

ISSUE 25 — VOLUME 51 — FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 2023



SEATTLE'S LGBTQIA+ NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY SINCE 1974

GAY IS GOOD

A black and white photograph of a person's arm and hand holding a rainbow flag. The flag is partially visible, showing the top and bottom stripes. The person's hand is visible at the bottom left, gripping the flagpole. The background is dark and out of focus.

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IT'S A WILD WORLD OUT THERE

KATE BURKE SHARES LESSONS FROM A YEAR OF QUEER TRAVEL

BY LINDSEY ANDERSON
SGN STAFF WRITER

For the past year, former Spokane city councilmember Kate Burke has been on the biggest adventure of her life: traveling the world. “This is something that I’ve always wanted to do,” Burke said. “Just go and travel and see the world, see what’s out there, and I just never put it as a priority for myself.”

Tethered to a small town

Despite her dream of seeing the world, Burke had a lot tethering her to Spokane, Washington. She was the youngest member of the city council, providing a liberal perspective to the conservative Eastern Washington city. “I was giving it my all. I didn’t matter over anybody else, and I was going to do everything I could to change as much as I could,” she recalled of her time on the council.

Burke fought for the rights of unhoused, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ people in Spokane. She spent so much energy fighting for others she had nothing left to give to herself. “I got sick. It was not good. It was not healthy. I went to this place where I never wanted to work again. I was so burnt out. I was so sick and tired, and I didn’t want to do anything ever again,” she said. After four years of serving the community, Burke decided to step away in 2021.

“I finally came to a spot in my life where I wasn’t happy with what I was doing work-wise and the direction I was going. I also found a partner who was just as crazy as me and wanted to do something similar,” Burke recalled. After leaving her job and discussing her plans with Sarah, Burke decided to take the leap.

The adventure begins!

Burke and Sarah sold all their belongings, bought a car, and first drove across the United States. They then sold their car and traveled to Mexico. “We knew we were going to Mexico first. We had a friend who let us stay in their house in Merida for two weeks, so we were like, ‘Great, this is a good starting point. We’ll start there.’ So we went there and didn’t have plans after that,” Burke said.

The couple spent four months in the country, visiting Merida, Valladolid, Troncones, Mexico City, Oaxaca City, and Mazunte. “We chose Mexico first because we knew we could



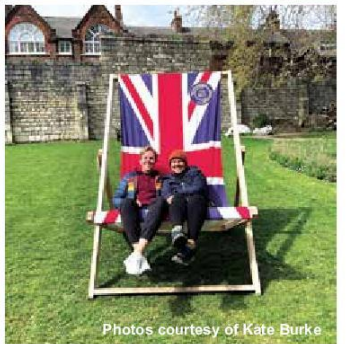
be there for 180 days, so we weren’t stressed to go fast or see all these places,” Burke said. “We had a great time. We barely touched seeing Mexico. We only saw five or six places. We still have so much more adventuring to do there. We liked the beaches.”

When they left Mexico, their adventure had barely begun. Now more seasoned as travelers, they had learned many lessons from Mexico they applied to their second destination, Colombia. “Once we got to Colombia, we knew that we didn’t want to stay more than two weeks at most places because that’s a long time to stay in one spot unless you have thousands of things to do or have friends there, so we were able to do less planning, more moving,” Burke said.

The couple fell in love with Colombia. “There’s a lot to do outdoors — hiking, ropes

courses, paragliding, all that stuff. It was so much fun there,” Burke said. They stayed in the country for a month, exploring waterfalls, surfing, snorkeling, and biking. Despite being in Colombia for only a month, they got around, visiting Bogota, Santa Marta, Minca, Palomino, Mesa de los Santos, San Gil, Barichara, Medellin, and Guatapé.

Next they traveled to Panama, where they learned more about what they do and don’t like. “We went to Mexico, and we were like, ‘This is cool, we like this,’ and we went to Colombia, and we were like, ‘This is awesome,’ and then we went to Panama and were like, ‘Okay, so there are places we don’t connect with,’” Burke said. “For a while, we thought maybe we would just like every place we go because it’s not the United States, but that’s not the case. Being able to see and experience



Photos courtesy of Kate Burke

different places because every place has a vibe, all the people are different.”

They spent a month in Panama, visiting Panama City and Bocas del Toro. One of their favorite things about Panama was the wildlife — they saw dolphins, sloths, and starfish.

Next they hopped across the pond to explore England, Scotland, and Ireland. While they enjoyed the lush countryside, diversity, and vegan food options, they also found the people were not quite as friendly as they had been in Latin America, and driving on the left side of the road was difficult.

After the UK, they went to Spain, where they visited beautiful nature parks, and historic architecture, and enjoyed a vegan tapas tour.

continues on page 6

Planning vs. spontaneity

They found that planning is a must for anyone visiting Europe. "We have to plan here. We bought a Eurail pass for the trains. You have to buy those tickets ahead of time and reserve seats, and we planned our trip ahead of time through Spain."

While planning can be helpful, Burke says keeping options open has also helped them find hidden gems they may not have otherwise experienced. "One thing about not planning is that you can start talking to locals, and they'll be like, 'Oh, you have to go here,'" she said. "We would never have found Mazunte. One of our friends in the United States told us to go, but then multiple Mexican people told us, 'You have to go.' We were like, okay, we have to go there. If you plan too far ahead, you might miss out on small gems you wouldn't even hear about. It's finding a balance between planning and letting travel happen."

Burke has learned more about the world, herself, and her partner on their adventures. "This is a good way to figure out if the person you're with is the person you're supposed to be with," Burke admitted. "There's 20-hour travel days, sleepless nights, noisy neighbors, walking seven or ten miles a day sometimes. Trying to figure out how to travel together, it's a lot of compromises, listening, learning, and it's a cool thing."

Safety

One thing they found about traveling the world is that it's much safer than American media often portrays. "The United States likes to fearmonger other countries as unsafe," Burke said. "Of course, I never fully bought into that. I had my knowledge, and I would research things. The first question [Americans] say when we go to Mexico and Colombia is, 'Oh my God, did you feel safe?' I felt 150% safer than anywhere I've ever been in the United States. It's a different experience," she continued.

The place where the couple felt the least safe was the United States. "We traveled through the United States before we left, and there were places where I was going to tell people that Sarah was my relative or friend if they asked. In other countries, I've felt zero obligation to lie or say anything like that," Burke said.

Seeing the world has helped Burke learn more about her country of origin. "People in the United States take things too seriously and overcomplicate everything," she said. "Other countries, the ones we've visited, seem to have different priorities about what's important. They also seem to be less inclined to get intimately connected with how your life is going. For instance, it seems people in Mexico, Colombia, and Panama couldn't care less about if people get abortions or if they're Gay or Trans or what have you because it doesn't affect their daily life."

Burke has also learned that Americans are less educated on global issues than most of the locals she and Sarah met. "You don't understand how conceited we are until you leave and see that no one cares. No one cares like we care about ourselves. We put ourselves at the forefront of everything," she said. "I'll put on the TV, and there will be news on, and it will just be global news. It doesn't seem like that in the United States. It's so much about us and what we do. We're not taught about other cultures in school."

Basic high school language requirements don't even scratch the surface of what other countries do to educate their children to become global citizens. "It's not a priority to educate us on the rest of the world. Every person we've met has known so much about the politics in the United States and how our systems work and these things that most people don't know about other countries from the United States. That's a huge thing. It's been eye-opening," she said.

Burke says they've felt welcome as a Queer couple in every place they've traveled, thanks to prior planning and research before they pick their location. "The big precautions you need to take are looking up what's legal and what's not. We don't even want to visit any countries that don't have good policies around LGBTQ because we don't want to give those places our time and energy, especially if we can't be ourselves."

They also make sure the resources they use are accurate. "We try to find authentic



articles, not fear mongering United States articles or anything like that, but we try to dig deep and find things," Burke said. "People will be like, 'You should visit here;' ... but they're not Queer. You have to be very careful of what you listen to. Some people would say, 'It's totally fine,' but they're straight and don't understand how scary it can be or the types of interactions you can have." Burke and her partner also make sure the locations they travel to are welcoming of BIPOC people.

The couple is careful about where and when they go out as well. "Something that's probably different from other people trav-

eling — we do not party. We don't go out late. We don't drink. We're not searching for drugs or anything like that," Burke said.

Returning to the US

Currently, the couple is in Portugal. They're headed to Amsterdam next before flying back to the US. Despite the fact that US politics leaves her drained and disappointed, Burke says she is excited to come back home and see her friends and family again. "Traveling has been amazing but also very isolating, especially when we've gone to a majority of countries that don't

speak English, so we haven't had strong connections with the locals," she said. "We've met some other travelers, which has been nice, but overall it's been isolating. I'm excited to see friends and family again."

While she is happy to come home, she's also wary of falling back into the American systems that left her so drained in the first place. "There's a lot of things that I don't like about the States. I don't want to get sucked back into what I thought was important," she admitted.

Since seeing the world and meeting so many new people, Burke has realized that the emphasis Americans put on work can quickly become toxic. "Now I'm in this place where I can see myself having a job, and when it's over, it's done. I'm still enjoying life," she said. "If you buy into the American dream, you're wasting your life. There's no such thing as the American dream, it's just capitalism. They're trying to use our bodies and minds as their little cogs in the machine. It's not worth it, and I will never do that again."

They plan on returning to the US for a little while to save money, visit family, and get married. Then they hope to travel more. "People have reached out and said, 'I wish I would have done what you're doing.' Older people always say, 'You're doing it right. I wish I would have done that,' and young people will say, 'I wish I could do that.' It's not easy, but people can do it," she said. "I say if someone's thinking about it, I would go for it. I am so happy with the people I've met and the experiences I've had. Just seeing other countries, it's amazing."

For anyone, especially Queer and Trans people, looking to leave the United States soon, Burke suggests traveling to multiple locations and "trying countries on" before settling on a permanent home. "If you can, travel before you pick a spot because I would have never known anything about Colombia except for what the United States says about it in horrible articles about it being unsafe. Going there was such an amazing experience, the Colombian people are so amazing. I'm in love with it."

Since leaving the US, Burke has felt happier, healthier, and safer. There's a wide world out there, and she plans on seeing as much of it as she can. You can follow her adventures on Instagram at @wild_world_women.



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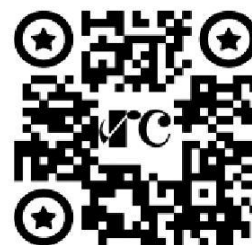
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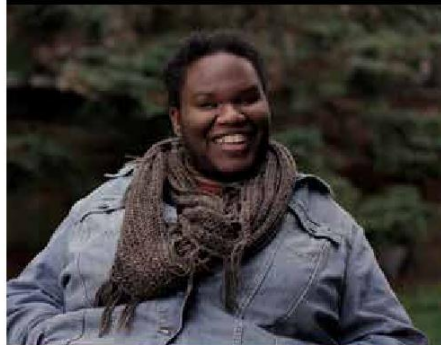
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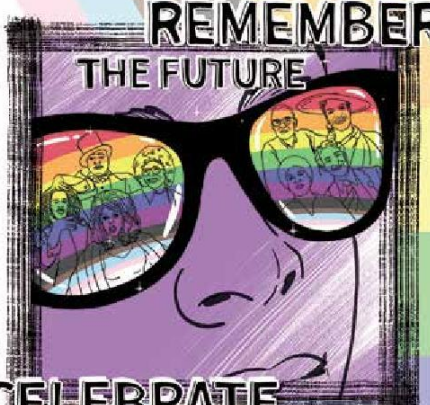
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PATRICIA GETS READY FOR PRIDE

BY LINDSEY ANDERSON
SGN STAFF WRITER

The flags have been hung, and the rainbows are sparkling, but one queen is still getting ready for her debut this Pride Season. The Fabulous Patricia Chiweenie is preparing her latest signature look for Seattle Pridefest's annual Doggy Drag competition.

Patricia isn't like most other drag queens. For one, she's a dog. Eleven months out of the year, Patricia is indistinguishable from any other Capitol Hill canine. She sniffs butts, lifts her leg to pee on every tree, stump, and pole she can find, and fights with her cat roommate. However, when June rolls over, so does Patricia. She dons her fabulous tutus, rainbow crop tops, and, most importantly, her wigs.

Humble beginnings

Patricia was not always Seattle's most fabulous Doggy Drag Queen. Patricia is an enigma of mysterious origins. Her momager discovered her one blustery night on the eve of June. Patricia was cold, skinny, and frightened. Some unforgiving person had dumped her in a parking lot and taken off without her. Like many iconic members of the LGBTQ+ community, Patricia found her true family was willing to accept her for who she was.

Before moving to Seattle, Patricia was indoctrinated by Fox News. The right-wing news channel played in a never-ending loop in her former home. Though she tried to avoid it, the news got to Patricia like a persistent earworm. She developed deeply internalized homophobia, as many Queer folks often do.

Patricia's momager eventually helped her leave that toxic home life behind, but Patricia still had to do lots of unlearning. She is not proud to admit it, but she used to growl and bark whenever she saw her momager display Queer affection. However, Patricia proved that anyone can change and learn to love themselves and others.

After several months of living in Seattle's Gay-borhood (Capitol Hill), Patricia slowly began to see how magical Queer community is. While Patricia does not label her sexuality, she has been known to kiss people of all genders. She especially loves to kiss her momager on the lips. Nobody enjoys Patricia's kisses because they smell like Pike Place Market during a heatwave.

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Photos courtesy of Lindsey Anderson



Patricia's first Pride

Patricia got her start in the performance world in 2021. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, Seattle's Pridefest moved to September. Patricia and her momager stumbled across a copy of the *Seattle Gay News* at their local Top Pot Donuts and noticed an advertisement for Pridefest's Doggy Drag Show. Patricia is a very sassy dog, so her momager encouraged her to try it.

They spent days preparing Patricia's outfit. As all experienced drag queens know, the best outfits are homemade. However, a crisis struck just days before Patricia's debut. She awoke one morning to a painful scratch on her eye. Some believe the abrasion came from her less-than-ideal habit of rolling on the dirty carpet outside her apartment. Others think it may have occurred when she dug through her cat roommate's litter box. Regardless of how it happened, Patricia rushed to her local vet.

The kind doctors at Urban Animal tended to Patricia's every need. She has a lot of needs. Their prognosis was hopeful. Patricia would live. It was only a small scratch. She's so dramatic! However, she was required to wear a cone for the next few weeks.

Patricia was dismayed. The cone of shame would not go over very well at her first-ever Pride event! However, her momager had an idea. She spent hours hunched over the kitchen table, attending to Patricia's cone with a hot glue gun and a pound of rhinestones.

The next morning, Patricia awoke to the most beautiful thing she had ever seen: a cone of Pride. Her prescription cone had been transformed into a fabulous, glittering, rainbow disk. Though the rhinestones made it heavy, Patricia did not mind. She has a thick neck.

Patricia strutted to Broadway, eager to

show off her glamorous cone, rainbow tutu, and purple Ariana-Grande-inspired ponytail. When she got to the stage she tucked her tail between her legs. The competition was fierce!

Patricia looked around. There were Gay cowboy dogs, fluffy pups in head-to-paw sparkles, and even a French Bulldog with a rainbow flower collar. Doubts rushed into her head for just a moment. She wondered if she was fabulous enough. Then she remembered her cone of Pride. The cone represented more than just her eye scratch. It was a reminder of who she was and what she had overcome. It was a reminder that the people who didn't believe in her didn't see the good in her, didn't see her sparkle were wrong. The cone was a symbol of her momager's love for her. The cone was about her foremothers, the fabulous queens who fought for their right to be proud.

Patricia held her head high and sashayed across the stage when the human drag queens called her name. She smiled as they "ooo-ed" and "aww-ed." She even winked (with her good eye) as the crowd erupted in applause.

The drag queens only deliberated for a few moments. It was a unanimous decision: The Fabulous Patricia Chiweenie was the show-stopping star! The Queens held Patricia up for photos and kisses. They didn't care that her breath smelled like the docks on Lake Union.

Now Patricia lives every day with Pride. She's proud of her home, community, and her momager, who has very good bedazzling skills. Most of all, she's proud of herself, eye scratch and all.

You can catch The Fabulous Patricia Chiweenie at this year's Doggy Drag Show on June 24 at 1 p.m. at the AIDS Memorial Parkway by Cal Anderson Park.



Photos courtesy of Lindsey Anderson



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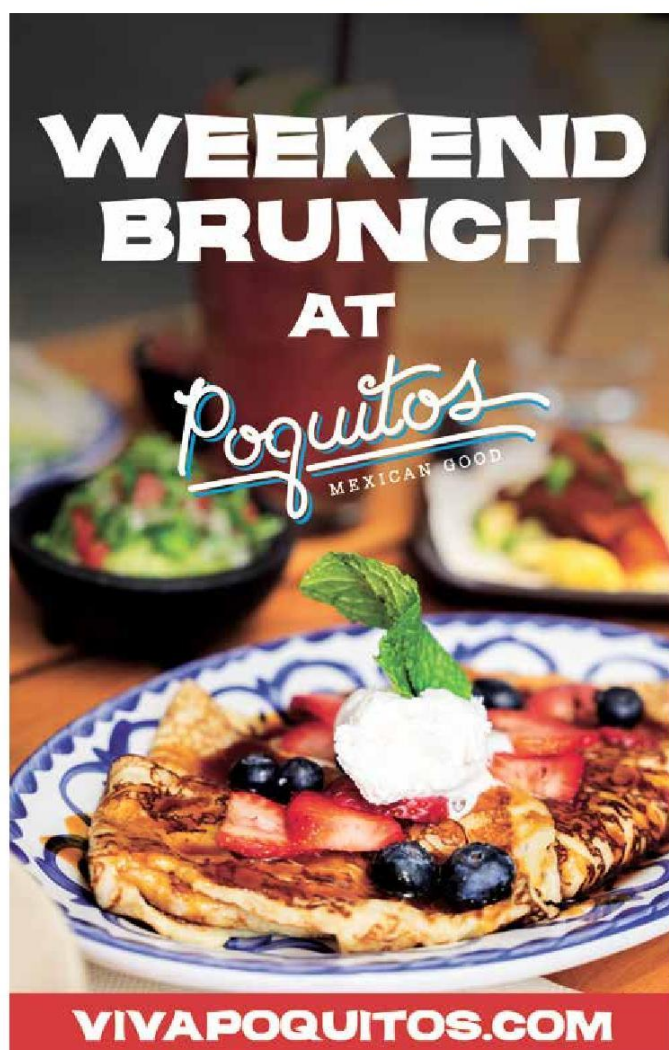
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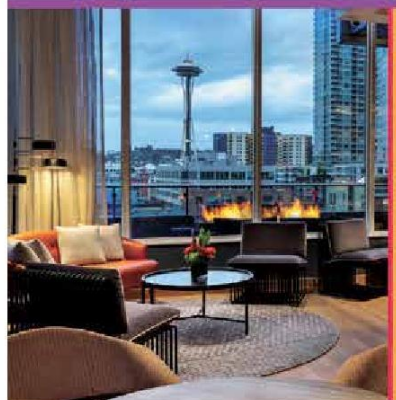
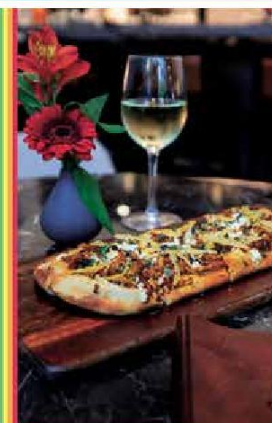
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BRIDE BEST

TEARING IT UP WITH DIVA DRAG BRUNCH'S JAYLA ROSE

BY LA KENDALL LABREE
SPECIAL TO THE SGN

Jayla Rose – Photo courtesy of the artist

Jayla Rose has been stirring things up in the Portland Drag Brunch scene for quite some time. Her dramatic dancing and gymnastic performances have been racking up an abundance of shares and likes on social media. Then came her inclusion in *Lizzo's Watch Out for the Big Grrrls*, where Jayla represented Trans Joy like a beacon for the entire Queer community. She is an Emmy winner who appeared on the Grammys to introduce Lizzo herself, and she continues to TEAR IT UP with the Diva Drag Brunch touring series. This year, Jayla rounds out the amazing line-up of headliners coming to the official Tacoma Pride Block Party at The Mix on Saturday, July 8. Jayla was sweet enough to take time out of her busy schedule to jump into the Q & A game with me, and I was delighted to learn more about this rising star!

LA Kendall LaBree: Tacoma Pride is excited to have you up in it! Have you been to Tacoma before?

Jayla Rose: First of all, I am so excited to be up in Tacoma to ring in Pride! I have actually only been to Tacoma once, and that was for our *America's Got Talent* audition many moons ago. So it's definitely about time to change that!

LAKL: We first saw you on Instagram from a Drag Brunch in Portland. It was impressive because you were doing THE

MOST. Then all of a sudden, there you were on Lizzo's Watch Out For the Big Grrrls. How did that come to be?

JR: Well, thank you so much! So when she had posted her initial casting call, I had a bunch of friends and family tag me in comments sending me the link to submit the audition. So with a lot of nudges from all of them, I submitted my audition on the second to the last day! Better late than never!

LAKL: What was the most inspiring thing about being on the show?

JR: The most inspiring part about the show was the fact that you had a group of women from all different walks of life sharing a common goal. In society we are used to seeing women compete against each other; however, with this project, we all formed such a sisterhood. We genuinely were then, and continue now to root for each other! The bonds formed and the support from one another, as well as Lizzo herself, is truly amazing.

LAKL: Conversely, what was the absolute most awful part of being on the show?

JR: The most awful part of the show? I could say that it was my own battle with myself during the filming process. However, the worst for me would honestly be the end of filming. We all got close and it was just an amazing energy to be surrounded by.

LAKL: How has life post-show been? I

mean, it must be pretty good appearing at the Grammys?

JR: Life has been such a whirlwind! The best way I can describe it is beautifully chaotic! I never pictured that I would be booked to headline different events, get to travel, and yes, the Grammys! Anybody that knows me knows that I get so anxious talking on a microphone but to be a presenter at the biggest night in music was so amazing!

LAKL: It was amazing to see you on there . . . and then, Emmy winner? Do you ever think, "Is this real life?"

JR: I ask myself all the time if this is all real. I honestly cannot describe how surreal it has been. I'm forever grateful that my life has been changed for the better! Adding Emmy winner to the credentials is the cherry on top of the sundae!

LAKL: What advice would you give those watching your experience and wishing to follow in your footsteps?

JR: The best advice that I could ever give somebody is to remember your why. We all have moments where we come up to those bumps in the road, but it's how we navigate them. Continue believing in yourself and know that you are seen, appreciated, and loved!

LAKL: I was reading somewhere that you are quite the well-trained dancer in various genres. Has dancing always been a passion of yours?

JR: Dancing has always been my passion and something that I completely fell in love with. There was a moment where I felt like I loved dance more than dance loved me, but I had to remember what made me fall in love with it and claim my home in the studio.

LAKL: Any big plans for the future? New projects we should be watching out for?

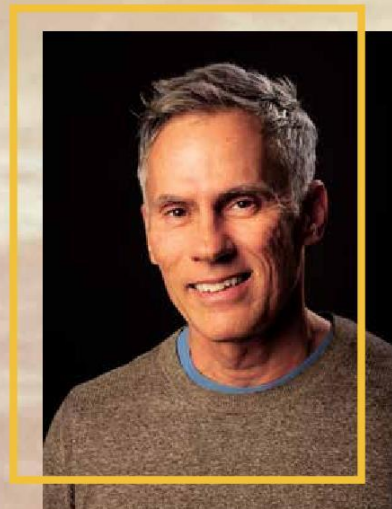
JR: As for the future there are a few things in the works! But I am loving the direction that things are moving in. This has been the first time I feel like the sky is truly the limit!

LAKL: What can the crowd at the official Tacoma Pride Block Party at The Mix expect when Jayla Rose hits the stage?

JR: A few things: They can expect dancing, energy, flexibility maybe a flip or two. But what I am hoping for is that somebody will be inspired. Just to know that if somebody like me is able to do this, then they certainly are as well!

Alright Queers — get those tickets and come see what all the buzz is all about! The official Tacoma Pride Block Party WILL NOT DISSAPOINT! Saturday Jul 8, starting 12 p.m., The Mix, 635 St Helens Ave., Tacoma, WA.

JACK'S *Take*



MAKING OUR DREAMS COME TRUE

BY JACK HILOVSKY
SGN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

RJ and Jack, 1976
— Photo courtesy of Jack Hilovsky

One year ago this past week something miraculous occurred. It had taken twelve years to come to fruition, but, man, was it worth the wait. On June 14, 2022, I published my first book, *RJ, Farrah, and Me: A Young Man's Gay Odyssey from the Inside Out*. I had written the book over the course of ten months in 2010, following the death of Farrah Fawcett the prior summer. Something inside me had whispered, *You've a story to tell, so tell it.*

That story became a love letter to my youth. I came of age at a weird time in American history: the late seventies careening into the early-to-mid eighties. And the boy I met,

RJ, who came along for the ride, blew up my world, changing forever the way I saw myself.

I met RJ the summer I turned 13, while studying acting at a children's theater in Cleveland, where we grew up. It was the year of the Bicentennial. Jimmy Carter was running for President and would beat the incumbent Gerald Ford that fall. The novel-turned-miniseries *Roots* was taking the country by storm. And a blonde Texan by the name of Farrah Fawcett would soon turn the nation on its head with a poster of herself outfitted in a one-piece red bathing suit and a role on a hit TV show called *Charlie's Angels*.

RJ and I discovered we had a "thing"

for Farrah and collected every magazine on which she graced the cover. Soon we had accumulated enough "Farrah paraphernalia" to start our own scrapbooks. But beyond that obsession, our friendship provided other avenues for fun and excitement. RJ, a cross-country runner, evolved into a talented disco dancer, and under his tutelage I too began to light up the dance floor. A year later, our friendship grew into something more intimate, which challenged my Catholic upbringing and led to my eventual coming out. And this was the story I told in my first book.

Back to making dreams come true. The small publisher I eventually found to pub-

lish my book arranged for a print-on-demand edition with Amazon. Marketing and promoting the book would fall on my shoulders. I had created a business plan that included the various groups and associations with whom I had relationships: my swim team, running group, men's chorus, hiking and skiing group, friends, family, neighbors, churchgoers, birthday party guest lists, and on and on. Most of this friendship network was reachable on Facebook and LISTSERV's I had created over the years. I also began a blog around the time I started writing my book.

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LGBTQIA+

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SWANSON'S

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PRIDE

NURSERY

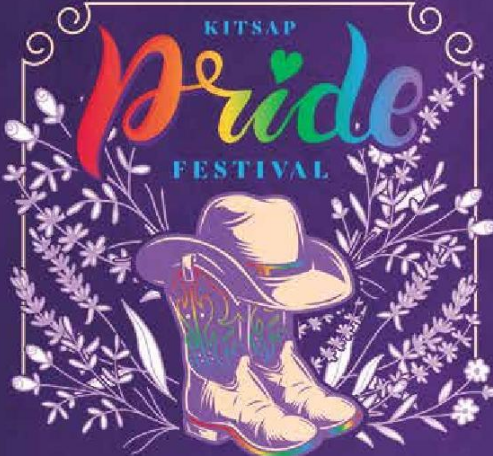
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HAPPY PRIDE 2023

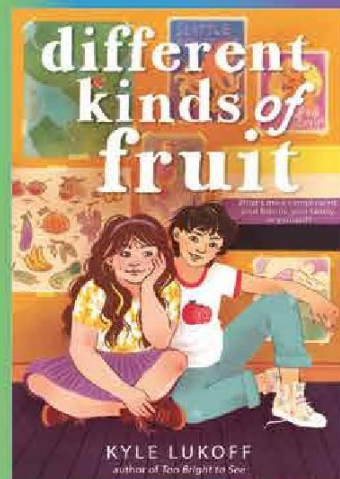
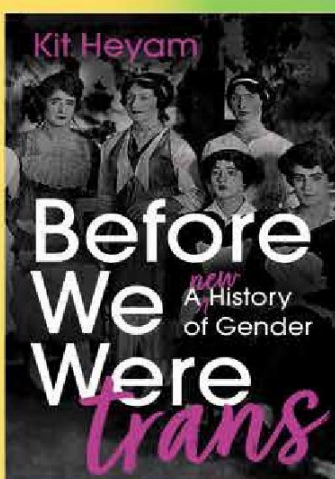
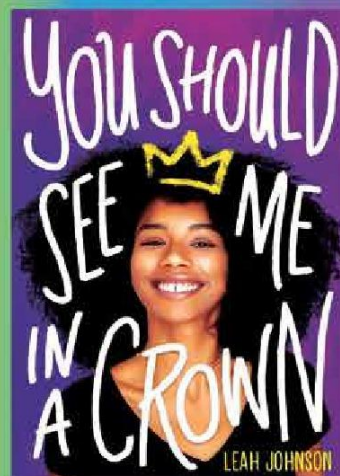
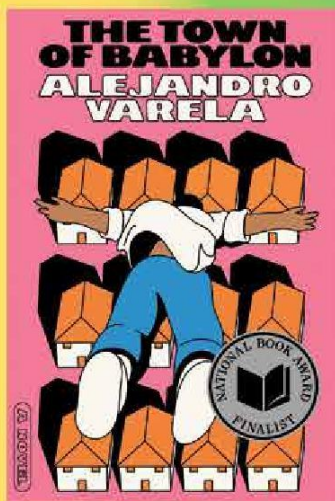
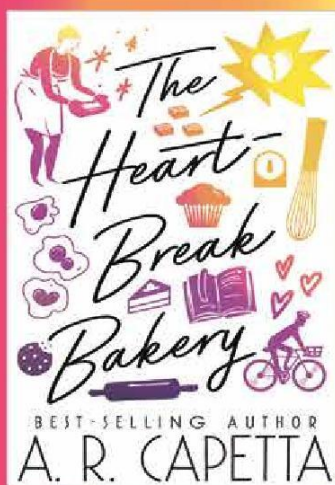
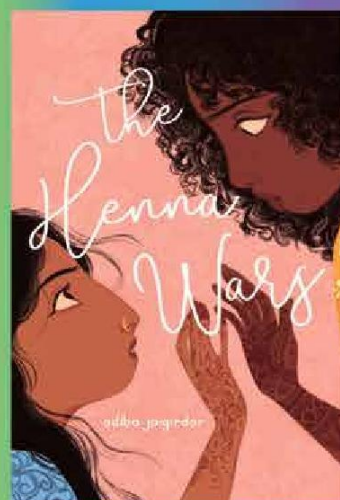
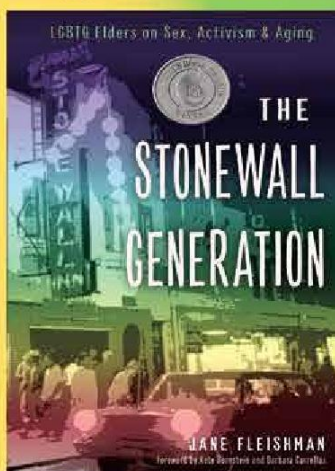
Jayne DeHaan, RE/MAX Metro Realty 206-963-3877 ladyj@jaynedehaan.com



PRIDE MONTH

kcls.org/prideevents

**Celebrating
LGBTQ+
history,
culture
and stories
in June.**



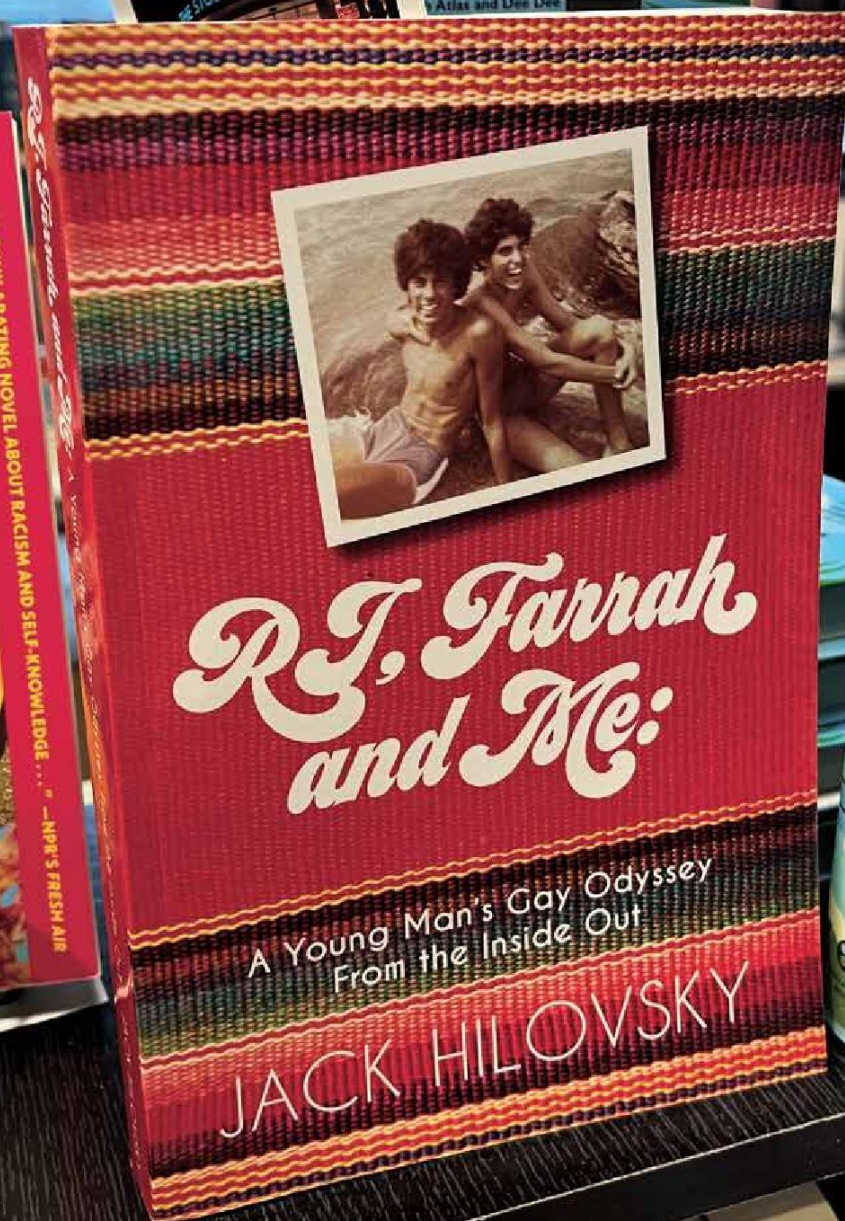
**Explore diverse experiences and outlooks
through the KCLS collection.**

kcls.org/PrideMonth



#READWITHPRIDE

BOOKS & BOOKS
© THE STUDIOS OF KEY WEST
BOOKS • ART SUPPLIES • EVENTS • GIFTS



R.J. Farrah and Me at Judy Blume's Key West bookstore, Books & Books, June 2023 - Photo courtesy of Jack Hilovsky

I think the most exciting part of getting my book out into the world was taking the initiative to reach out to local booksellers and convince them to take a chance on me. I started with my neighborhood bookstore, Elliott Bay Book Company, and soon I developed a Little Engine That Could mentality. Fuel Coffee, Third Place Books, Barnes & Noble, Nook & Cranny, Pegasus Book Exchange, Madison Books, and University Bookstore all agreed to a consignment arrangement. And for the most part, all the books sold.

More recently I have reached out to booksellers beyond the Seattle market. After the release of the film *Are You There God? It's Me Margaret* and the renewed focus on children's author Judy Blume,

I saw some synchronicity in our themes. I contacted her Key West bookstore and sent several copies of my book for their Pride Month display. In my hometown of Cleveland, two local independent bookstores accepted copies in advance of an alumni author event where I was the virtual guest of honor at my college alma mater.

That alumni author event happened the day after the one-year anniversary of the publication of my book. In a way, I felt as if I had come full circle. Full of nerves, I popped up on a Zoom screen in front of 22 attendees to discuss my book with the facilitator. I read several passages, and then took questions from the chat box. The setup felt artificial, so I asked if we could at least

unmute people to hear their voices and have a more engaged discussion, which made the last 20 minutes more personal.

There's a lot of topsy turvy going on in the world right now; as the SGN reported on June 9, the Human Rights Campaign declared that our LGBTQ+ community is living in a "state of emergency." I'm hoping in some small way that by following our dreams and intuitions, telling our stories, and remaining our brave, fierce selves, we will overcome this tide of resistance in some parts of our country and eventually turn a corner as our community has done time and again.

For now, we can batten down the hatches, but let's set that sail and look toward a day when the roiling waters will once again be

calm. We've been here before. We can stick together and keep our eyes on the prize. A better tomorrow is on the horizon if we work toward it and re-envision the dream of a country where we can be ourselves and achieve greater equality for all.

Jack Hilovsky is an author, actor and blogger who has made his home in Seattle since 1986. His first book *R.J. Farrah, and Me: A Young Man's Gay Odyssey from the Inside Out* was published in June 2022. It can be found at Elliott Bay Book Co., Madison Books, Nook & Cranny, University Bookstore, Pegasus Book Exchange, and Third Place Books (Seward Park), among other independent booksellers.



PRIDE
2023

TOP FIVE QUEER CULTURE SCANDALS OF 2023 (SO FAR)

BY CAMERON MARTINEZ
SGN INTERN

Photo courtesy of Eula Rochard

Even though we're only six months into 2023, we've already had plenty of juicy scandals. Allow me to tell you about four of my favorite ones so far.

George Santos caught doing drag

Republican Rep. George Santos had pictures leaked of him doing drag while living in Brazil. This is significant because Santos, who is openly Gay, has supported drag bans and other anti-LGBTQ+ laws.

"The most recent obsession from the media claiming that I am a drag queen or 'performed' as a drag queen is categorically false," he said on Twitter. "The media continues to make outrageous claims about my life while I am working to deliver results. I will not be distracted nor fazed by this."

The pictures taken of him, however, told a different story. The side-by-side comparison of Santos in and out of drag look nearly identical in terms of facial structure.

"No, I was not a drag queen in Brazil, guys," Santos said to a group of reporters at LaGuardia Airport. "I was young, and I had fun at a festival. Sue me for having a life."

According to the *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, one of the definitions of drag is "entertainment in which performers caricature or challenge gender stereotypes (as by dressing in clothing that is stereotypical of another gender, by using exaggeratedly gendered mannerisms, or by combining elements of stereotypically male and female dress) and often wear elaborate or outrageous costumes."

Based on this definition, Santos has performed drag. He should just own it because he clearly had a fun time doing it.

The M&M'S controversy

M&M'S had already been deemed controversial by conservative media last year when the green M&M was given tennis shoes, but "scandals" continue to plague the candy. To be clear, most people do not care about what the candy spokespeople appear to wear, but ex-Fox News anchor Tucker Carlson is obsessed with them.

"Woke M&M'S have returned," Carlson said in a January broadcast on Fox. "The green M&M got her boots back, but apparently is now a Lesbian maybe, and there's also a plus-sized obese purple M&M. So, we're going to cover that of course because that's what we do."

Why Carlson is obsessed with candy is unknown, but many internet users and meme creators have made jokes that he may have a fetish for the M&M'S mascots. This, of course, is just internet speculation.

In response to the outrage, M&M'S put out a statement on its social media accounts saying they are putting a pause on having spokescandies and replacing them with Maya Rudolph. I'm not sure what the thinking there was, but the decision did not last long, and shortly after Rudolph took over, the spokescandies came back.

I think it may have been M&M'S way of trolling Carlson, but that speculation has not been confirmed by the company.

Hopefully now that Carlson has been fired from Fox News, the green M&M can live her best Lesbian life.

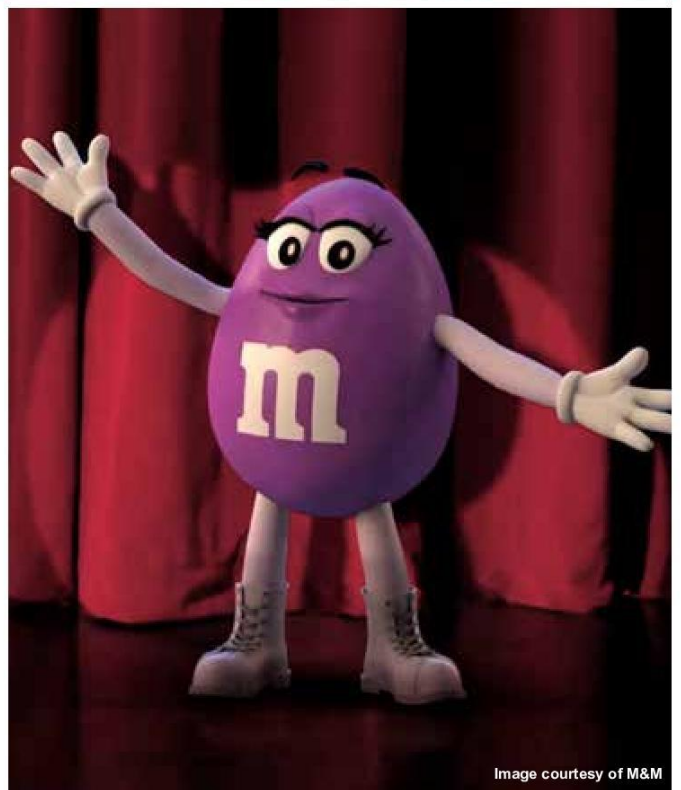


Image courtesy of M&M



Courtesy photo

FDA issues warning not to confuse poppers with energy shots

"A single mistake can prove fatal," the FDA said in a post to its social media accounts.

"We continue to receive reports of people dying or being severely injured after consuming poppers that resemble and are often mistaken for popular energy shots. Drinking or inhaling poppers seriously jeopardizes your health."

Queer people and partygoers who use poppers like the effect they have on the sex drive.

According to GoodRx.com, "The combination of chemicals in nitrites causes a person's blood vessels to dilate and muscles to relax, which can make sex less painful and more enjoyable."

Do not confuse the two products, because they are very different.

Gay Twitter had a field day with the FDA warning, with many people pointing out that if your energy drink smells like nail polish, it's not an energy drink. Others went a more absurd route. "STAY SAFE KIDS. A single mistake can prove fatal," tweeted @byebyeussy over a picture of a jalapeno popper. Health experts within the Queer community also called out the FDA for fearmongering, saying there were limited to no reports of the purported mistake actually occurring that they could find.

Pride Month "Demon"

Far-right political activist Lauren Witzke decided to celebrate Pride Month by tweeting that the word "demon" can be found if you combine the words "Pride month."

"Demons can seethe," Witzke posted to her Twitter account. "Christians are done taking crap from the LGBTQ Mafia. We're canceling Pride Month, pouring out your Bud Light, shutting down your Targets, and we're taking back the rainbow. We will also stand up for our right to criticize your depravity in court. No more cowardling, no more pandering."

Queer Twitter responded in a fantastic way. People pointed out that "Bi" is in the word "Bible" and "Ru" is in the word "Crucifixion."

Additionally, many Queer people own "demon" as a title for one reason or another. (Yes, Queer Christians, we know you exist.)

Frankly, Queer people have heard worse than Witzke's silly way of being hateful.

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PRIDEMONTH
PRIDEMONTH
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PRIDEMONTH
PRIDEMONTH
PRIDEMONTH

Image by Lauren Witzke



Images courtesy of Dylan Mulvaney / Instagram

Budweiser TikTok Fiasco

Conservatives flipped out when Trans TikTok influencer Dylan Mulvaney partnered with Bud Light brewer Anheuser-Busch for a marketing campaign to promote the company's Easy Carry contest on social media. Right-wing Americans announced their boycott of Budweiser products, and conservative media pundits were up in arms! Kid Rock shot up several cases of beer with an AR-15 because that is, in his mind, a sane and patriotic thing to do. Many outraged transphobes took to Twitter and TikTok to say they'd be switching brands from Bud Light to Natural Light or Busch — both also owned by Anheuser-Busch. Other beers owned by Anheuser-Busch include Kona Big Wave, Michelob Ultra, Stella Artois, Estrella Jalisco, Hoegaarden, Shock Top, Presidente, and Land Shark, which caused another uproar on social media as it became harder to boycott the company. Eventually, entrepreneur Seth Weathers entered the scene with Conservative Dad's Ultra Right 100% Woke Free American Beer, a beer that promised to "support American values" with its \$20 six-pack of cheap, watery beer. Mulvaney continues to rock TikTok despite the anti-Trans hate.

All in all, these scandals are small potatoes compared to the overarching themes of homophobia and transphobia we're seeing from legislators across the nation. It's fun to laugh, because if we didn't laugh, we'd cry! Happy Pride, everybody! Stay scandalous!



Image courtesy of Kid Rock / Twitter

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RAINBOW RISING
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PRIDE GUIDE!

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**SATURDAY
JUNE 24** **PRIDEFEST** **CAPITOL HILL**
NOON-8PM THREE STAGES FREE FOR ALL

**SUNDAY
JUNE 25** **PRIDEFEST** **SEATTLE CENTER**
NOON-8PM THREE STAGES FREE FOR ALL



HOUSE OF MOSCHINO ALEKSA MANILA LÜCHI
LITTLE MISS HOT MESS COAST SLAYLISH ANGEL BONILLA
BACON STRIP EX-FLORIST BEAUTYBOIZ DRAG LASHES AZN GLO
ISSA MAN MISS TEXAS 1988 CRESCENT LOUNGE #BLACKHOTSUNDAY
PNW BLACK PRIDE LATINE SHOWCASE DJ TOYA B RAIN COUNTRY DANCE
PRIDE ASIA TRANS POWER HOUR DANZA MONARCAS BOOM BOOM L'ROUX +MORE!

CAPITOL HILL SCHEDULE

MAIN STAGE SCHEDULE

HARRISON & BROADWAY
NOON-8PM

12:00 PM	BACON STRIP	4:05 PM	BEAUTYBOIZ DRAG
1:00 PM	ISSA MAN PRESENTS FUTURE DRAG LEGENDS	5:05 PM	HOUSE OF MOSCHINO
1:55 PM	POPROX DANCE	5:35 PM	MISS TEXAS 1988
2:00 PM	LÜCHI	6:05 PM	LASHES WITH CHABLIS
2:40 PM	LITTLE MISS HOT MESS	7:05 PM	EX-FLORIST
2:50 PM	ANGEL BONILLA/PRIDE ASIA	7:35 PM	CRESCENT LOUNGE KARAOKE ALL-STARS
3:05 PM	KYLIE MOONCAKES PRESENTS AZN GLO		

HOSTED BY: GAYSHA STARR & DONNATELLA HOWE

RAINBOW STAGE

REPUBLICAN & BROADWAY
NOON-8PM

12:00 PM	DJ TOYA B
1:00 PM	COAST SLAYLISH
2:00 PM	LATINE SHOWCASE
3:00 PM	#BLACKHOTSUNDAY 'UP & COMING'
4:00 PM	RAIN COUNTRY DANCE ASSN.
4:35 PM	PRIDE ASIA
5:30 PM	DANZA MONARCAS
6:00 PM	TINASHEA MONET PRESENTS TRANS POWER HOUR
7:00 PM	PNW BLACK PRIDE

STAGE HOSTED BY: BOOM BOOM L'ROUX

FAMILY & ALL-AGES STAGE

AIDS MEMORIAL PATHWAY PLAZA
1PM-8PM

1:00 PM	DRAG QUEEN STORYTIME WITH ALEKSA MANILA & LIL MISS HOT MESS
1:30 PM	DOGGY DRAG REGISTRATION
2:00 PM	DOGGY DRAG CONTEST HOSTED BY KARA SUTRA
3:00 PM	QUEER YOUTH PRIDE (SEATTLE'S LGBTQ+ CENTER)
5:00 PM	C89.5 DANCE PARTY!

STAGE HOSTED BY: OLD WITCH

FAMILY & QUEER YOUTH

AT AIDS MEMORIAL PATHWAY PLAZA
BARBARA BAILEY WAY & BROADWAY
1PM-8PM

FREE FOR ALL!

BROADWAY STREET FESTIVAL

MULTIPLE STAGES & BEER GARDENS
BROADWAY SMALL BUSINESSES
HUNDREDS OF VENDORS
NOON-8PM

THORGY THOR CANDIS CAYNE KYLIE SONIQUE LOVE
SIENA LIGGINS ANGEL BONILLA DJ JOSH PEACE
EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ROBOTS (FEATURING CAZWELL + DJ BARBEAU)
BRITTANY DAVIS QUARTET JAYLA ROSE LIL MISS HOT MESS RAINE STERN
MOSCHINO MINI BALL JAYLA ROSE PURPLE LEMONADE #BLACKHOTSUNDAY
VERA PROJECT BEST OF BLACK BROADWAY ANITA SPRITZER WHIM W'HIM SUNSTONE
ALEKSA MANILA TONY BURNS ESSEX RICKI LEIGH MISS TEXAS 1988 DIAMOND LIL GOLD CHISME
CAELA BAILEY TAYLAR ELIZZA BETH BEAUTYBOIZ BLACK PRIDE LATINE SHOWCASE LASHES
DJ HERSHE K VAN PETTEN SOLANA SOLSTICE MONDAY MOURNING SEATTLE LADIES CHOIR

SEATTLE CENTER SCHEDULE

MAIN STAGE SCHEDULE

FISHER GREEN
NOON-7PM

12:00 PM	SEATTLE LADIES CHOIR	3:25 PM	KYLIE SONIQUE LOVE
12:25 PM	LASHES	3:55 PM	CANDIS CAYNE
12:55 PM	BLACK PRIDE CELEBRATION	4:15 PM	#BLACKHOTSUNDAY 'STICKY & SWEET'
1:25 PM	LIL MISS HOT MESS	4:55 PM	MOSCHINO MINI BALL
1:35 PM	PURPLE LEMONADE	5:50 PM	BLACK BROADWAY
2:00 PM	ANGEL BONILLA	6:20 PM	TAYLAR ELIZZA BETH
2:30 PM	JAYLA ROSE	6:40 PM	HALLEY GREG
2:50 PM	WHIM W'HIM		
2:55 PM	ANITA SPRITZER		
3:00 PM	THORGY THOR		

MAIN STAGE HOSTED BY: ALEKSA MANILA

FOUNTAIN STAGE

INTERNATIONAL FOUNTAIN
NOON-8PM

12:00 PM	ESSEX
1:30 PM	RICKI LEIGH
3:00 PM	DEEJAY HERSHE
4:00 PM	DJ JOSH PEACE (LA)
5:00 PM	EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ROBOTS (CAZWELL & DJ BARBEAU)
6:00 PM	DJ TONY BURNS
7:00 PM	GOLD CHISME

HOST: MONDAY MOURNING
PERFORMANCES BY: MISS TEXAS 1988,
DIAMOND LIL, SOLANA SOLSTICE

MURAL STAGE

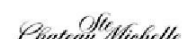
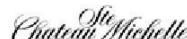
MURAL AMPHITHEATER
NOON-8PM

12:00 PM	VERA PROJECT SHOWCASE
1:00 PM	SUNSTONE
2:00 PM	RAINE STERN
3:00 PM	BRITTANY DAVIS QUARTET
4:05 PM	SIENA LIGGINS
5:05 PM	K VAN PETTEN

MURAL STAGE HOSTED BY: CAELA BAILEY

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE PRIDE PARADE
NOON-8PM

P R I D E F E S T P R I D E F E S T



SEATTLEPRIDEGUIDE.COM