LUMBER YARD REBUILDS
Gay community staple rises from ashes

BY CARTER HEMION
SGN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In July 2021, the Lumber Yard, White Center’s first LGBTQ+ bar, suffered extensive damage in a fire still under active investigation as arson and a hate crime. Since then, the bar has been rebuilding across the street from its original location, with the support of the community. Its reopening is anticipated in early June 2022.

The bar is co-owned by husbands Nathan Adams and Michale Farrar. Adams shared updates on the construction at 9630 16th Ave. SW. He assured us that the new space, which will be 4,000 square feet, will continue to have “a lot of what we had at the old bar.” All prior performers are set to return, and the location will continue hosting drag shows and themed parties. The bar will also bring back about 90% of its staff when it reopens.

see LUMBER YARD page 11
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July 24 - 30, 2022
Local News

Same woman charged with first two local anti-LGBTQ hate crimes of 2022

by Hannah Saunders
SGV Contributing Writer

The King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office (KCPAO) has filed two hate crime charges relating to gender identity and sexual orientation this year. Both charges were filed against Destira Marie Freeman, 42.

The charging documents state that Freeman maliciously and intentionally caused the physical injury of the victim due to her perception of that sexual orientation. On Dec. 5, 2021, Freeman banged on the door of a tenant who resided in the same apartment building as she and called him an “HIV positive faggot.” The documents also state that Freeman yelled numerous homophobic slurs during the incident, which escalated to physical violence: when the victim opened the door, Freeman pinched him in the face as she called him a “fucking faggot.”

Once officers arrived, Freeman continued with homophobic statements and told officers that the victim “wants to be a girl” herself.

On Jan. 2, 2022, Freeman and the victim were both in another tenant’s apartment in the same building. Freeman was sitting in a chair while the victim, who identifies as a Transgender female, was standing next to her.

The victim was discussing her transition when the defendant began making comments about what the victim should do with her own body.

During the interaction, Freeman reached out and grabbed the victim’s chest, and twisted and pinched her nipples, which caused the victim pain. The victim told Freeman to stop and pushed her hands away numerous times, but Freeman continued and escalated to grabbing the victim’s genitalia, which also caused her pain.

On Jan. 5, 2022, the KCPAO filed charges against Freeman for “hate crime, assault in the fourth degree.” These charging documents state that Freeman maliciously and intentionally caused the physical injury of the victim due to her perception of gender expression or gender identity.

The charging documents also state “that the defendant... committed this crime with sexual motivation, that is, that one of the purposes for which the defendant committed this crime was for the purpose of her sexual gratification, under the authority of RCW 9.94.040(4)(b)”.

The state requested that Freeman also have no contact with the victim. Freeman’s trial dates on the charges are set for April 13 and May 2, both at 9:00 a.m.

Nightlife

Issa Man and Kylie Mooncakes curate a perfect Thursday night at Kickback

by Nick Rapp
SGV Contributing Writer

A good performer makes the audience feel like they’re in on it — “it” being some essential character of the show, a connective thread that pieces everything together. At Kickback, a monthly drag showcase hosted by the lovely duo of Kylie Mooncakes and Issa Man, that thread is friendship.

The show takes place on the second Thursday of every month, bringing itself with the tagline: “Your new super chill, super lit Thursday night.” They deliver on that promise, creating a diverse lineup of performers that don’t take themselves too seriously but whose contributions showcase each one’s individuality.

As hosts, Kylie and Issa bounced off each other’s energy. You could tell they loved sharing a stage. They opened with a duet, wearing matching pink outfits (each with its own floral) and using all of the space possible on the runway stage. Later, they jokingly asked the audience how many people actually knew the song they lip-synced to in their opener.

Kickback thrived in moments like these: the hosts’ love for each other, bubblegum pop, and all the performers in the lineup were so fun to watch that you didn’t need to know what song was playing.

Others performers included Sasa Abad, Viper Fengz, The Duh Boiz, Baby, and Staica Coopee, all Northwest locals and all distinct in their talents. There was pop work and duets, solo lip syncs and pseudo performance art. Everyone’s style shone through, with Kylie and Issa bookending the night in together stunning get-ups.

I felt Kickback still overflowing at the talent and liveliness of all the performers and had to ask the hosts a few questions about how they came to be.

Nick Rapp: How did you decide on a monthly Thursday evening show?

Kylie Mooncakes: When I started doing drag, all of my favorite shows were on the weekends. Then, when I traveled to other cities recently, it felt like all the great shows that I called to the local Queen community were on the weekends, while weekend gigs were more for Drag Race girls coming in town, or for your standard 8-11 pm crowds.

Issa Man: If I’m being honest, I was just being a girl boss. I wanted a consistent gig but also wanted to leave my Fridays and Saturdays open for bookings.

NR: What is the inspiration behind Kickback?

KM: The vision for Kickback was just to be a show that performers would feel at home at. We urge them to get high (if that feels right) and just get loose and have fun with whatever they pull out — whether it’s the experimental numbers they’ve been wanting to show or their face. We’re really all waiting for the community to bounce back.

NR: What do you see as your final goal for the show, artistic, or otherwise?

KM: To build trust in the community by allowing people to be their authentic selves and spread joy. I’m also just a huge fan of the stage and the fun. We both admire each other so much and have a lot of chemistry, so working together just seemed like a no-brainer.

NR: When did you two meet and start performing together?

KM: Me and Issa met back in 2019 when we first moved here from Alaska. I was so immediately taken by her talent and artistic, and we bonded over our style, our humor, and our passions immediately. We cooked up a couple fun shows together and here we are.

Photo by Mathias P.R. Reding / Unsplash
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**Books**

That’s a wrap on our winter book club!

By Lindsey Anderson

SGV Contributing Writer

The Seattle winter can be a tough and hopeless time. Skies are endlessly gray, the rain makes the perfect backdrop for an imaginary emo music video, and love seems to have fled the city as quickly as the sunshine.

As a hopeless romantic, I have found that the best way to thaw my frozen heart is with a good rom-com. From the incredibly cheesy Hallmark Christmas specials to blockbuster meet-cutes, our winter months are always full of cheap, fabricated love.

One book that I loved this winter was the glorious art form of the rom-com is that genre is overwhelmingly white, straight, and cis. For Queer or women, happy endings are hard to find on the pages of literature that loves to capitalize on the pain and struggle of the LGBTQ+ community. So for our winter book club, I was determined to find the happiest, Queerest, and most cli-ched rom-com novels and share them with our loyal readers.

**May the Best Man Win**

We started the season off with a classic lovers-to-enemies-to-lovers-again story set against the timeless backdrop of a prep school high. *May the Best Man Win* followed Jeremy, a Trans teen trying to prove his masculinity to the world, and Lukas, the only boy left behind in the dust. As their senior year begins, the boys find themselves in a heated battle for homecoming king. A timely take on gender and sexuality, the novel is a shining light in an otherwise bleak time. Written by an queer author, the book is a call to action for those who want to stand up against homophobia and transphobia.

**Mangoes and Musteloids**

As Christmas into a wrap, we found the best Hallmark-esque Queer holiday movie. We read Adriana Herrera’s hit WVL Musteloids. The story follows two Dominicans, Kiki and Sally, who compete in Scotland’s most significant holiday bake-off. The story is a sweet tale of love and acceptance in a world that often fails to understand Queer love. Written in a poetic style, the book is a celebration of Queer love and a reminder that love knows no boundaries.

**Written in the Stars**

The holiday season wrapped up with a sapphic love letter to Seattle. Written in the Stars is novelist and Queer author, Alexandra Becellette’s first novel in the hit rom-com series of the same name. Branded as a WVL Pride and Prejudice, Becellette’s story follows the love story of Duchess and Cynical Darcy as they fall in love at first sight. The story is a heartwarming tale of love and acceptance, and it is a must-read for any Queer love story fan.

**Fifteen Hundred Miles from the Sun**

The SGN’s book club entered 2022 with a romantic bang. We started the year off with a fresh new romance from debut author Jenny Garza Villa. *Fifteen Hundred Miles from the Sun* is a story of love and loss set in the life of a closeted teen, Julian Luna, as he comes out, falls in love, and looks forward to his next steps in life. Written in a poetic style, the book is a celebration of Queer love and a reminder that love knows no boundaries.

Garza Villa says the book was inspired by the love story of her parents, who were Queer and in love despite the societal norms. The book is a celebration of Queer love and a reminder that love knows no boundaries.

**The Lights on Knockbridge Lane**

As the holiday season ramped up, we took a stroll down Knockbridge Lane with author Brian Patrick. *The Lights on Knockbridge Lane* is the joyful story of single dad Adam, his two beautiful daughters Olivia and Ava, and their mysterious and very new neighbor Wes. As the three of them try to create the best Christmas light show ever, they learn that love is about more than just the lights on the house. Written in a poetic style, the book is a celebration of Queer love and a reminder that love knows no boundaries.

I Wish You All the Best

Following the theme of coming-of-age and coming-out stories, we next read *I Wish You All the Best*, the touching story of Ben, a Nonbinary teen struggling to show the world their identity and cope with anxiety. The book gave all the feels as well as a touching and authentic Nonbinary experience.

Deaver says a big reason they wanted to write the book was to give accurate Nonbinary representation to a genre that has simply not been seen yet. “There were no Nonbinary characters in YA at the time,” he said. “Trans representation as a whole left a lot to be desired,” they said. “Lots of cis writers creating harmful — or doawg offensive — ways. Some inaccuracies in writing a Nonbinary character, things that cis charac-

**GirlHaven**

As the gloomy winter weather dragged on, our book club took a field trip to the delightful fantasy land of Kerretta, inside the pages of Lily Sturgis’ middle-grade graphic novel, *GirlHaven*. We met Ash, who travels to the mystical world where only girls are allowed. The only catch: Ash was born a boy. The whimsical adventure follows Ash’s journey to gender identity and self-discovery along with her new, delightfully Queer friends. Not only is *GirlHaven* a special book for many QTs and young adults, but it was also a special journey for Sturgis. “*GirlHaven* is a very special book to me, because it’s one of the first things I’ve ever written that came from a place of total honesty and vulnerability,” Sturges said. “I started working on it right after I transitioned in 2016, so a lot of feelings in there are very raw for me.”

**Of Ice and Shadows**

The book club continued to journey to distant and fantastical lands. For the next week, we read *Of Ice and Shadows*, Audrey Colthurt’s highly anticipated sequel to the full book club read of *Of Fire and Stars*. The novel picked up where readers had last left off, with star-crossed lovers Mare and Denna reuniting their kingdom and hoping to avoid a war. For Colthurt, part of the fun of writing a sequel was being able to put the charac-
ers have come to know and love through tests and difficulties. “It was fun to get Denasea and Marie through new challenges and to explore how getting together in the first place is hardly the main obstacle in a relationship,” said Contreco. “The first always bring new trials to a partnership and give people the chance to confront them together or be driven apart.”

**Hot Dog Girl**

As the weather dragged on, readers began longing for the days of summer time warmth. While we didn’t feel much heat from the San Francisco summer Dagan’s *Hot Dog Girl* brought readers right back to the warm summer vibes. This story followed Bi teen Eliseo as she spanned and laid over the nest to realize that she might just be in love with the best friend she spent the summer parallel with. Dagan’s depiction of Eliseo’s “disaster Bisexual” was heavily influenced by her teenage misadventures. “I was, myself, kind of a disaster teen growing up, and I still definitely have many elements of disaster in my life as an adult,” laughed Dagan.

“Even though I think it’s right, the place, she makes some bad decisions, and she’s trying to figure it out, but she’s not figuring it out in an elegant way. She’s just running headfirst into walls.”

“I wanted the takeaway to be that even if you’re not sure, you’re not sure, you go to figure out who you are, and I feel like there’s a gap between who you are right now and who you want to be. You’re still are, and you’re sad, and you’re family and joy. You don’t have to pretend to have a love story and have good things.”

**Meet Cute Diary**

Following the theme of “disaster teen summer,” the next book on our list was **Meet Cute Diary: This story** centered on Noah, a Transgender, trisexual boy just trying to find his perfect summer romance with a Transgender aspiring actor in Colorado. Readers cringed along with author Emery Lee’s delightful debut novel as they watched Noah make mistakes after mistake. Lee adds not having written *Meet Cute Diary* to teach any kind of lesson about Trans identity and struggle. “Ultimately, I think the way readers to feel like this is it’s not the book that changes their life, that it means something super special to them, because it’s just one book. All trans readers to take away is a good time.”

**SATISFACTION GUARANTEED**

In a bit of a narrative turn, the next book we featured was **Satisfaction Guaranteed**, a no-nonsense set in quickie bar hit novel, which author Paukia Stets-Netts on the maps, focused on the topic of female sexual pleasure and sexual liberation. The story follows a group of four female-identified and female-attracted characters who are brought together through Sate-Netts as a Coade, a tightly wound accountant, and Solena, a free-spirited artist, as the two worked together to bring a beloved sex shop back from the brink of bankruptcy.

Stets-Netts put a lot of time into researching female sexuality, which ultimately turned the novel’s sex shop back drop from an afterthought into a revolution. “As I started doing some research into sex toy stores, pleasure education, and sex positivity, I learned a lot that I didn’t know about the pleasure gap, about the anatomy of the eroticism, sexuality for women, for vulva owners, other gender perspectives, in the world of sex. So it was...”

“Just a really fun set to kind of a candle,” she said.

**Perfect on Paper**

Australian author Sophie Gonzales took our readers back to high school yet again, this time with *Flirty Bisexual Romance* on *Perfect on Paper* focused on secret high school romance advice specialist Darryl and charming senior Bronagh, who discover they share a secret and bond until helping him win his ex back.

While a romance ultimately develops between Darryl and Bronagh, Gonzales said it is important for readers to accept Bisexual romances as inherently Queer, even when they happen to be between a cismen-talizing couple.

“The main reason I wanted to focus on a male/female relationship in this book was that I had received a biphasic comment about another book that I had written,” Gonzales said. “There was this biphasic opinion that the character is somehow less Queer if it’s a Bisexual character that ends up in a different gender relationship. I have people questioned publicly about why the book is considered LGBTQ when there’s a same-sex relationship at the front and center...”

“You know, *LGBTQ* is not only the L, I and the G, it’s not only BI people, either. You can be a Trans person or a Nonbinary person or an Ace person who’s still in a male/male (or other-sexing) relationship. That doesn’t impact whether it’s an LGBTQ story, that’s so another misconception that I’ve seen come up quite a bit.”

**In the Deep End**

The next book we read was *In the Deep End*, a novel by author Kate Davies originally written for the screen. Davies spent years writing and rewriting her slutty romance, spinning it from overly comedic to more dainty, until she found the perfect balance of reality and humor. *In the Deep End* follows a late-in-life Lesbian, Julia, as she struggles to make a place for herself in London’s Lesbian scene. Saucy and hilarious, the book was definitely worth the reread.

“I wrote it as a kind of Bridget Jones’ Diary story—novel, and it was okay, but it felt a bit too light, and I decided that I wanted to write something that was much more substantial,” said Davies about her multiple attempts to craft the perfect Queer novel. “I decided to make it about a much more controlling relationship, and I let the whole thing. At that point, I made it much more serious, and I had to find the balance between the comedy and the seriousness as I went along.”

**Cool for the Summer**

We ended the winter book club with a nod of hope for warmer days with Dhali Adler’s *Cool for the Summer.* This modern, Queer Grease follows teenager Laura, as she returns from a summer spent away — and in the arms of another girl — to her life as a popular high school queen. When her sainet’s friend, Jasmine, moves to town, Laura now must decide whether or not she wants the boy of her dreams or the girl of her summer.

Inspired by Dhali Lovato’s smash hit, Adler wanted to make sure fans knew the book would be just as Queer as the song. “Cool for the Summer” is a relevant scene in the book, which is funny, because I’ve seen people comment when they’ve first seen news of the book, they were like, ‘If this book isn’t Queer, I’m going to be so mad!’” said Adler. “And I’m like, ‘It’s going to be. It promises to do justice to your love of the song, and the exploration and the Queerness, so don’t be preemptively mad. I’m not messing with you.’ And then people get excited that it does come through in what, ‘Cool for the Summer’ is obviously about.”

The variety of Queer romances we read this winter gave hope in a dark time. The stories rearticulated the idea that LGBTQ+ people, regardless of age, gender, or whether or not they are out, deserve love. We are all capable of happily ever after, and once we can see stories that reflect our identities and experiences, we can start to believe them.

If you are interested in joining the SGN Book Club, you can find us on Instagram @sgn_books. Starting next week, we will be launching into our spring book club, which is all about Queer pioneers telling their stories in their own words.

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**Keep your eyes on the Shadows**

by Terri Schlichenmeyer

Special to the SGN

SHADOWMAN: AN ELUSIVE PSYCHO KILLER AND THE BIRTH OF FBI PROFILING
Ron Franscell

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527.00

304 pages

It was toward the end of June, 1973, and it wasn’t quite morning when 14-year-old Heidi Jaeger was awakened by a breeze.

Had she left the tent-flap open around midnight when she’d come back from an outhouse run? No, she’d been crept by something and had gone straight back to the tent, but she was sure she’d rapped it up tight.

All was well then — her siblings were asleep like a pile of poppies. But now, in this predawn, frigidly cold, Heidi Jaeger lied in the bed that he should have been. FBI Special Agent Byron Dunbar was called. He was a local who’d served under Edgar Hoover doing nothing but care for his patients. He knew the terrain, so he started gathering evidence, but there was little of it. He’d been interviewing people who might have had information about the abduction, but even in everyday, everybody knows the people here. Montana, nobody seemed to know a thing.

Then someone began phoning the Jager, taunting Heidi’s mother with false clues. And 19-year-old Sandy Smallegan disappeared.

Crime-solving in the early 1970s was still relatively simple, although the FBI had been working with intriguing new theories. It’d already been established that some killers could be identified by their habits and personality quirks. Dunbar knew this, and with the bureau’s help, he’d severely narrowed the list of suspects. But he was frustrated — until it was suggested that he use a new method of crime solving.

Voiceprinting, they said, was nearly as individual and distinctive as a fingerprint... So, you know that squinty-eyed face you make when the rest of your body cringes? Yeah, that’s what you’ll get when you read *ShadowMan*.

You’ll recall, because these crimes were gruesome, and author Ron Franscell doesn’t candy-coat that. Instead, he gives readers an arachnoid tour of an evil, depraved mind and the things it can do. Squirm and twist awhile, make that face, then let yourself be immersed in Franscell’s detailed account of the development of profiling methodology in the FBI. Yes, true crime fanatics, you’ll love how he wades and history of it together, especially if you’re already familiar with the bureau’s ways. Whodunit fans won’t exactly find mystery in this story, but the background will appeal to everyone.

If you’ve got books about the Body Farm on your shelf, or anything by John Douglas or Robert Ressler, there’s no denying that this deserves to be right next to them. If you love a gruesome tale of crime-solving, wipe off your head around this one.

Also: here’s another book for true crime fans: *Bone Deep* by Charles Bowser Jr. and Joel Schwartz. It’s the story of Betsy Furr’s murder — she was stabbed 55 times! — and a miscarriage of justice that jailed an innocent man and left a killer to roam free.
Energetic Adam Project is a family-friendly, time-travel joyride

by Sara Michelle Fetters
SGN Staff Writer

THE ADAM PROJECT

Netflix

Pilot Adam Reed (Ryan Reynolds) has traveled from the year 2050 to right a grievous wrong. But his ship is damaged and he is shot during the unauthorized trip, and instead of arriving in 2018 as planned, he ends up in the middle of nowhere in a lushly forested 2022.

Or maybe he landed exactly where he was meant to? Intentionally or not, he's come to the childhood home of his 12-year-old self. Young Adam (Walker Scobell) lives alone with his single mother Ellie (Jennifer Garner), the pair still grieving the tragic loss of the boy's scientist father Louis (Mark Ruffalo) a year prior, even if neither will admit it.

This is the setup to director Shawn Levy's The Adam Project, his latest collaboration with Free Guy star Reynolds — and this star-studded bit of sci-fi silliness is even more entertaining than that 2021 box office hit was. Reminiscent of '80s favorites Like Flight of the Navigator, The Lost Starfighter, or Batteries Not Included, this heartwarming adventure is a lot of fun. It also has an underlying emotional complexity I didn't anticipate, making it far more memorable and endearing than it has any right to be.

The book is that both Adams join forces to go back to 2018 to see their dad and convince him not only that he inventions time travel, but that his wealthy tech-billionaire business partner Maya Soria (Catherine Keener) will utilize this power recklessly when she gains control of his discovery after his suicide — and mysterious... death. This forces Louis into an ethical quandary: the logic-driven scientist has to decide whether to listen to two versions of his son from the future, or instead turn them away to keep from risking doing greater damage to the universe by changing set timelines without knowing how they'll affect events still to come.

With four credited writers, there is a "scripted by committee" feel to some of what happens, mostly in how the narrative treats Soria. There is an attempt during the 2018 section to show how the characters began as a selfless do-gooder who ultimately wants Louis' invention to be a boon to humanity. But something transforms her into a ravenous despot thirsting for power, and while Keener does a solid job differentiating between the two versions of her character, the mechanics of this descent into full-blown evil never rings true.

What does work is the interplay between Reynolds and Scobell. The two have incredible chemistry, and I got a big kick out of their rapid-fire banter. Scobell is especially terrific. The younger has to not only play a pint-sized version of Reynolds but also emotionally navigate a path well outside of the one his older self insistst is the only one available to him. It's a tricky part, and the newcomer doesn't just play it well, at times he's downright spectacular.

There's an engaging, albeit brief, supporting turn from Zoe Saldana as a character I choose not to speak more about, and a quick 13 Going on 30 reunion between Garner and Ruffalo right around the two-thirds mark is well worth the wait. The visual effects are excellent, composer Rob Simonsen (Ghostbusters: Afterlife) provides a suitably ebullient score, and cinematographer Tobian Schledsleider (Beauty and the Beast) gives the picture a magnetic visual aesthetic I was continually drawn to.

It all slightly runs out of steam near the end, but thankfully Levy and his screenwriters stay true to their characters and the foundations of the mythology they've created. Instead of taking the easy way out, the aftereffects of tragedy and loss are allowed to linger in ways atypical for genre fare like this, granting the film an extra layer of empathetic hopefulness that's lovely.

I enjoyed The Adam Project. Its past, present, and future permutations were an exciting joyride fit for the whole family.
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DAILY DOZEN DOUGHNUT COMPANY
93 Pike St, Ste 7 in the Pike Place Market
Northwest Black Restaurant Week Round Up

BY KYLIE BROWN  
SGN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

From Feb. 25 to Mar. 6, Black Restaurant Week took over the Pacific Northwest. Dozens of African-American, African, and Caribbean eateries were celebrated across Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia.

This year marked the second tour of Black Restaurant Week's campaign in the Northwest. In total, 44 restaurants across Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia participated.

Through the summer and fall, the event will come to 15 US and Canadian markets, and over 1,500 businesses will participate.

During BRW alone, the organization reports an average increase in sales of 15% for participating restaurants in each region.

"More Than Just a Week"

Unlike most such campaigns, BRW also includes panels, awards, and other recognitions for bars, catering, solo chefs, and food trucks. For example, its culinary showcase, "Noah," helps connect restaurateurs to consumers and to each other.

"I'm really grateful for having gained some prominence for what I do, and I don't know if that would have happened without Black Restaurant Week," said Atlanta-based chef Ed Warner, the 2019 winner of BRW's Power of the Plate award.

Black Restaurant Week (BRW) was founded in 2016 by Warren Luckett, Falaya Ferrell, and Derek Robinson, a trio of marketing and culinary entrepreneurs who sought to aid the healing of Black communities through food.

For 2022, the chosen theme was "More Than Just a Week," representative of all of the work the organization performs beyond the week-long campaign. BRW "goes beyond restaurants," said Luckett.

Robinson is the BRW team's marketing specialist. He and Ferrell co-owned Fade Media, a digital marketing firm in Houston, Tex. They discusses their passion for providing Black business owners with exposure, recognition, and connections in order to connect the greater Black community to better food.

"I thought [Black Restaurant Week] was the perfect opportunity to support small businesses in the community, which I'm really passionate about," said Ferrell.

"A lot of small businesses just don't understand business from a marketing aspect," said Robinson. "They don't know the kind of exposure that we're providing them."

Robinson noted that when a business doesn't have the resources for self-promotion, or its brick-and-mortar location is undesirable, the larger population might never find it.

Ferrell added, "In most urban communities, it's like People's, McDonald's. There are a lot of things we can do in communities just by supporting the restaurants and supporting the culinary space."

Additionally, Luckett said the organization has set its sights on dispelling "misconceptions that people have about Black folks and about Black food."

During the initial stages of the pandemic, the team found their in-person operations stymied. They remained dedicated to their continued expansion, however, knowing that there are hundreds of Black-owned businesses they have yet to reach, and they continued to make waves online.

In lieu of its traditional programming, BRW launched its nonprofit, the Feed the Soul Foundation. Through large corporate partnerships with companies like Maker's Mark, Pepsi, GrubHub, and HIVOMax, the foundation provided $250,000 to Black-owned culinary businesses in 2020. With ongoing grants, awards, and free business courses, the organization is bigger than ever.

Seattle Black restaurant directory

While the official campaign week for the Northwest region—which coincided with Black History Month—has ended, BRW encourages the public to support local Black-owned businesses and Black chefs all year long. Thanks to its sourcing of Afro-outs in Seattle, we have some new ideas on where to spend an "Afro" budget next.

On Capitol Hill, Osteria La Spiga's executive chef Sabrina Tinsley's dishes are a gastronomic tribute to the Emilia-Romagna region of northern Italy, where her husband was raised. Her pasta is made in-house daily and paired with fresh seasonal ingredients from local market vendors. Tinsley is also a mentor and advocate for female chefs and chefs of color. Find out more or make a reservation at www.laspiga.com.

First Hill residents can enjoy a quick stroll to Jamaica at E. Jefferson's Taste of the Caribbean. From 5 to 9 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday, you can find a combo plate of authentic Caribbean food, culture, and music all in one. Find photos, reviews, and menus at tasteeastseattlebseattle.com.

A trip down Rainier Ave, S will bring you to Lil Red Jamaican BBQ and Soul Cuisine (located in last week's SGO) who you can find a unique array of specialties from Chef James Beard Award semifinalist Erasto Jackson. To order takeout or take a peek at the current menu, visit lilredjamaican.com.

Continue further south to enjoy highly-rated Delish Ethiopian Cuisine. The name says it all. It is known as "the best Ethiopian food in Seattle," according to the restaurant's website. Delish, the owner, and his wife also offer cocktails, vegetarian options, and a great ambience. Find their menu at delishethiopianfood.com.

Lastly, no need to travel to West Seattle for Black Star Kebab, even though it resides at the tip of Alki Beach. The Ghanaian food truck tours across Seattle, offering fresh, organic kebabs and sides, including vegetarian and halal options. Its current locations are posted daily at www.facebook.com/blackstarkebabs.

From West African jollof rice to plantation foods and Texas BBQ, Seattle's lineup of Black Restaurant Week partners brings a comprehensive palette of Black culinary masterpieces to the table.

And its partnership with local restaurants is only just beginning. African American, African, and Caribbean businesses are encouraged to register on the BRW website for free (or at the premium level) to be highlighted in next year's Black Restaurant Week or if interested in year-round opportunities.

Learn more about BRW at blackrestaurantweeks.com/about. Find the Seattle directory, including an interactive map and links to all aforementioned businesses at blackrestaurantweeks.com/bw-campaigns/united-states/washington-seattle-5.
B-Side Food gets an A+
This is not your average breakfast spot

BY NICK RAPP
SGN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

"We knew from the very beginning that we wanted to serve an egg sandwich, and that we wanted it to be unique," said Hanlon. "We worked with our friend and local cook Jake Vorono to develop the original menu." The well-known chef Sanain Norratt popularized the four-ingredient classic cooking: salt, fat, acid, and heat. The B-Side sandwich finds its success in utilizing each of these categories to allow every ingredient to shine.

On developing the recipe, Hanlon explained, "We like the English muffin as a base for the egg sandwich, because it's easy to hold and eat, aside from being delicious." The owners also wanted a flavorful sauce, and wanted the crunch and acid from a pickle, resulting in the use of charred onion aioli and a daikon pickle as a mild radish, daikon provides a milder crunch than a classic dill pickle and doesn't overwhelm the palate.

If you like spice, the fermented hot sauce brings a flavor reminiscent of Korean cooking to the sandwich. This somehow pairs wonderfully with Beecher's Flagship cheddar, the perfectly fatty addition that rounds out the sandwich.

Additionally, all of the ingredients are super fresh. The egg sandwich sits less heavily in the stomach than a traditional breakfast sandwich, and every other menu item is equally as formidable. B-Side sources its eggs from Sisters Farms in Yelm, and the English muffins are local, from Franz. Hanlon noted that they aim to make local sourcing of ingredients as an even larger focus in the future.

If you're sold on the sandwich (which you should be), B-Side and Analog are open for takeout from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily. They plan on eventually transitioning back to indoor dining as well, but they want to be cautious and be sure that it will be a permanent transition.

LUMBER YARD
continued from cover

Adams described the new space as having two main parts — the Lumber Yard bar and arcade, and Loading Dock dance side — which together take up the same amount of space as the old location's combined parts. Said Adams, "The larger side will be where we'll be doing karaoke, drag shows, dance parties. And then the smaller side, which looks a lot like the footprint of the original Lumber Yard, is going to be more like the neighborhood, casual, sit-down dining experience."

On the current state of the rebuilding, Adams said, "The fun thing has been, this last month, we're actually starting to see it come together. So the plumbers and the other contractors have started coming in and doing what they need to do, so that we can start putting the cosmetic stuff in place and seeing what this space is actually going to look and feel like.

Since the July fire, the bar has received ongoing financial support. In the first week alone, the community raised over $800,000 for the rebuilding. Adams is proud of "the support we've had from the community to get the space back up and going."

He is also proud of what the bar means to the LGBTQ+ community and Seattle. Said Adams, "There's no way, after the fire, that we could have just let it go away. It just meant too much to too many of us, including my husband and myself."

Adams said the Lumber Yard plans to reopen at the start of June, depending on how fast reconstruction moves forward. He looks forward to White Center's Pride festival in early June.

"It'll be, hopefully, fun that we can be a full part of that," he said.

Follow the Lumber Yard Bar's Facebook page for updates.
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If there's one thing Seattleites love more than good food, it's good companionship. Hailed as one of the most dog-friendly cities in the country, Seattle boasts several amazing dog parks, daycares, and even bars dedicated to dog lovers. So if you're looking for the best place to score a special treat for your best furry friends, look no further than these dog-friendly locations!

Pints and paws
Looking for a place to hang with Rover? Check out Dog Yard Bar in Ballard. For those 21 and older, Dog Yard Bar is the perfect place to make friends, sip pints, and mark your territory.

Each weekend, Dog Yard Bar hosts a breed-specific meet-up for one type of pooch, these "heavy breathers" to "man's best friends for life." Events typically last a few hours and are exclusive to dogs that fit the event criteria.

Seattle Pride’s 2020 Doggie Drag Queen Championship, Petey “Patricia Chleoonie,” had the pleasure of visiting Dog Yard Bar for its latest "Small Dog" meetup. Dancing his best attire, Petey enjoyed many treats, pets, and butt sniffs in a friendly and safe environment. Petey spent his morning lounging in the sunshine and making friends with other small breeds. The small-dog environment allowed him to let his guard down and enjoy the company of others without feeling the need to pretend to be a pit bull.

The staff was on the grounds at all times, monitoring the behavior of all those in attendance and making sure the yard remained clean and sanitary while owners enjoyed tasty cocktails.

After the meet-ups and on weekdays, the bar is open for dogs of all sizes, so long as they (and their owners) can provide proof of vaccination. Dogs and their owners love the atmosphere there and relax the opportunities dogs and their owners enjoy.


Homemade for your hound
If you’re looking for a shop where you can pamper your pup’s with the finest treats and toys, check out the Seattle Barkery. Originally a food truck for dogs, it has quickly grown into a must-try for all Pacific Northwest pet owners.

“We’ve been in business since 2014, and we just recently opened up this location in Shoreline, in September," said owner Ben Ford. "The first location was a mobile doggy-treat truck. That’s honestly what put us on the map, because it’s such a weird idea. But we started driving that around town and built up momentum and got a customer base." "It’s such a foreign concept that a lot of people are hesitant and like, ‘What is this?’ or confused. So it took a couple of years, honestly, for people to understand what we’re doing. We started with a truck, and we’re on our fifth location now."

Ben and his wife Dawn started the business as a labor of love, dedicated to all the dogs in their lives. "That was all my wife, Dawn, that was her idea," Ben said. "It was her brainchild, and she did some convincing of me that it was going to work, and here we are!"

Each Seattle Barkery location puts its customers first. The store carries toys, clothes, collars, and plenty of yummy snacks for each pooch who enters the doors. The Fords, like many Seattleites, treat their dogs like their children and wanted to make sure the food they gave them was the best. "We know how much we spend on our dogs, so we know we probably weren’t buying them crazy dog snacks. They’re just in the sunshine and making friends with other small breeds. The small-dog environment allowed him to let his guard down and enjoy the company of others without feeling the need to pretend to be a pit bull.

The Barkery is also currently working to help dogs affected by the war in Ukraine. "We’re doing a benefit for Ukrainian dogs, so for every Banana Bone, we’re donating a dollar, which is great. I know it sounds a little silly, but with what the war and everything, but you know those people have dogs. They’re just crazy dog lovers. They’re just the family, so we found a reputable rescue group and organization that takes in all the dogs that are having to deal with all of this."

Creative treats
It’s clear, from nose to tail, that everyone at the Seattle Barkery is dedicated to improving the lives of the dogs who love them.

"We’ve been doing this for many years, and I was saying before, it was kind of a leap of faith as to whether it would work or not, and I think it taught me that we value our dogs here," Ben said. "Not just in the sense that it’s a dog, it’s a part of our family. My wife and I are children, we’re not going to have kids. So we’ve put all of that love into our dogs, it’s just that we’re a market for that here in Seattle, and hopefully, it spreads all over the place."

Pete’s favorite part of the store was the "treat case," a whimsical dispenser that launches a tasty sample to every dog who comes by. His favorite treats were the fresh chicken hearts, perfect bite-sized snacks for dogs of all sizes and a delicacy Ben and Dawn make every day. "It makes those fresh each morning. We put a little coconut oil in them and air-fry them. Those seem to be everyone’s favorite," Ben said.

Pete also enjoyed the cheesy donuts, a freshly baked snack from the downtown location, courtesy of dedicated employee Krauf, who informed us that the store is getting ready for a seasonal batch of Girl Scout-inspired dog treats. "We have some fun ones coming up with Girl Scout cookies and Easter candy and stuff. We try and do something for the holidays. For Valentine’s Day, we did a peanut butter-pumpkin pretzel heart, and then we did little heart-shaped peanut butter-banana bones. It’s really fun," she said.

Cleaning dogs and clean ingredients
If you’re seeking a one-stop shopping experience with your dog, look no further than Queen Anne’s Wag N’ Wash. It offers a unique opportunity to use its in-store grooming equipment to make sure your pet is smelling just as good as their groomers treat!

Wag N’ Wash offers special grooming opportunities for the hands-on pet owner, a specialty nail trim service, and best of all, a deluxe pet bakery in the back. The bakery items are made fresh each day by an in-store baker, Peter, who loves to receive feedback from all his happy customers.

Wag N’ Wash’s most popular pet treats include "Muttballs," "Pet Pies," and special "Pup-Cakes" for all your most festive occasions. The bakery items are made from the same high-grade ingredients you might find in your birthday cake, except they do not include sugar, which can be hazardous to pets.

The treat counter was a must-see for Pete, especially after a quick pedicure with Wag N’ Wash’s excellent grooming staff. His favorite treats were the Muttballs, a soft bread-like ball he could gobble in one bite! He couldn’t get enough of their soft and easy-to-chew texture and was begging for more as soon as he got home.

Wag N’ Wash makes sure to market all its treats at affordable prices so that everyone can get the chance to spoil their pets. The store also carries specialty items for dogs and cats, such as an intrinsic CBD and catnip sprays, high-quality organic toys, and plenty of dog noisemakers.

Our dogs are more than just pets, they’re our babies, our best friends, and sometimes our favorite drug performers. They deserve all the best treats, and thanks to Seattle’s dedicated dog-loving business owners, there are plenty of local options to choose from! Pete rates all the treats he tried at Dog Yard Bar, The Seattle Barkery, and Wag N’ Wash an 11 out of 10. If my picky Chinese in will eat them, your dog will love these treats too!
A la Mode
It’s never too late for Pi Day

BY DANIEL LINDSEY
SGN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

West Seattle is so isolated that, despite the bridge being closed for two years, it comes as news to many living elsewhere that the bridge is closed at all. Residents take pride in “never leaving, even if we could.”

Mind you, West Seattle has long been an island of sorts. The hillsides of Alki and North Admiral are a quilt of single-family homes, with only a few major roads home to businesses and pricey apartment buildings. Plus, there just isn't the same density of things to do as in other districts.

Fortunately, to sample the menu of Queen-owned A la Mode Pie, those east of the Duwamish need not make the long trek to Phinney Ridge or Ballard. As I did, to take in the atmosphere and a few slices, they can visit A la Mode’s café branch at the Junction (California & Alaska).

I arrived at the place on a dreary Saturday afternoon, after a walk through the neighborhood alleys that run between backyards and garages. Despite the bustle of the street outside, the line was a single couple ahead of me, and nobody was dining in at the time (possibly because of pandemic concerns).

The staff were friendly. All the apparatus of the kitchen was visible behind the counter, and with the place’s high ceilings and dark, mellow colors, there was a sense of intimacy at rest, since the kitchen itself wasn’t busy.

I tried a slice of each of the three pie varieties on the menu. The strawberry rhubarb, a personal favorite, had a melt-in-your-mouth filling with a strong, lasting tartness, fading nicely into its strawberry flavor and finishing with a hint of sweet vinegar.

The banana cream pie, another classic, had a good balance of its components. It made a statement without being too rich or too sweet.

A la Mode’s “signature dessert,” the Blue Hawaiian, was a blend of blueberry and pineapple filling, topped with toasted coconut. It had a mellow flavor, with the almost whole blueberries, pineapple bits, and coconut shavings giving it a landscape of texture that might tempt the eater to chew more thoughtfully and savor the unique taste. The crust on all these, worth mentioning on its own, was flavorful yet unobtrusive—firm enough to hold things together and soft enough to be cut with ease.

A la Mode’s menu also includes savory pies, various drinks, ice cream by the scoop or pint, and options for vegans and those allergic to eggs, nuts, or dairy. The price for one regular-sized pie is generally $8.

A la Mode can be found at 4225 SW Alaska St. in West Seattle, 5823 Phinney Ave N. near the zoo, or 2034 SW 56th St. in Ballard. Online, go to www.alamodeseattle.com.

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Idaho moves to pass anti-Trans legislation

by Lindsey Anderson
SGN Contributing Writer

On Wednesday, March 9, Idaho House Bill 675 was passed by the state House of Representatives. The legislation, which has been branded the "Genital mutilation of a Child Bill," will make it a felony for any adult in the state, including parents and doctors, to aid Transgender youth with age-appropriate, medically necessary, gender-affirming care.

The bill criminalizes operations such as top surgery or hysterectomy and also goes so far as to outlaw prescriptions of hormone blockers and HRT.

HB 675 coincides with other restrictive proposed legislations that seek to prohibit discussions of gender identity and sexual orientation in public schools and a ban on transgender athletes in sports.

The proposed law has many questioning the constitutionality of criminalizing the crossing of state lines to receive care that is legal elsewhere. The constitution limits restrictions on interstate travel, so HB 675 would likely face legal challenge on a federal level if it became law.

Idaho Democrats hopeful bill will die in committee

Despite HB 675 passing through the state House of Representatives, several lawmakers on strictly along party lines, some members of Idaho's state legislature are confident the bill will not pass the Senate and be signed into law.

Rep. John McCrostie told the SGN he's optimistic the bill will not have enough time to be thoroughly considered by the state Senate. "I think the Senate doesn't even give this horrific bill a hearing. As of today, we've only got nine more legislative days of our session, and that as long as we need to hold out," he said. "Let's cross our fingers this stays in a draconian bill and doesn't see the light of day for the rest of the session."

Rep. Johnic Olsen also believes the bill will not make it past the Senate. "Our Senate isn't going to consider it. It's too extreme even for the Republican-controlled Senate to consider," he said.

Damage may have already been done

While the McCrostie and Gannon are hopeful the bill will not become law, other Idaho representatives say the damage has already been done.

"Just in the weeks since this law has been introduced, there have been three trans kids in the area that attempted suicide. This risk is very, very real," Rep. Ilana Rubel told the SGN. "I am scared that this will result in the death of a child. This bill is uniquely dangerous in that it [fails] a litany of other [to] leave the state to receive gender-affirming care. It forecloses the options for families living in Idaho to even leave the state," she said.

Many members of the Idaho state legislature have documented the risks for crossing state borders to be overly extreme measure. Rep. Colin Bash believes the bill will result in families deciding to leave Idaho permanently in order to support their children.

"I voted against the bill" because it will get in the way of care for evidence-based medical care for Trans youth," Bash said. "I think it will have negative social impact for Trans youth who are already at high suicide risk. People will not only seek care out of state but move out of state. It will just make it harder for them not to do the best they can for their children."

"I think the whole law will be challenged," added Rubel. "I think the whole law runs aaf the Equal Protection Clause. If it becomes a law, it won't survive a federal court challenge and will likely be struck down."

"But, frankly, even if it doesn't become a law, I think a lot of the damage has already been done. Even if it never becomes a law, it is extremely demoralizing to Trans youth and their families to have this kind of hateful legislation progress this far."

Some representatives' support of HB 675

I also spoke with representatives in support of the bill. When asked why they favored the harsh legislation, they echoed the rhetoric of Rep. Skaggs, who introduced the bill to the House.

"We do not allow minors to get tattoos, smoke cigarettes, and drink alcohol or sign legal contracts," Skaggs said to the House on Wednesday, "why would we allow them to make decisions to cut away organs based on their feelings during puberty time?"

Some Republicans in support of the bill projected themselves onto Trans youth. For example, Rep. Ryan Kerby agreed with the harsh punishment of parents who seek to help their children transition because they would not have prefered this treatment in his youth. "If my parents would have done that to me, they would have deserved to go to prison," he said. "This needs to be a deterrent for people who want to do this stuff."

"I am not sure of the rhetoric," Rep. Tommy Nichols said supported the bill because the district voiced its support to her. "I listen to my constituents, because that's who I represent, and so this is something that is concerning to my constituents, and of course, I am representing them, so that's my primary reason for supporting the bill," Nichols said.

However, her reasons for wanting to support the bill echoed Skaggs'. "The second reason was wanting to protect children that are under 18 and still going through puberty," she said. "I have heard a lot of testimony on this issue in the past. There have been decisions that have been made while they were young that have not been beneficial for them in the long run," Nichols said.

"People transition young then work to transition back to their original gender," she said, "so for me, that's kind of a pause, and I'd like to work with children and get them through puberty before they make major changes to their bodies. In Idaho, you can't even get a tattoo without a parent's permission until you're 18; major changes to your body shouldn't be something that is [decided] until later on."

When further questioned about her comparison to tattoos, which Idaho does permit minors to receive as long as they have parental permission, Nichols back tracked. "Of course, a tattoo is something that does do something to your body, but it is not as invasive as taking parts of your body apart," she said.

"So, while that isn't equal as far as that goes, it just shows that we're not allowing children to make those decisions with a tattoo — now with their parent's permission at 16 — why would we allow them to make major decisions and do things like that when they're young?"

"And a tattoo you can get laser treatment to get it removed, and a lot of those procedures that get done are not reversible," she said.

When asked about her knowledge of hormone blockers, which HB 675 also bans, Nichols responded, "Hormone blockers, you know, they get into your system, and it can take time to get out of your system. My concern is if you give those to young children, what kind of unintended consequences can happen when things don't develop properly because the hormones are being blocked?"

"Well, first of all, puberty blockers are reversible," countered Rep. Rubel. "When you stop taking them, puberty hits." She explained that while some of the procedures the bill bans are irreversible, so is puberty. Forcing Trans kids to experience puberty is not only detrimental to their mental health but also makes transitioning later in life challenging.

Medical opposition to HB 675

"They're forcing a young person into an irreversible situation and preventing them from taking reversible steps. It is a very difficult decision that is usually made with the family in concert with medical professionals," Rubel said of the decision to take hormone blockers.

"I have several friends whose children have gone through gender reassignment as a youth. Those decisions were made after a lifetime of gender dysphoria. These are young people who knew they were in the wrong body since they were toddlers, and they would never make this decision lightly. These decisions are made after many years of deep-certainly."

Idaho Democrats believe that parent's and doctors are best suited to make medical decisions about minors. Many choose to oppose the bill because it undermines the expertise of medical professionals.

Rep. Gannon was concerned about the bill's disregard for medical practice. He said he voted against the bill because it was "too extreme and opposed by Idaho doctors [and] the American Medical Association, and it ignored accepted medical practice. This was so extreme that it was dealing with treatment that wasn't surgical but was way beyond. It even purported to restrain treatment out of state."

Mental health effects on LGBT+ youth

When asked about what the implications this "deterrent" will have on the mental health of LGBT+ youth, Rep. Kerby said, "I don't have a comment at all."

Other conservatives, such as Rep. Nichols, were willing to consider the mental health impacts anti-Trans legislation has on kids. While she still supports the bill, Nichols did admit that children should have access to mental health resources, especially during puberty.

"I would say on the mental health part of things that children, when they are growing up and going through puberty, are dealing with a lot of things that are transpiring with their bodies and the social aspect of society," she said.

"Kids and teenagers have a lot of challenges, and there are a lot of issues that come about in the mental health [component], so we want to make sure that these kids are making decisions for themselves and that they are doing things after coming through this awkward time of life. When kids [have] mental health issues, they need to be treated and talk to a therapist. I don't think this constitutes permanent changes."

"Democrats like Rubel believe the bill is incredibly detrimental to LGBT+ mental health. "I think it is potentially catastrophic; there are situations where young people suffer gender dysphoria and require medical treatment or have a high risk of suicide," Rubel said. "One of my colleagues said this bill puts a noose around the neck of Trans youth, and I don't think he exaggerated."

"Furthermore, it is outrageous that puberty blockers are included in this bill. Those are reversible, but puberty is not a risk factor for any of the issues that the bill addresses," she said.

"We are seeing a lot of children who are transitioning, and we don't want to make this harder for them," Rubel said. "We are seeing that some of the children in our community are not able to transition because of this bill. I don't think that this is the right thing to do."

"We have to support the children who are in our community, and we have to make sure that they have access to the care that they need," she said.
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SGN MARCH 18, 2022 CELEBRATING 48 YEARS!
HRC launches Reality Flag campaign to raise Equality Act awareness

by Daniel Lindsey
SGN Contributing Writer

Florida: Disney employees force freeze on donations

Reuters reported on March 11 that Walt Disney Co. will be freezing its political donations in Florida, after employees protested the company's donations to Florida state senators who support the controversial "Don't Say Gay" bill. The bill, which awaits approval by Gov. Ron DeSantis, would limit discussion of LGBTQ issues in schools.

Chief Executive Bob Chapek announced the decision in a memo to staff, "Speaking to you, reading your messages, and meeting with you, I have helped me understand how painful our silence was," he wrote. "It is clear that this is not just an issue about a bill in Florida but another challenge to basic human rights. You need not be a stranger in the fight for equal rights, and I yet down, I am sorry." Disney animation writer Benjamin Siemon, who publicly criticized the company for its donations, said of the announcement, "We have more to do as a company in helping make Disney a place the LGBTQ+ community can be proud of again, but it's a start."

Arkansas: Trans models walk runway for rights

On March 14, NBC News put a spotlight on 13 Trans models that walked in a fashion show to protest Arkansas' recent anti-Trans laws, such as the ban on gender-affirming care for Trans minors (currently blocked by a federal judge), and the law that limits Trans participation in school sports.

Trans activist Lisa Stuart organized the fashion show and participated. "We really want to promote this awareness and the visibility that Trans people are part of the community," she said, "that we are everywhere, and that we are in every aspect of society, any activity, any occupation."

Clothes for the fashion show were provided by the Transition Closet, an Arkansas-based nonprofit that provides clothes for the LGBTQ community. The show's proceeds went to the organization, which was formed in response to the state's anti-Trans legislation.

"Luckily, we're able to do our part to make it a little less scary for the community," Transition Closet founder Amaree Rouch said, "because that's what we truly need right now."

by Hannah Saunders
SGN Contributing Writer

The Human Rights Campaign launched its "Reality Flag" campaign on Feb. 23, to bring awareness and support to basic freedoms for LGBTQ Americans missing in 29 states.

"The Reality Flag campaign is designed to point out the inequalities LGBTQ+ individuals face every day — in our own voices," said Joni Madison, interim HRC president. "From housing and educational discrimination to denial of government and health services, LGBTQ+ people are confronted by hurdles simply to exist every day."

"Something is seriously wrong when state legislatures around the country are attacking LGBTQ+ rights for political purposes, forcing families to pack up their homes and move to another state so that their children can have equal rights and legal protections," said Madison. "This needs to change. The Reality Flag not only calls out the 29 states where basic freedoms are still missing for millions of people but stands as a symbol of hope that communities can rally behind to enact meaningful change."

According to the HRC, about two-thirds of LGBTQ+ people have reported experiencing discrimination.

Thousands of LGBTQ+ people in the United States are at risk of being evicted from homes, kicked out of businesses that are open to the public, sanctioned unnecessarily for goods and services, and in many states, denied healthcare, home loans, taxis or car sharing, and government services.

The Federal Equality Act is federal legislation that would ensure comprehensive anti-discrimination protections for LGBTQ+ people in the United States across key areas of life, including housing, credit, education, public spaces and services, federally funded programs, and jury service. It was passed by the House of Representatives in February of 2021. Its fate now lies with the Senate.

What is the Reality Flag?

The Reality Flag is an altered version of the American flag, with 29 of the stars removed, which represents each state that lacks comprehensive protections for LGBTQ+ people.

The Human Rights Campaign plans to unveil an 85-foot banner featuring the Reality Flag, which will be placed across the front of the HRC's headquarters in Washington, DC — six blocks from the White House.

What to expect from the Reality Flag campaign

The Reality Flag campaign will feature content across traditional and social media platforms, including video advertisements created by the Emmy Award-winning director, producer, and creator of America's Transparent Jeremy Soloway.

Soloway's videos will highlight real stories and lived experiences of LGBTQ+ people who have been impacted by discrimination. The vignettes will inspire and move audiences, while showing an urgent need for passing the Equality Act.

"When I was approached about partnering with HRC on this campaign, I jumped at the opportunity and immediately signed on," said Soloway, "not only because of the important opportunity to help lift up stories and amplify the voices of LGBTQ+ people across the country but because I believe this campaign has the potential to fundamentally shift the conversation around equality in a way that brings more people together than ever before, to ensure we are all equally protected and represented under the law."

"Just meeting and working with the amazing LGBTQ+ people who shared their stories of discrimination in front of the camera was so much to so many of us behind the camera — especially since a majority in our production crew identify as LGBTQ+ and could relate to the experiences of the brave storytellers we worked with. It's an honor to be able to do this work, and to be a part of this important campaign."

Some of the stories Soloway will introduce through the Reality Flag campaign are:

• Micah, a gay African American who was refused medical treatment by a Minnesota doctor because of his sexual orientation.

• Queen, a Transgender woman, who experienced discrimination at the hands of her landlord in North Carolina. When Queen called her for a repair, he spotted a Transgender flag inside her home. He went on to berate Queen and then threatened to force her to move out.

• Soloway's video vignettes will be highlighted through an advertising campaign that will include partnerships with 20 national media platforms, including TV, print, display, audio, social, search, and video, among others. HRC anticipates over 3 million impressions during the launch.

For more information, visit www.hrc.org/campaigns/equality-act.
Pro-LGBTQ bishops should be reprimanded says Cardinal & convicted child molester

by Mike Andrew
SGN Staff Writer

Roman Catholic Cardinal George Pell – convicted in 2017 of molesting altar boys – called on the Vatican to discipline two of Europe’s most senior bishops for violating Catholic teaching.

In a statement released March 15, Pell asked the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) to “intervene and pronounce judgment” on Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich and Bishop Georg Bätzing, president of the German Bishops’ Conference.

Their crime in Pell’s eyes? They both made statements questioning Catholic teaching that same-sex relations are sinful.

Cardinal Hollerich, who presides over the Synod on Synodality that runs until October next year, said last month that Church teaching on same-sex relations was “wrong” and that “the ‘sociological-scientific foundations’ of Catholic teaching on what "one formerly confused as sodomy" was was "no longer correct.”

Bishop Bätzing, the president of the German Conference of Bishops, said, in a March 4 interview that same-sex relationships were permissible and not a sin and that the Catholic Church should be partially changed to reflect this.

According to Pell, such statements are “erroneous,” because “they not only reject the ancient Judeo-Christian doctrines against homosexuality and sodomy and reject the teaching on monogamous marriage, the exclusive union of a man and a woman.”

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reversible. Fliering Trans youth to experience the full implications of puberty will cause lasting impacts that threaten the risk of their future mental health and treatment.

Republican by proxy on parental rights

Rep. McCroskie, who is the only openly LGBTQ+ member of the Idaho legislature, says the lack of empathy from conservatives will lead to harmful effects on Trans people in Idaho.

“It’s a very harmful and hurtful piece of anti-Trans legislation,” he said. “It makes us wonder if this is happening to Trans youth today.

“Is it as a result of the fact that they are being forced into puberty, just like all other people do, and this piece of legislation will prevent that. What it’s actually harmful about the bill, though, is that it represents a fundamental misunderstanding of what Trans people experience. I think that’s probably the most offensive part.

“From the end of the day, it doesn’t accomplish any of the goals [conservatives] say are part of the bill. It is just an opportunity to make harmful statements against transgender people without even recognizing the challenges Trans youth face,” he continued.

“Instead, what you will see is that they will go across the border in the communities where you can do that. Those who are not going to be able to leave the state because their parents have jobs, you’re just going to send Trans youth inside themselves to this very unsafe space, and I am worried about what their future might be.”

McCrosskie also pointed out the hypocrisy of the Republican-led bill. Over the last two years, Idaho Republicans have advocated for parental rights when it comes to making medical decisions for children, such as choosing not to vaccinate them. Now, they are flipping their stance and criminalizing parents who choose to help their children transition.

“I think part of that is just sociopolitical to what some of my colleagues across the aisle continue to proclaim about parental choice,” he said. “The whole notion of criminalizing parents for taking care of their children is ludicrous.

“McCrosskie is not only a number of the State House of Representatives but also a teacher. He wants Idaho’s LGBTQ+ students to know that they are still safe and loved. He said in this community and that people are still fighting for their rights.

“I believe Trans youth and all LGBTQ+ youth need beautiful and powerful friends of our community, and they deserve every opportunity to grow up and be progressive members of our community,” he said. “They deserve the opportunity to live fully and long, so that they can make mistakes on their own and have their hearts broken, and all those other things that all of us just long to experience, all the ups and downs and in between. They deserve a beautiful life, and I want them to get there.”

Democrats are still fighting for Trans youth. Rep. Bubelia says she will continue to oppose HB 635 and all other anti-LGBTQ+ bills brought forward.

“Every single Democrat here strongly opposed this bill. This bill is severely being brought by Idaho Republicans, and I hope they know nobody among the Idaho Democrats would ever support such a monstrous piece of legislation.”

She also says ordinary citizens can do their part to ensure the bill does not pass.

“I hope everybody will write to the Idaho Senate State of Affairs Committee and ask them to hold this bill in committee,” she said. “The best thing we can do is support Transgender youth in Idaho.”

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International news highlights

by Daniel Lindsley
SGN Contributing Writer

Chile: First Gay marriage

On March 10 that two men in Chile, Javier Silva and Jaime Nazar, have become the first two men in the country to legally marry. A law allowing same-sex marriage that passed in December just came into effect.

Silva and Nazar have two young children, and they have been together for seven years. They had a civil union for three years before the marriage, which did not provide the same benefits.

“Now we have the same rights as other families” and they will be able to have, we hope, a better future. “We hope that the court will not be discriminating against for having two parents who love each other,” Silva told reporters after the civil ceremony.

“I think we’re putting ourselves at the level of the rest of the world is living in, which is great.”

President-elect Gabriel Boric, who will take office on March 18, congratulated the couple on Twitter.

Bermuda: London rules Gay marriage ban constitutional

Reuters reported on March 14 that a London tribunal has ruled that Bermuda’s 2018 ban on same-sex marriage is constitutional in the British overseas territory. This comes three years after Bermuda’s top court ruled that the ban violates the constitutional freedom of conscience. The Bermuda government appealed the decision at the time, which brought the case to London’s Privy Council.

The lead claimant in the case against the ban, Roderick Ferguson, said in a statement by advocacy group OUTBermuda, “Our supporters all say ‘love wins.’ This time it didn’t. Our work as a society is not done until everyone’s humanity is recognized both in law and in life.”

The organization has pushed for clarification on how the government will handle the lawful same-sex marriages that were performed since 2017.

Supporters of the ban, thousands of the Atlantic island’s population of 60,000, claim that legal domestic partnerships provide the same rights as marriage. Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs Kathy Sinanos said in a statement that the government is “pleased with the outcome of the appeal” and that it will “take time to consider the full judgment and its impact.”
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