop, or maybe a hallucination, cause what else would it be?”

(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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A full-body photograph of a very muscular man standing against a plain white background. He is shirtless, showing his well-defined chest, abdominal muscles, and broad shoulders. He is wearing bright red, knee-length shorts. His hands are placed on his hips, and he is looking directly at the camera. A shadow of his body is cast onto the wall behind him to the left. In the top right corner, a portion of another person's arm with a tattoo is visible.

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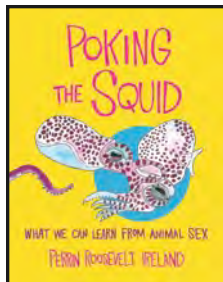
A man with a large number of tattoos is the central figure. He has a 'Stay Strong' tattoo on his right arm, a 'Don't Worry' tattoo on his chest, and a 'Kill 'em All' tattoo on his left leg. He is wearing a black tactical harness and black underwear with blue side panels. The background is dark and textured.

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GRAB A BOOK

"Poking the Squid: What We Can Learn from Animal Sex" by Perrin Roosevelt Ireland
c.2026, W.W. Norton
\$29.99 241 pages



Birds do it.

According to Cole Porter, bees do, too, but it's not exactly what he imagined. Wild and tame, avians, insects, and mammals all have sex – although not always as you've been told or for reasons you might think. Even educated fleas do it and, as in the new book, "Poking the Squid" by Perrin Roosevelt Ireland, humans can learn from them all.

If you read through scientific papers on animal reproduction, you might notice something unusual: for scientists, the word "sex" means a lot of different things.

Says Ireland, "It's used to describe behaviors, biology, life histories, and more."

That might be because animals are not simply binary.

Take, for instance, hyenas. It's easy for the casual observer to mistake a male hyena for a female and vice versa because of stereotypes of anatomy. Mating, for hyenas, requires subordination for the male and a nifty trick on the part of the female's body to get things done.

Our feathered friends are no birdbrains, either: black-browed albatrosses were once thought to be monogamous but global warming seems to have changed their nesting habits sometimes. Male flamingos have sex with one another, as a territorial thing; other birds and animals form same-sex pairs for other reasons.

The Chinese mantis eats her mate after fertilization. Female snakes, alpacas, guinea pigs, and monkeys are anatomically able to enjoy sex. Genitalia between species varies quite a bit; in fact, the vaginas of ducks "are highly complex." Lionesses will mate up to a hundred times when in heat. Female damselflies will change into a "third sex" to avoid overly-aggressive mating males. Bearded dragons can change their sex, if needed, as can yellow clown goby fish. And seahorse pregnancy and birth sparked a book-

banning in Tennessee.

So, asks Ireland, if animals, including us, vary so much in biology and life, "... why are we using the word sex like it means something, anything, consistent?"

Pick up "Poking the Squid," page through it a few seconds, and you'll see that the information here is largely told through cartoon-like drawings mixed with captions. It seems to be something on the lighter side, but don't let that artwork fool you.

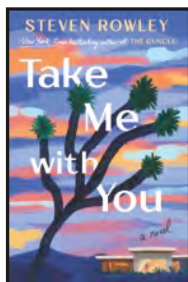
Author Perrin Roosevelt Ireland offers readers solid information that cozies up to the scholarly, with hard science, philosophy, feminism, and quotations from researchers to support it, thus furthering the narrative and hitting the points squarely. If you see the art and expect something lighthearted, comic, and small-talk-worthy, you could be disappointed.

On the other hand, if you want solid, wryly-serious facts, you're in for a treat.

There's lots of learning to be gleaned here, and some slight nudge-wink whimsy to emphasize the absurdity of wrong-headed thinking. This can make readers feel like they're in-the-know on the jokes, and the playfulness balances the seriousness of the information well.

So, serious, scholarly, or slightly silly, none of these are negative but you're going to know what you want from a book like this. For the right reader, someone in the mood, "Poking the Squid" is wild.

"Take Me With You" by Steven Rowley
c.2026, Putnam
\$30.00 353 pages



The smell of exhaust fumes. The click of a door shutting, the surge of an engine. That's what you get when you narrowly miss the bus, miss your flight, miss your ride – add the outrage, the I-can't-believe-it feeling and you want to scream. Yup, as in the new novel, "Take Me With You" by Steven Rowley, being left behind is frustrating. They hadn't been getting along very well. Wasn't that how it was with all long-time couples? Jesse del Ruth thought

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

maybe so. He and his husband, Norman, sniped at one another a lot lately, though lovingly. But was that disconnect, the growing-apart enough for Norman to leave? And in the way that he did?

Just like that, one night after a meaningless little spat, Norman walked out on the patio of their Joshua Tree home, held up his phone to the night skies, then he walked toward the blinding light that came from somewhere out there, and he was gone.

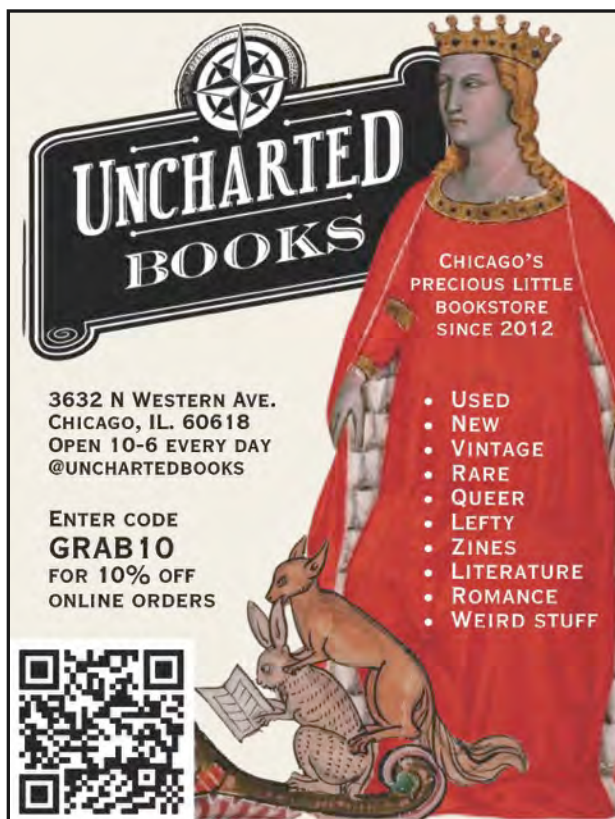
Jesse's boss at the college thought it was funny when he told her; the man teaching a class about humor was making a joke. It wasn't funny. It wasn't even an abduction; it seemed maybe that Norman had gone voluntarily.

And so Jesse had to figure out life without Norman. He got the dog he always wanted, and he dug a hole in his back yard, hoping to learn something, anything. When Lally, Norman's sister showed up, asking for Norman to sign legal papers to start a family process that had been put off for too long, Jesse couldn't tell her the truth. He said that Norman was in Minneapolis or Milwaukee or somewhere.

It was Lally who hired a private detective to find Norman, who had no luck in the search. So where was Norman? Jesse started divorce proceedings, a first step for moving on. Lally mourned her brother, and things that would never happen. Then again, Earth was a terrible place lately and maybe Norman was right. Maybe any other place was better. Sigh. You truly want "Take Me With You" to be great, don't you? But it's just... weird. It asks you to suspend belief on several fronts, that Norman actually calls in the aliens, that Jesse basically freezes over it, and how the ending of this story even begins. Is this book more for firm, heavy-duty believers of UFOlogy? It feels like it might be.

Furthermore, it's hard to like Norman and Jesse because they don't seem to like one another very much, which makes Norman's absence seem almost like a big yay (even to Jesse). His disappearance actually makes Jesse more palatable, which is... weird. Lally is the most likable person in this book but her why is, well, yeah, you guessed it.

Fans of author Steven Rowley's other books may be disappointed with this plot. The book contains Rowley's sweetly-gentle sense of humor and his wonderful scene-setting, but those benefits might not be enough. Sadly, it may seem to some readers that "Take Me With You" missed the bus.



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**MOVIES IN THE PARKS AT
LINCOLN (ABRAHAM) PARK
SATURDAY AUGUST 1
BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY**

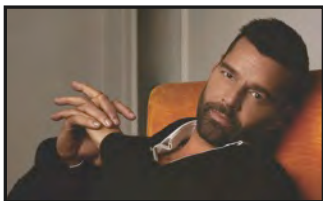


The story of the legendary British rock band Queen and lead singer Freddie Mercury (Rami Malek), leading up to their famous performance at Live Aid.

8:30-pm - 1044pm (Start time is approximate, all movies begin at dusk).

This Free movie will be located at Belmont Harbor @ N. Lake Shore Dr. and Belmont Ave. The screening will take place in the grass field near the AIDS Garden.

**RICKY MARTIN AT
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Following his recent surprise appearance at the 2026 Super Bowl LX Halftime Show, Ricky Martin makes his Ravinia debut—promising a whirlwind of dance-floor anthems, Latin pop classics, and exhilarating showmanship under the Ravinia stars. One of the best-selling Latin music artists of all time, Martin has sold over 70 million records worldwide, with 95 Platinum and 40 Gold records.

A trailblazing performer, Martin has been onstage since the age of 12, starting as a member of Puerto Rico boy band Menudo and bursting onto the American music scene in 1998 with his performance of "La Copa de la Vida" at the 41st Annual Grammy Awards. His 1999 English language hit "Livin' La Vida Loca" topped the Billboard Hot 100 chart for five consecutive weeks,

becoming a cultural phenomenon that grew to exemplify the exuberant energy of an era.

Now decades into global superstardom, Martin continues to evolve as an artist and entertainer, blending pop spectacle with heartfelt balladry and undeniable charisma. His live performances are celebrations of vitality and passion—bringing audiences to their feet and reminding the world why he remains one of the most dynamic performers of his generation.

For tickets or more information visit <https://www.ravinia.org>

**RAVINIA AND XRT PRESENT:
BRANDI CARLILE WITH
SPECIAL GUEST I'M WITH
HER WEDNESDAY AUGUST 26**



After years of creative collaboration with icons like Joni Mitchell and Elton John, Brandi Carlile turns inward with *Returning to Myself*—a radiant new chapter hailed by ArtsDesk as "one of her finest efforts and one of the best albums of the year...as luminous as the northern lights." It's a project that finds Carlile reflecting on her journey while embracing the raw honesty and soaring emotion that first made her a singular voice in American music.

As NPR's Tiny Desk raves, "Carlile is a bona fide superstar whose compositions feel like instant classics." That rare ability—to write songs that feel both deeply personal and universally resonant—has made her a beloved collaborator and kindred spirit to artists across genres, from The Highwomen and Soundgarden to Alicia Keys, Hozier, and Dolly Parton. Named *OUT Magazine's* "Icon of the Year" and honored with Billboard's Women In Music "Trailblazer Award," Carlile's impact extends far beyond the stage. Through her Looking Out Foundation, she has helped raise more than \$8 million for grassroots causes—embodying the same compassion and conviction that

brings life to her music.

Vanity Fair declares, "Her voice is the eighth wonder of the world; her swagger astonishing and absolute." Experience the wonder that is Brandi Carlile live at Ravinia, enjoying an evening of soul-stirring anthems from one of the most compelling artists of our time.

For tickets or more information visit <https://www.ravinia.org>

**DANCE FOR LIFE 35TH
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AUGUST 22 AT THE
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Dance for Life, which benefits the Chicago Dance Health Fund, is a one-night-only event showcasing the city's variety of dance traditions and styles by bringing together professional dance companies and dancers from throughout Chicago, who unite to support their peers by generously donating their time, energy, and artistry. Since its debut in 1992, Dance for Life has raised more than \$8 million and presented more than 50 Chicago-based professional dance companies. The performance gives guests an opportunity to experience a range of dance genres, companies of different sizes and histories, and numerous choreographers, artists, and designers in one memorable evening each year. An additional beneficiary of Dance for Life is AIDS Foundation Chicago.

Tickets are available at **312.341.2300**, <http://www.auditoriumtheatre.org>,

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OF 1812 TO THE CIVIL WAR
AND WORLD WAR I**



A new exhibition shows how visual artists living in the US cheered, critiqued, and satirized the country's commitment to liberty during times of war. Conceived in Liberty: Cartoons, Caricatures, and Illustrations in the Wartime United States, 1812–1918 includes a wealth of works from the Newberry's collection to show that dedicating a country to liberty was an idea that was immediately contested—and continues to be contested to this day. The exhibition, opening June 11, includes political cartoons, magazine illustrations, caricatures, sheet music covers, broadsides, and posters by Indigenous artists, abolitionists, anti-war dissenters, suffragists, and others. Whether patriotic or dissenting, produced for the masses or only a few, these images reveal the diverse, inspiring, and contradictory ways that liberty has been conceived and realized by the people of the United States.

The exhibition, curated by **Margaret M. Storey**, Professor, Department of History, DePaul University, is organized around four themes: "Icons of Liberty," "War, Freedom, and Democracy," "Dissent and Sacrifice in Wartime," and "Immigrants in Wartime." Throughout, the show highlights how popular artists have used national symbols and stories to comment on the country's wars and their relationship to freedom, democracy, and justice. The Liberty Bell, a potent symbol of the American Revolution that fell into disuse as a national icon until it was reclaimed by the abolitionists in their "war" against slavery in the 1830s, appears in the exhibition in a publication from the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Fair of 1842. Thomas



Nast's 1863 "The Copperhead Party. —In Favor of a Vigorous Prosecution of Peace!" portrays anti-Civil War Northerners as dangerous snakes threatening the Union, personified as Columbia. **John T. McCutcheon's** "The Past and the Present are in Deadly Grapple," from 1918, uses the visual metaphor of a wrestling match between Democracy and Tyranny to argue for US intervention in World War I.

Conceived in Liberty along with the current exhibition, *Free and Independent: The Declaration of Independence and the Words That Made the United States*, are part of the Newberry's commemoration of America's semiquincentennial—the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Throughout 2026, a series of exhibitions and programs are planned to mark the occasion. The Newberry is proud to be a partner in Illinois America 250, an inclusive, statewide effort to bring together Illinoisans' diverse perspectives about our history – and our future.

Conceived in Liberty runs from June 11 through September 19, 2026, in the Newberry's Trienens Galleries, 60 West Walton Street. *Free and Independent* runs through July 18 in the Hanson Gallery.

Exhibitions at the Newberry are free and open to all. Exhibition hours are 10am–7pm Tuesday through Thursday and 10am–5pm Friday and Saturday.

To learn more visit www.newberry.org.

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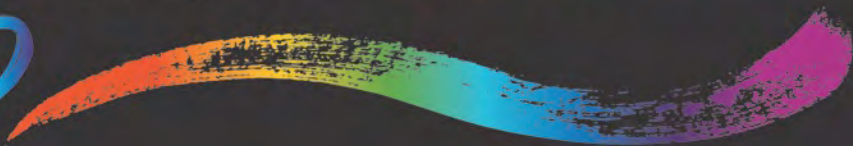
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