



# SGN

# FOOD & DINING

FEATURE ISSUE!

SEE PAGE 10

# 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 4,500 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

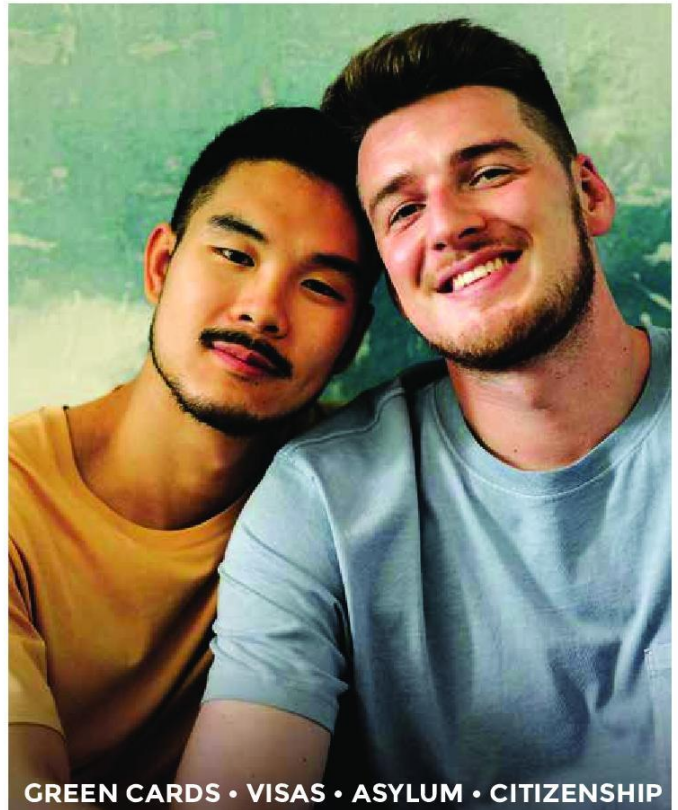
Photo courtesy of Nathan Adams

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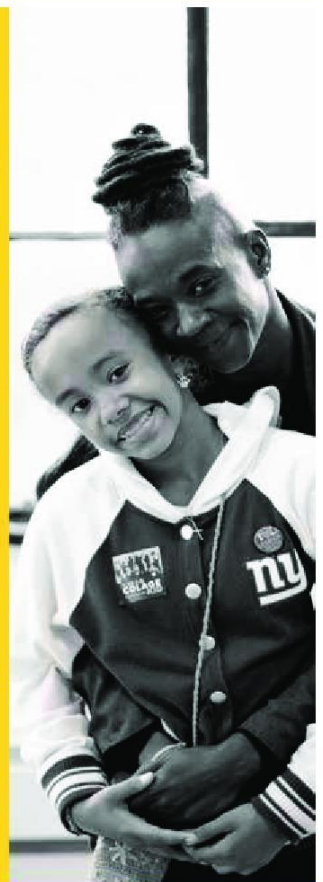


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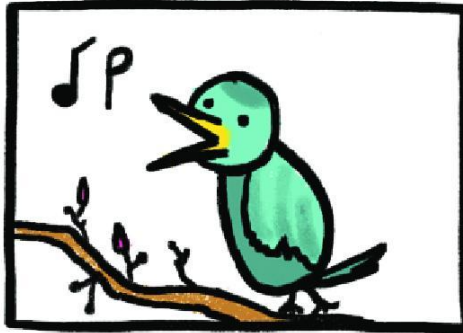


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# Same woman charged with first two local anti-LGBTQ hate crimes of 2022

by **Hannah Saunders**  
SGN 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 Denitra Marie Freeman, 42.

The charging documents state that Freeman maliciously and intentionally caused the physical injury of the victim due to her perception of his sexual orientation.

On Dec. 5, 2021, Freeman banged on the door of a tenant who resided in the same apartment building as her 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 his door, Freeman punched 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" like 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 not 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 9.94A.835."

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.

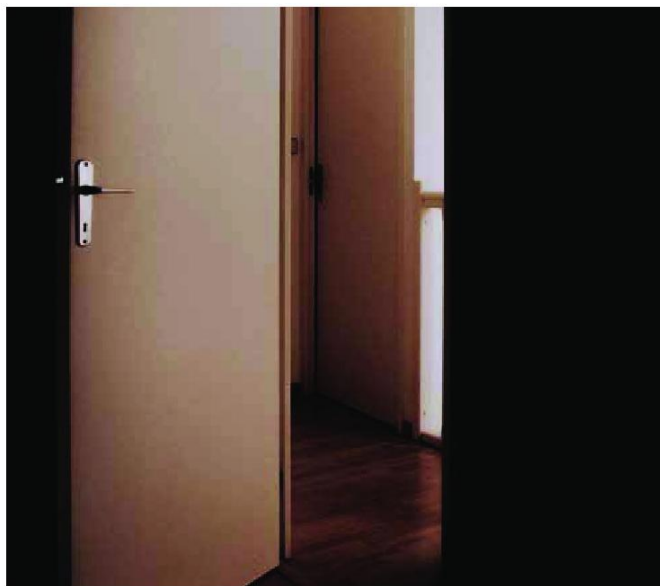


Photo by Mathias P.R. Reding / Unsplash

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

by **Nick Rapp**  
SGN 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, branding itself with the tagline "Your new super chill, super lit Thursday night." They deliver on that promise, curating 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 flair) 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-synched 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 was so fun to take in that you didn't need to know what song was playing.

Others performers included Sam Ahmed, Viper Fenzg, The Dab Boiz, Baby, and Stasia Coup, all Northwest locals and all distinct in their talents. There was prop work and duets, solo lip synchs and pseudo performance art. Everyone's style shone through, with Kylie and Issa bookending the night together in stunning get-ups.

I left *Kickback* still marveling at the talent and liveliness of all the performers and had to ask the hosts a few questions about how it all came to be.

**Nick Rapp: How did y'all decide on a monthly Thursday evening show?**

Kylie Mooncakes: When I started doing



Issa Man (far right) and Kylie Mooncakes (far left) with ensemble — Photo by Nick Rapp

drag, all of my favorite shows were on the weekdays. Then, when I traveled to other cities recently, it felt like all the great gems that called to the local Queer community were on the weekdays, while weekend gigs were more for *Drag Race* girls coming to town, or for your standard cis-white 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 super at home at. We urge them to get high (if that fuels them) and just get loose and have fun with whatever they pull out — whether it's the experimental numbers they've been waiting to show or their fave middle school anthem.

IM: I think we also just wanted a space to be best friends on stage. We both admire

each other so much and have a lot of crossovers in our drag tastes, so working together just seemed like a must!

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

KM: Me and Issa met back in 2019 when they first moved here from Alaska. I was so immediately taken by their talent and aesthetic, and we bonded over our style, our humor, and our passions immediately. We cooked up a couple fun duo numbers here and there, and even though we take a while to get there, the end results always [feel] so fulfilling that continuing to do this felt like a no-brainer.

IM: Tea.

**NR: You're both so tall in heels. Are you ever scared of hitting the beam at *Kremwerk*?**

KM: Every moment of my life.

IM: Well, that was actually a big reason we decided to have the runway stage! So we'd actually have space to dance! That, and we wanted to pay homage to ballroom!

KM: I still hit it though.

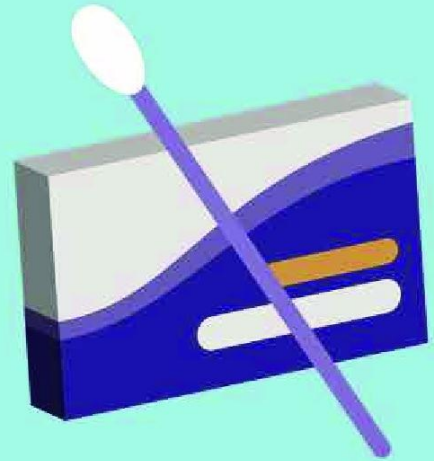
**NR: Did you sew the floral outfits from your final number?**

KM: No! Issa's an indie fashion fiend, and she put us on to House of Aris, this super dope independent brand made by this one Black girl based in Vietnam. Both looks from our first number are Issa's fits that she made too! We bought them at different times, but they ended up fitting kind of perfectly together for the number.

IM: I love House of Aris so much! Working with her is always such a joy, because I have very few boundaries when it comes to fashion! I'll be naked and uncomfortable if it means I get to serve a look, so our collabs are always so wild! Definitely a designer to look out for!

*The next iteration of Kickback is on Thursday, April 14 at Kremwerk, 1809 Minor Ave., Seattle.*

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# That's a wrap on our winter book club!



By Lindsey Anderson  
SGN Contributing Writer

The Seattle winter can be a rough 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, my winter months are always full of cheap, fabricated love.

One problem I have found with the glorious art form of the rom-com is that the genre is overwhelmingly white, straight, and cis. For Queer readers, happy endings are hard to find on the pages of literature that loves to capitalize off the pain and struggle of the LGBTQ+ community. So for our winter book club, I was determined to find the happiest, Queerest, and most clichéd rom-coms 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 preppy high school. *May the Best Man Win* followed Jeremy, a Trans boy trying to prove his masculinity to the world, and Lukas, the ex he left behind in the dust. As their senior year begins, the boys find themselves in a heated battle for homecoming king.

Author Z.R. Ellor wrote this hilarious romance novel to bring some lighthearted joy to the Queer literary community. “We are still very much in a period where Queer teenagers do not have access to that kind of representation in their reading life,” Ellor said. “When I was a teen, the few pieces of Queer media I had weren’t written for me. They were specific, sensationalized, and tragic, written in a way that didn’t make me understand I could be Queer and that label could be accessible to me. I think it is important to have Queer rep in media, for Queer teens who are looking to find a sense of themselves and the world they live in.”

### The Queer Principles of Kitt Webb

For our next romantic read, we took a trip back in time with author Cat Sebastian to

a steamy 18th-century coffee shop for an even steamier romance. *The Queer Principles of Kitt Webb* tells the story of the titular retired burglar and an aristocrat, Percy, who hires him to right a wrong.

Sebastian is best known for her historical fiction, which often features Queer leads. She says she prefers to read historical fiction because it functions as great literary escapism but has found that most people are unaware that Queer characters can, and did, exist in historical contexts.

“When it comes to Queer historical fiction, we have this tendency in culture to be like, ‘Queer people must not have existed, because we don’t see them in the historical record,’” she said. “We do see them in historical records, and when we don’t, there are many good reasons for this. Queer people have been systemically erased from so many narratives that putting them back in, especially putting us back into settings where we have been deliberately kept absent, is satisfying to me as a writer.”

### Mangos and Mistletoe

As Christmastime rolled around, we found the best Hallmark-esque Queer holiday romances! We read Adriana Herrera’s hot WLW *Mangos and Mistletoe*. The story follows two Dominican cooks, Kiskeya and Sully, who compete in Scotland’s biggest holiday bake-off. The tasty rivals-to-lovers romance is unique in that it is one of the only LGBTQ+ romances that features two women of color in the lead.

“You don’t often see sapphic books where both leads are women of color,” said Herrera. “With *Mangos and Mistletoe*, they’re both Dominican, but they have very different stories: one is born in the US, the other... in the Dominican Republic, so their approach to their culture, how they see themselves, is very different. I love exploring [that].”

### The Lights on Knockbridge Lane

As the holiday season ramped up, we took a stroll down Knockbridge Lane with author Roan Parrish. *The Lights on Knockbridge Lane* is the jolly story of single dad Adam, his rambunctious daughter Gus, and their mysterious and sexy new neighbor Wes, as the three of them try to create the best Christmas light show ever.

“I love holiday stories, and this is a

Christmas book,” gushed Parrish. “I’m Jewish, and people were like, ‘Why are you writing a Christmas book?’ Growing up not celebrating Christmas, I have no negative association with it. It’s just magical and snowy and cheerful. I wanted to write a Hallmark Christmas movie in book form, but Gay, very Gay,” they laughed.

### Written in the Stars

The holiday season wrapped up with a sapphic love letter to Seattle. *Written in the Stars* is author Alexandria Bellefleur’s first novel in the her rom-com series of the same name. Branded as a WLW *Pride and Prejudice*, Bellefleur’s story follows optimistic Elle and cynical Darcy as they fake a romance at Christmastime.

“My original inspiration was to give nods to *Pride and Prejudice* and *Bridget Jones’s Diary*, but not have a direct retelling beat for beat. I wanted to explore the archetypes and capture that same feeling, but I wanted to make it Queer. From the very beginning, I wanted to make it Queer,” said Bellefleur.

### 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 Jonny Garza Villa. *Fifteen Hundred Miles from the Sun* spotlights a year 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.

Garza Villa says the book was inspired by the film *Love, Simon*. But they also had a desire to see more BIPOC representation in Queer media. With the help of their friends, they were able to create a happy, romantic, and hopeful masterpiece.

“I hope that just anyone who knows what it is to be in Jules’ shoes and is still existing in a place that is similar to Jules’ own experience of having to hide for his safety knows that anywhere you are within your coming out, you are enough,” said Garza Villa. “You are enough for this world, there’s no rush. You are loved, you are supported. And I hope [that] just reading it, even if you’re reading it behind closed doors in your bedroom at night, you feel not so alone, you feel that you have Jules and Mat and all Jules’ friends and his sister there to support you.”

### I Wish You All the Best

Following the theme of coming-of-age and coming-out stories, we next read Mason Deaver’s *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 friends-to-lovers slow-burn romance.

Deaver says a big reason they wanted to write the book was to give accurate Nonbinary representation to a genre that has simply not seen any yet. “There were no Nonbinary characters in YA at the time. Trans representation as a whole left a lot to be desired,” they said. “Lots of cis writers creating harmful — or downright offensive — ways. Some intricacies go into writing a Nonbinary character, things that cis characters won’t experience or can’t understand.”

### Girl Haven

As the gloomy winter weather dragged on, our book club took a field trip to the delightful fantasy land of Koretrix. Inside the pages of Lilah Sturges’ middle-grade graphic novel, *Girl Haven*, 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 *Girl Haven* a special book for many QT teens and young adults, but it was also a special journey for Sturges. “*Girl Haven* 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. The next week, we read *Of Ice and Shadows*, Audrey Coulthurst’s highly anticipated sequel to the fall book club read *Of Fire and Stars*. The novel picked up where readers had last left off, with star-crossed lovers Mare and Denna fleeing their kingdom and hoping to avoid a war.

For Coulthurst, part of the fun of writing a sequel was being able to put the charac-

ters readers have come to know and love through tests and difficulties. "It was fun to put Denna and Mare through new challenges and to explore how getting together in the first place is hardly the main obstacle in a relationship," said Coulthurst. "Time will always bring new trials to a partnership and give people the choice to confront them together or be driven apart."

### Hot Dog Girl

As the winter dragged on, readers began longing for the days of summertime warmth. While we didn't feel much heat from the Seattle sun, Jennifer Dugan's *Hot Dog Girl* brought readers right back to the warm summer vibes. This story followed Bi teen Eloise as she schemed and pined over the boy of her dreams, only to realize that she might just be in love with the best friend she spent the summer pushing away.

Dugan's depiction of Eloise the "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 Dugan. "Even though Lou's heart is in the right 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 are struggling to figure out who you are, [or] there's a gap between who you are right now and who you want to be, you still are deserving of love and family and joy. You don't have to be perfect 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, triracial boy just trying to find his perfect summer romance while visiting his older brother in Colorado. Readers cringed along with author

Emery Lee's delightful debut novel as they watched Noah make mistake after mistake.

Lee admits not having written *Meet Cute Diary* to teach any kind of lesson about Trans identity and struggle. "Ultimately, I don't want [readers] to feel like this has to be the book that changes their life, that it means something super special to them, because it's just one book... All I want readers to take away is a good time."

### Satisfaction Guaranteed

In a bit of a mature turn, the next book we featured was *Satisfaction Guaranteed*, a WLW romance set in quirky Portland. The hit novel, which put author Karelia Stetz-Waters on the map, focused on the topic of female sexual pleasure and sexual liberation. The opposites-attract romance introduced us to Cade, a tightly wound accountant, and Selena, a free-spirited artist, as the two worked together to bring a beloved sex shop back from the brink of bankruptcy.

Stetz-Waters put a lot of time into researching female sexuality, which ultimately turned the novel's sex shop backdrop 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 clitoris, sexuality for women, for vulva owners, other gender perspectives, gender identities. So it went from just a really fun set to kind of a calling," she said.

### Perfect on Paper

Australian author Sophie Gonzales took our readers back to high school yet again, for a fun and flirty Bi romance. *Perfect on Paper* focused on secret high school romance advice specialist Darcy and charming senior Brougham, who discovers Darcy's secret and blackmails her into helping him win his ex back.

While a romance ultimately develops between Darcy and Brougham, Gonzales said it is important for readers to accept

Bisexual romances as inherently Queer, even when they happen to be between a cis-hetero-presenting couple.

"The main reason I wanted to focus on a male/female relationship in this book was that I had received a biphobic comment about another book that I had written," Gonzales said. "There was this biphobic opinion that the character is somehow less Queer if it's a Bisexual character that ends up in a different-gender relationship. I have had people quarrel publicly about why the book is considered LGBT when there's not a same-sex relationship at the front and center..."

"You know, LGBT is not only the L and the G, and 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/female-[presenting] relationship. That doesn't impact whether it's an LGBT story, so that's another misconception that I've seen come up quite a bit."

### In at the Deep End

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

"I wrote it as a kind of *Bridget Jones's Diary*-style 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 truthful," 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 rewrote the whole thing. At that point, I made it much more serious, and I had to sort of 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 Dhalia 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 summer fling, 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 Demi 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 in a relevant scene in the book, which is funny, because I've seen people comment when they've first seen news of the book, and 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. I promise it will 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 on 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 reinforced 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, follow 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.

## 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 FRANSCCELL  
© 2022 Berkley  
\$27.00  
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 creeped out by something and had gone straight back to the tent, but she was sure she'd zipped it up tight. All was well then — her siblings were asleep like a pile of puppies. But now, in this pre-dawn hour, something was definitely wrong.

Susie, Heidi's 7-year-old sister, was gone, and there was a neatly cut hole in the tent near where her head should've been.

FBI Special Agent Byron Dunbar was called. He was a local who'd served under J. Edgar Hoover before returning home to care for his parents. He knew the terrain, so he started gathering evidence, but there wasn't much of it. He began interviewing people who might have had information about the abduction, but even in everybody-knows-everybody Manhattan, Montana, nobody seemed to know a thing.

Then someone began phoning the Jaeger home, taunting Susie's mother with false clues. And 19-year-old Sandy Small-gang 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 preidentified 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 recoil, because these crimes were gruesome, and author Ron Franscell doesn't candy-coat that. Instead, he gives readers an armchair 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 murder and history are woven 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 you.

If you've got books about the Body Farm on your shelf, or anything by John Douglas or Robert Ressler, *ShadowMan* deserves to be right next to them. If you love a gruesome tale of crime-solving, wrap your head around this one.

Also: here's another book for true crime fans: *Bone Deep* by Charles Bosworth Jr. and Joel J. Schwartz. It's the story of Betsy Faria's murder — she was stabbed 55 times! — and a miscarriage of justice that jailed an innocent man and left a killer to roam free.

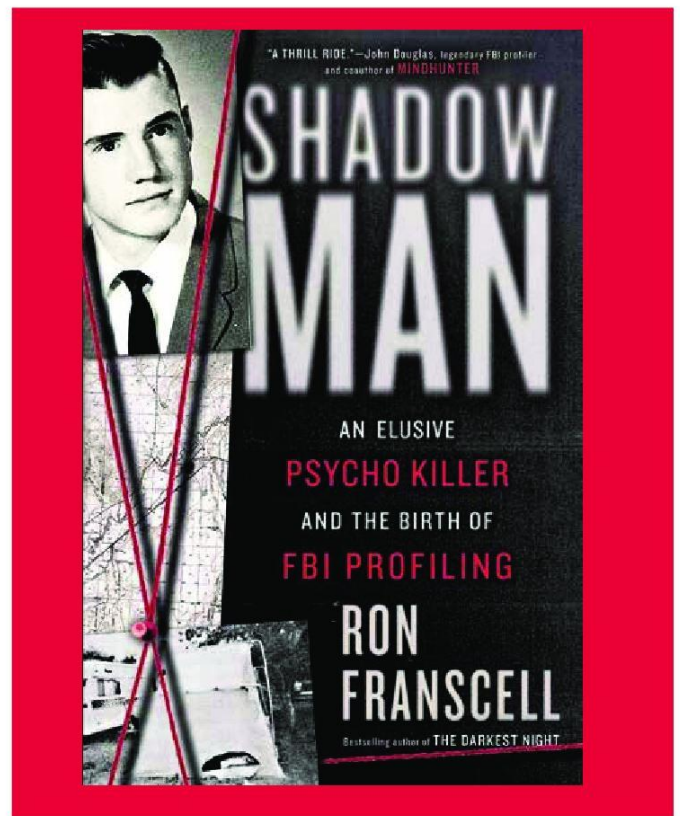


Image courtesy of Berkley

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# 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 his *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 Last 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 hook is that both Adams join forces to go back to 2018 to see their dad



Walker Scobell and Ryan Reynolds in *The Adam Project* — Photo courtesy of Netflix

and convince him not only that he invents time travel, but that his wealthy tech-billionaire business partner Maya Sorian (Catherine Keener) will utilize this power recklessly when she gains control of his discovery after his untimely — 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 Sorian. There is an attempt during the 2018 section to show how the character began as a selfless do-gooder who legitimately wants Louis' invention to be a boon to humanity. But something transforms her into a murderous 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 youngster has to not only be a pint-sized version of Reynolds but also emotionally navigate a path well outside of the one his older self insists 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 exuberant score, and cinematographer Tobias Schliessler (*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 concocted. 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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# Northwest Black Restaurant Week Round-Up

BY KYLIN BROWN  
SGN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Photo courtesy of Osteria La Spiga

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 recognition for bars, catering, solo chefs, and food trucks. For example, its culinary showcase, “Nosh,” 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 Palate award.

Black Restaurant Week (BRW) was founded in 2016 by Warren Luckett, Falayn 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 weeklong campaign. BRW “goes beyond restaurants,” said Luckett.

Robinson is the BRW team’s marketing specialist. He and Ferrell co-own Fade Media, a digital marketing firm in Houston, Tex. They discussed 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 get 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 Popeyes, McDonald’s. There are a lot of things we can cure 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 HBOMax, the foundation provided \$250,000 to Black-owned culinary businesses in 2020. With ongoing grants, awards, and free business courses, the organization is busier than ever.

## A 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 scouting of Afro-eats in Seattle, we have some new ideas on where to spend our “flavor” 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](http://www.laspiga.com).

First Hill residents can enjoy a quick stroll to Jamaica at E. Jefferson’s Taste of the Caribbean. From 3 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 [tasteofthecaribbeanseattle.com](http://tasteofthecaribbeanseattle.com).

A trip down Rainier Ave. S will bring you by Lil Red Jamaican BBQ and Soul Cuisine (covered in last week’s SGN), where 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 [lilredtakeout.com](http://lilredtakeout.com).

Continue further south to enjoy highly-rated Delish Ethiopian Cuisine. The name

says it all. It are 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](http://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](http://www.facebook.com/blackstarkebabs).

From West African jollof rice to plantain fritters and Texan 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](http://blackrestaurantweeks.com/about). Find the Seattle directory, including an interactive map and links to all aforementioned businesses at [blackrestaurantweeks.com/brw-campaigns/united-states/washington-2/seattle-3/](http://blackrestaurantweeks.com/brw-campaigns/united-states/washington-2/seattle-3/).*

Broadway is second to none when it comes to food options. Every block has something for someone. But a few blocks west, at Thomas and Summit, lies a hidden gem serving breakfast food that stands out from the rest.

B~Side Foods is nestled in a cozy space alongside its sister café, Analog Coffee. This unassuming spot would be easy to miss without its corner easel sign — and the crowds lined up for breakfast fare. They're there for a reason.

I am going on the record to say that B~Side is home to the best breakfast sandwich in Seattle (maybe even the Northwest). It is no mere bacon, egg, and cheese. The sandwich is composed of an English muffin, a scrambled egg crepe with green onions folded in, pickled daikon, charred onion aioli, Beecher's cheese, and your choice of mushrooms, ham, or both. You can also spice it up with some fermented hot sauce. (More on the sandwich below.)

Danny Hanlon, co-owner of Analog and B~Side, filled the *SGN* in on the café's history and what makes B~Side's menu so special.

Hanlon explained that he and Tim Hayden "opened Analog in June of 2011, and B~Side in September of 2017." There was a wall between the two spots until June 2020, when they were sure of B~Side's success and decided to knock it down and combine them.

Hayden and Hanlon's approach to developing menu items is asking the simple question: "What do we want to eat?" It turns out that what they want to eat is most certainly what you want to eat as well.

"We are inspired by everything that we get excited about eating," said Hanlon. "Often we are trying to recreate a food memory or just a certain feeling with a new dish."

The core menu consists of the egg sandwich and a rice bowl, along with an herby veggie toast that grew into a staple. Otherwise, they "try to keep the rest of the spaces on the menu somewhat open to change seasonally, to give us some room to create new favorites," Hanlon said.

#### The egg sandwich

If the ingredients of the egg sandwich strike you as odd, you would be reasonable in your concern. But trust that much thought went into combining unique flavors to create something delicious, if atypical.



# B~Side SGN FOOD & DINING gets an A+

## This is not your average breakfast spot

BY NICK RAPP  
SGN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Photo by Nick Rapp

"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 Samin Nosrat popularized the four components of good cooking: salt, fat, acid, and heat. The B~Side sandwich finds its success in utilizing each of these categories to allow every ingredient the chance 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 deli-

icious." 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 meatier 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 all pairs wonderfully with Beecher's Flagship cheddar, the perfect 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 very vegetable-forward. B~Side sources its eggs from Stiebers Farms in Yelm, and the English muffins are local, from Franz. Hanlon noted that they aim to make local sourcing of ingredients 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.



Photos courtesy of Nathan Adams

## LUMBER YARD continued from cover

Adams described the new space as having two main parts — the Lumber Yard bar side 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 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 \$100,000 for the rebuilding. Adams is proud of "the support we... have 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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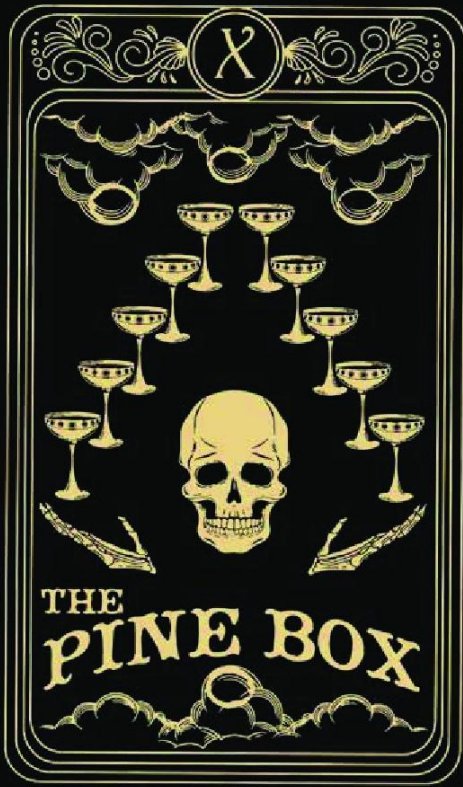
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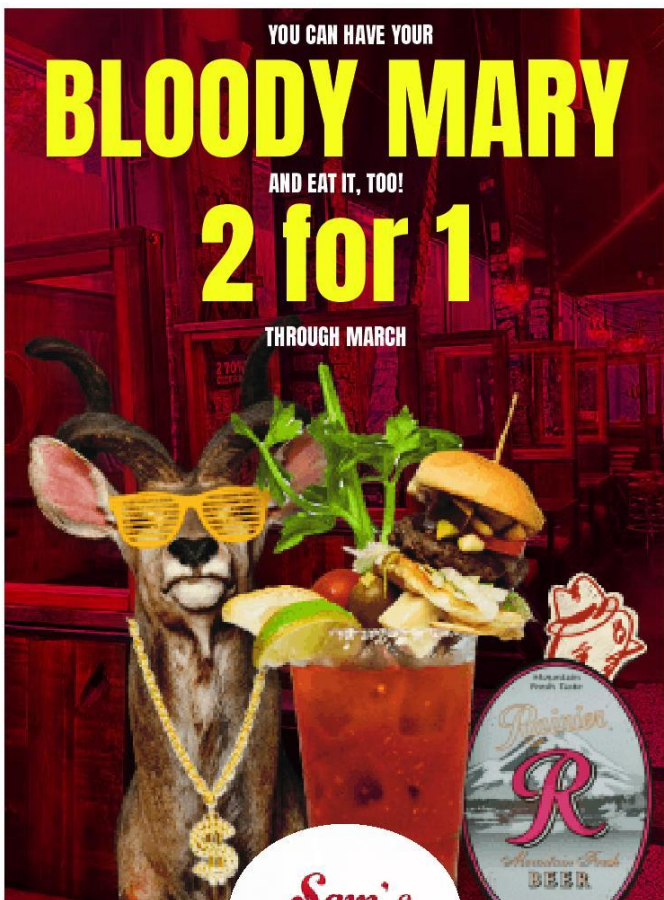
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# Bark up the right trees

Seattle is a dog's best friend

BY LINDSEY ANDERSON  
SGN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Photo courtesy of  
The Seattle Barkery

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 pups

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, from "heavy breathers" to "minis" to "chihuahuas and mixes." The events typically last a few hours and are exclusive to dogs that fit the event criteria.

Seattle Pride's 2021 Doggie Drag Queen Champion, Petey "Patricia Chiweenie," had the pleasure of visiting Dog Yard Bar for its latest "Small Dog" meetup. Donning 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 opens up its yard to all dogs — so long as they (and their owners) can provide proof of vaccination. Dogs and their owners love the atmosphere there and relish the opportunity to make new friends and pet all the dogs.

For information on upcoming events including, "Heavy Breathers," "Giants," "Puppy Playdate," and "Doodles," visit Dog Yard Bar's website at [www.dogyardbar.com](http://www.dogyardbar.com).

## Homemade for your hound

If you're looking for a shop where you can pamper your pups 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 to me that it was going to work, and here we are."

Each Seattle Barkery location puts its dog customers first. The stores carry 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 knew how much we were spending on our dogs, so we knew we probably weren't the only crazy dog parents in this town. There are a lot of dogs in Seattle. So yeah, it works."

The Seattle Barkery has twelve types of treats they make from scratch every day, and they make sure to source all their ingredients locally. "We make it all ourselves in-house. We have over twelve recipes, including our cakes, which are all registered with the Department of Agriculture," Ben said.

"We also try to source locally in the Pacific Northwest, so all our elk antlers come from Montana, [and] any of our bags treats come from Portland and Vancouver, so we try to keep it as local as possible.

"Everything is freshly baked each day, so it's all soft and fresh. I think that's why we have such a good reaction to our treats. The dogs seem to like something fresh. A lot of times you're giving them some store-bought treat that's just dehydrated and it's been sitting on a shelf for who knows how long. So yeah, no preservatives. All of our treats have three to five ingredients, all very simple and easy to make."

## Giving back one bone at a time

Ben and Dawn also use their business to give back to the community. "My wife Dawn is on the board of Old Dog Haven, so we've been working with them for years," said Ben.

The Barkery works alongside the elderly-dog rescue to provide extra treats and donations every year. "We used to go to the Humane Society and donate there, too, but we've got it down so well [now] that there [aren't] a lot of leftovers, but we do donate a lot of different [things] to Old Dog Haven," he said.

"We have a Barkery Box, each month it rotates and changes. It's sponsored by one of our fan's dogs, and each month they choose a different organization to donate to. Last month, for instance, it was Parkinson's. So, a dollar of every Barkery Box goes to Parkinson's. And that averages to about \$300 a month. It's up to whoever is sponsoring the box to choose what they want to do. Old Dog Haven seems to be about three or four months out of the year. We try to spread it out as much as we can. Kind of a fun and creative way to help get other people involved."

The Barkery is also currently working to help dogs affected by the war in Ukraine. "We're doing a benefit for Ukraine dogs, so for every Banana Bone, we're donating a dollar, which is great. I know it sounds a little silly, [what with the] war and everything, but you know those people have dogs as well, and they're a part of 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, too."

## 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 like 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 childless — we're not going to have kids. So we've put all of that love into our dogs. I realize that there's a market for that here in Seattle, and hopefully, it spreads all over the place."

Petey's favorite part of the store was the "treat chute," 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. "I make 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.

Petey also enjoyed the cheesy donuts, a freshly baked snack from the downtown

location, courtesy of dedicated employee Keazia, who informed us that the store is getting ready for a new 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.

## Clean 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 gourmet treats!

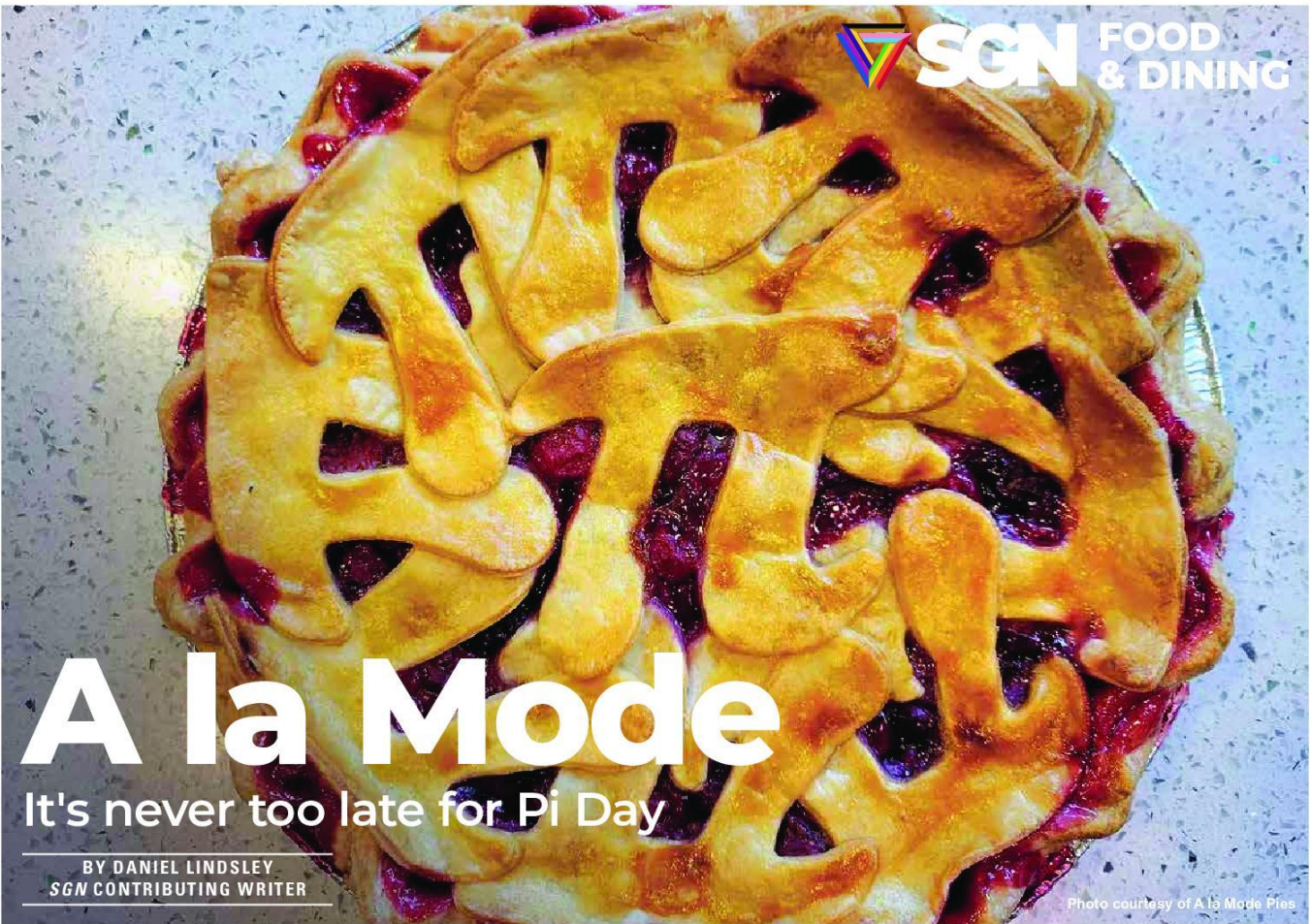
Wag N' Wash offers special grooming opportunities for the hands-on pet owner, a specialty nail trim service, and best of all, a deluxe pet bakery in the back. The bakery items are made fresh each day by an in-store baker, Peter, who loves to receive feedback from all his happy customers.

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

The treat counter was a must-see for Petey, 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 anti-anxiety CBD and catnip sprays, high-quality organic toys, and plenty of dog raincoats.

Our dogs are more than just pets, they're our babies, our best friends, and sometimes our favorite drag performers. They deserve all the best treats, and thanks to Seattle's dedicated dog-loving business owners, there are a plethora of local options to choose from! Petey 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 Chiweenie will eat them, your dog will love these treats too!



# A la Mode

It's never too late for Pi Day

BY DANIEL LINDSLEY  
SGN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Photo courtesy of A la Mode Pies

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 Queer-owned A la Mode Pies, 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 industry 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 \$35.

*A la Mode can be found at 4225 SW Alaska St. in West Seattle, 5821 Phinney Ave N. near the zoo, or 2034 NW 56th St. in Ballard. Online, go to [www.alamodeseatle.com](http://www.alamodeseatle.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 does not stop there but also criminalizes parents who cross state borders with their child to receive care. The maximum sentence for such actions would be life in prison.

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

HB 675 coincides with other restrictive proposed legislation, such as bills prohibiting discussions of gender identity and sexual orientation in public schools and a ban on Trans athletes competing in sports.

The proposed law has many questioning the constitutionality of criminalizing the crossing of state borders to receive care that is legal elsewhere. The constitution limits restrictions on interstate travel, so HB 675 would likely be challenged 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 on strictly along party lines, some members of Idaho’s state legislature are confident the bill will not survive long enough to be signed to 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 am hopeful that the Senate doesn’t even give this horrible bill a hearing. As of today, we’ve only got nine more business days of our legislature, and that’s as long as we need to hold out,” he said. “Let’s cross our fingers this stays in a drawer and doesn’t see the light of day for the rest of the session.”

Rep. John Gannon also believes the bill will not make it past the Senate. “Our Senate isn’t going to consider it. It’s too extreme for even the Republican-controlled Senate to consider,” he said.

## Damage may have already been done

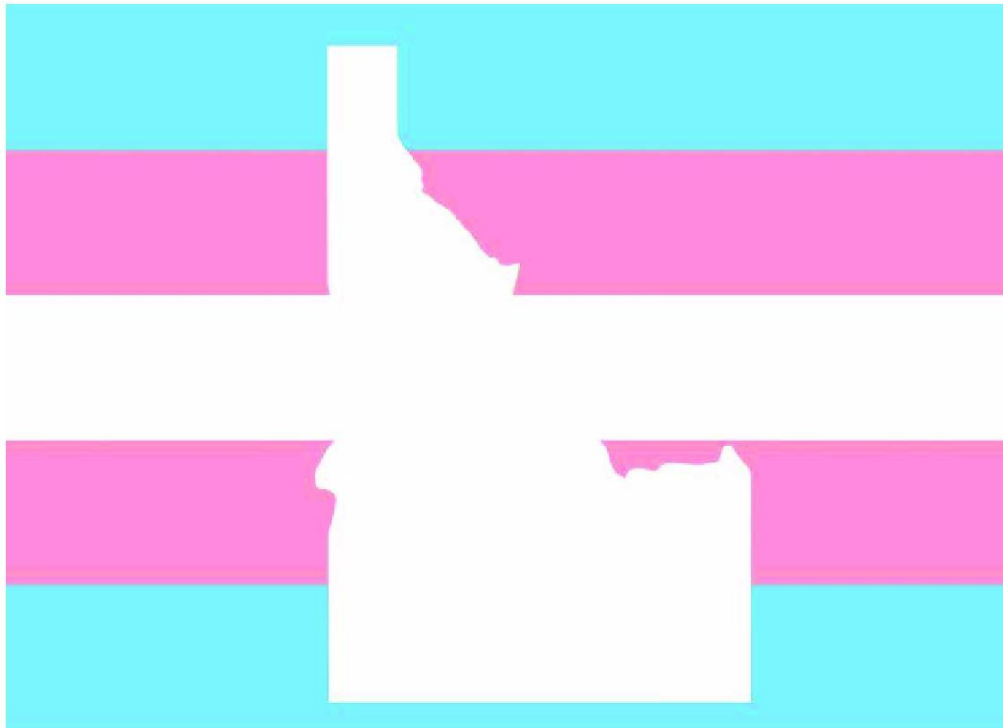
While Reps. McCrostie and Gannon are hopeful the bill will not become law, other Idaho representatives say the damage has already been done.

“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 deaths of Trans youth. This bill is uniquely dangerous in that it makes [it] a life-sentence felony [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 find criminalizing citizens for crossing state borders to be an overly extreme measure. Rep. Colin Nash 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 put parents in prison for life for evidence-based medical care for Trans youth,” Nash said. “I think it will have negative social impacts for Trans youth who were already at high suicide risk. People will not only seek care out of state but move out of state. It will hurt families that are just trying 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 afoul of 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. Skaug, who introduced the bill to the House.

“If we do not allow minors to get tattoos, smoke cigarettes, and drink alcohol or sign legal contracts,” Skaug 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 he would not have preferred this treatment in his youth. “[If] my parents would have done that to me, they would have deserved to go to prison,” he said. “What this needs to be is a deterrent for people who want to do this stuff.”

Rep. Tammy Nichols said she supported the bill because her district voiced its support to her. “I listen to my constituents, because that’s who I represent, and so this is something that was 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 Skaug’s. “The second [reason] was wanting to protect children that are under 18 and still going through puberty. 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 backtracked. “Of course, a tattoo is something that does do something to your body, but it is not as invasive as taking off parts of your body, in my mind,” 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 certainty.”

Idaho Democrats believe that parents and doctors are best suited to make medi-

cal 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 way too extreme and opposed by Idaho doctors [and] the American Medical Association, and it ignored accepted medical practice. This was so extreme [in] 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 LGBTQ+ youth

When asked about what the implications this “deterrent” will have on the mental health of LGBTQ+ 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’re 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 LGBTQ+ 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

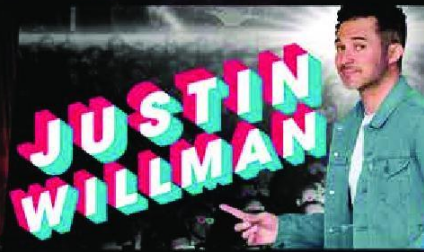
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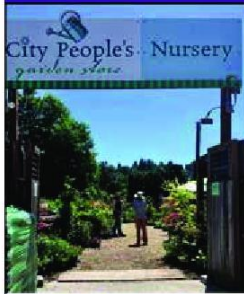
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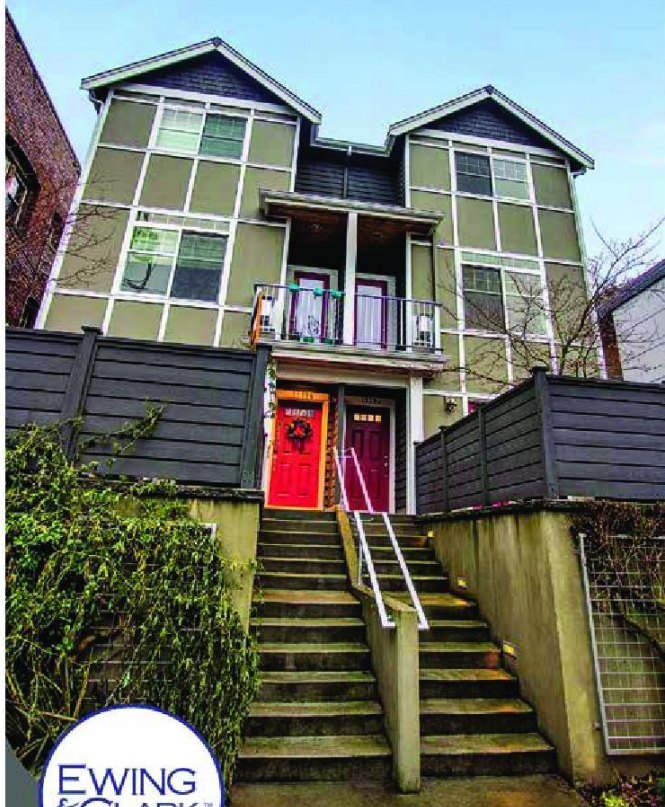
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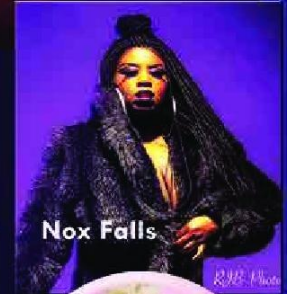
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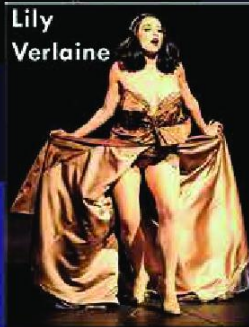
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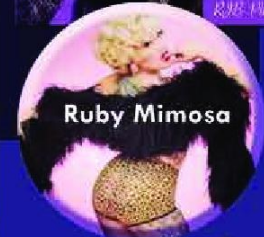
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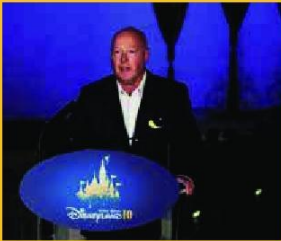
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## National news highlights

by Daniel Lindsley  
SGN Contributing Writer



Bob Chapek  
— Photo by Tyrone Siu / Reuters

### Florida: Disney employees force freeze on donations

Reuters reported on March 11 that Walt Disney Co. will be pausing 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 classrooms.

Chief Executive Bob Chapek announced the decision in a memo to staff. "Speaking to you, reading your messages, and meeting with you have helped me better understand how painful our silence was," he wrote. "It is clear that this is not just an issue about a bill in Florida but instead another challenge to basic human rights. You needed me to be a stronger ally in the fight for equal rights, and I let you 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 LGBTQIA+ 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 this 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 hobby, 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 Amare Roush said, "because that's what we truly need right now."

# HRC launches Reality Flag campaign to raise Equality Act awareness



Photo courtesy of HRC

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 voice," said Joni Madison, interim HRC president. "From housing and educational discrimination to denial of government and health services, LGBTQ+ people are confronted by hurdles to simply 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 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.

Millions 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, surcharged 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 nondiscrimination 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 a series of video advertisements created by the Emmy Award-winning director, producer, and creator of Amazon's *Transparent*, Joey 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 meant 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:

- Staci J, a proud Lesbian Navy veteran who was refused medical treatment by a Minnesota doctor because of her sexual orientation.

- Queen, a Transgender woman, who experienced discrimination at the hands of her landlord in North Carolina. When Queen called him for a repair, he spotted a Transgender flag inside her home. He went on to berate Queen and shortly thereafter asked 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 30 million impressions during the launch.

For more information, visit [www.hrc.org/campaigns/equality-act](http://www.hrc.org/campaigns/equality-act).

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# Pro-LGBTQ bishops should be reprimanded says Cardinal & convicted child molester

by Mike Andrew  
SGN Staff Writer

Roman Catholic Cardinal George Pell — convicted in 2018 of molesting altar boys — called on the Vatican to discipline two of Europe's most senior bishops for violating the Church's teaching on sexual ethics.

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 "theological-scientific foundation" of Catholic teaching on what "one formerly condemned as sodomy" 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 Catechism 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 homosexual activity but undermine and reject the teaching on monogamous marriage, the exclusive union of a man and a woman."



Cardinal George Pell — Photo by Gregorio Borgia / AP

The CDF is a powerful Vatican institution charged with keeping Church officials and the faithful in line with Catholic dogma. They may censure violators, prohibit them from preaching or publishing texts, or even excommunicate them from the Catholic Church.

The group was once headed by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI. During his tenure, the CDF earned a reputation for suppressing progressive Catholic thought — especially on questions of sexual ethics and family relationships.

Pell was arrested for molesting children in 2017 and convicted by an Australian court in 2018. Australia's High Court overturned the conviction in 2020 on the grounds that the jury "ought to have entertained a doubt" about his guilt.

A Vatican investigation into the charges against him was terminated after the High Court ruling. He was never disciplined by the Church, but the Pope allowed him to retire from his positions, as he was already 75 at the time of his arrest.

## IDAHO

continued from page 17

reversible. Forcing Trans youth to experience the full implications of puberty against their will has lifelong impacts that threaten the risk of their future mental health and treatment."

### Republican hypocrisy on parental rights

Rep. McCrostie, 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. "What it seeks to do is keep Trans youth from getting access

to the meds they need as they are working out how to go through puberty, just like all teens go through, and this piece of legislation would prevent that. What's particularly harmful about the bill, though, is that it represents a fundamental misunderstanding of what Trans people experience. I think that was probably the most offensive part."

"At 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. "In particular... 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."

McCrostie 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 so antithetical to what some of my colleagues across the aisle continue to proclaim about top parental choice," he said. "The whole notion of criminalizing parents for taking care of their children is ludicrous."

McCrostie is not only a member 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 by the adults in their community and that people are still fighting for their rights.

"I believe Trans youth and all LGBTQ+ youth are beautiful people and beautiful members 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 that long, so that they can make mistakes on their taxes 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 just deserve a beautiful life, and I want them to get there."

Idaho Democrats are still fighting for Trans youth. Rep. Rubel says she will continue to oppose HB 675 and all other anti-LGBTQ+ bills brought forward.

"Every single Democrat here strongly opposed this bill. This is entirely 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 hope is that this bill does not even get a hearing in the committee and dies. Contacting that committee is the best thing people can do to protect Transgender youth in Idaho."

## International news highlights

by Daniel Lindsley  
SGN Contributing Writer



Javier Silva and Jaime Nazar before their wedding day — Photo by Ivan Alvarado / Reuters

### Chile: First Gay marriage

Reuters reported on March 10 that two men in Chile, Javier Silva and Jaime Nazar, have become the first two men in the country's history 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 have been together for seven years. They had had a civil union for three years before the marriage, which didn't provide the same benefits.

"Now our children can have the same rights [as other families] and they will be able to have, we hope, a better future, [and we hope] that they will not be discriminated 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 the rest of the world is living in, which is great," Nazar said. "I know our society is very conservative, but I also know we have a promising future as a country."

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.

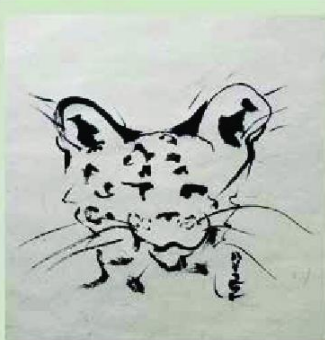
The lead co-plaintiff in the case against the ban, Roderick Ferguson, said in a statement by advocacy group OUTBermuda, "Our supporters often say 'love wins.' This time it didn't. Our work as a society is not done until everyone's humanity is recognized both in law and in life."

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 among 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 Simmons 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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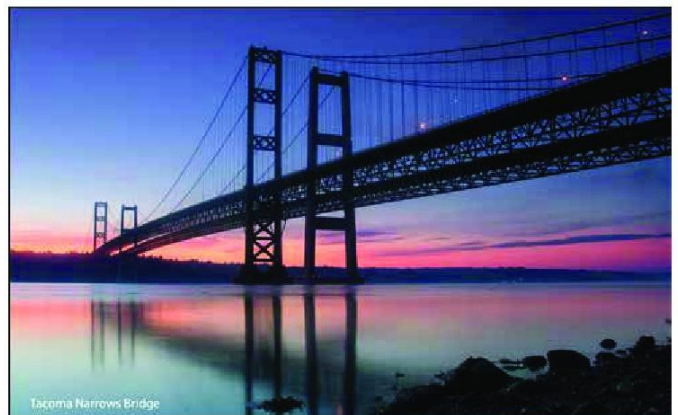
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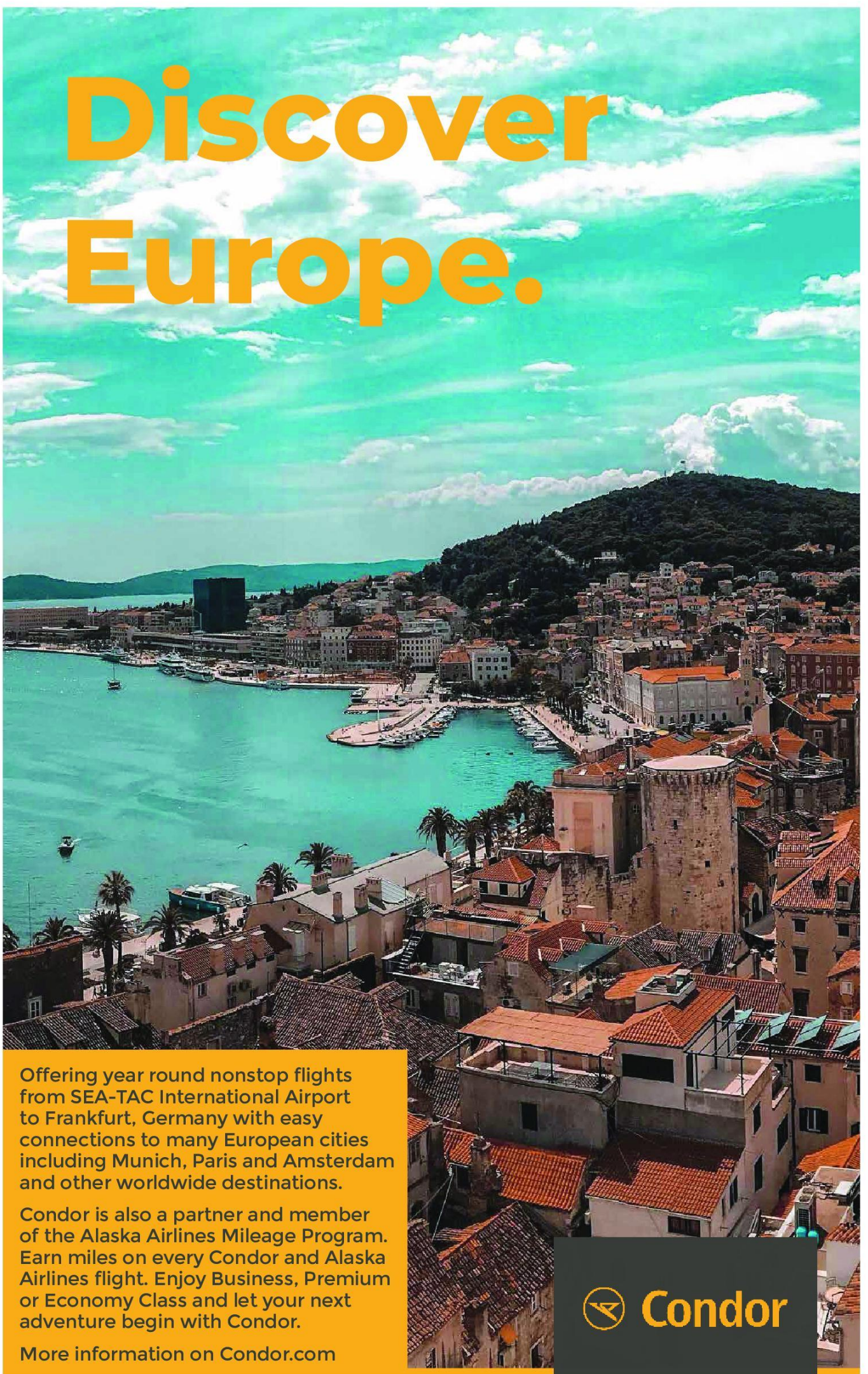
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