

OUT CLIQUE

Volume 1, Issue 3
February 2017

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FROM TRAILER
TO STARDOM**

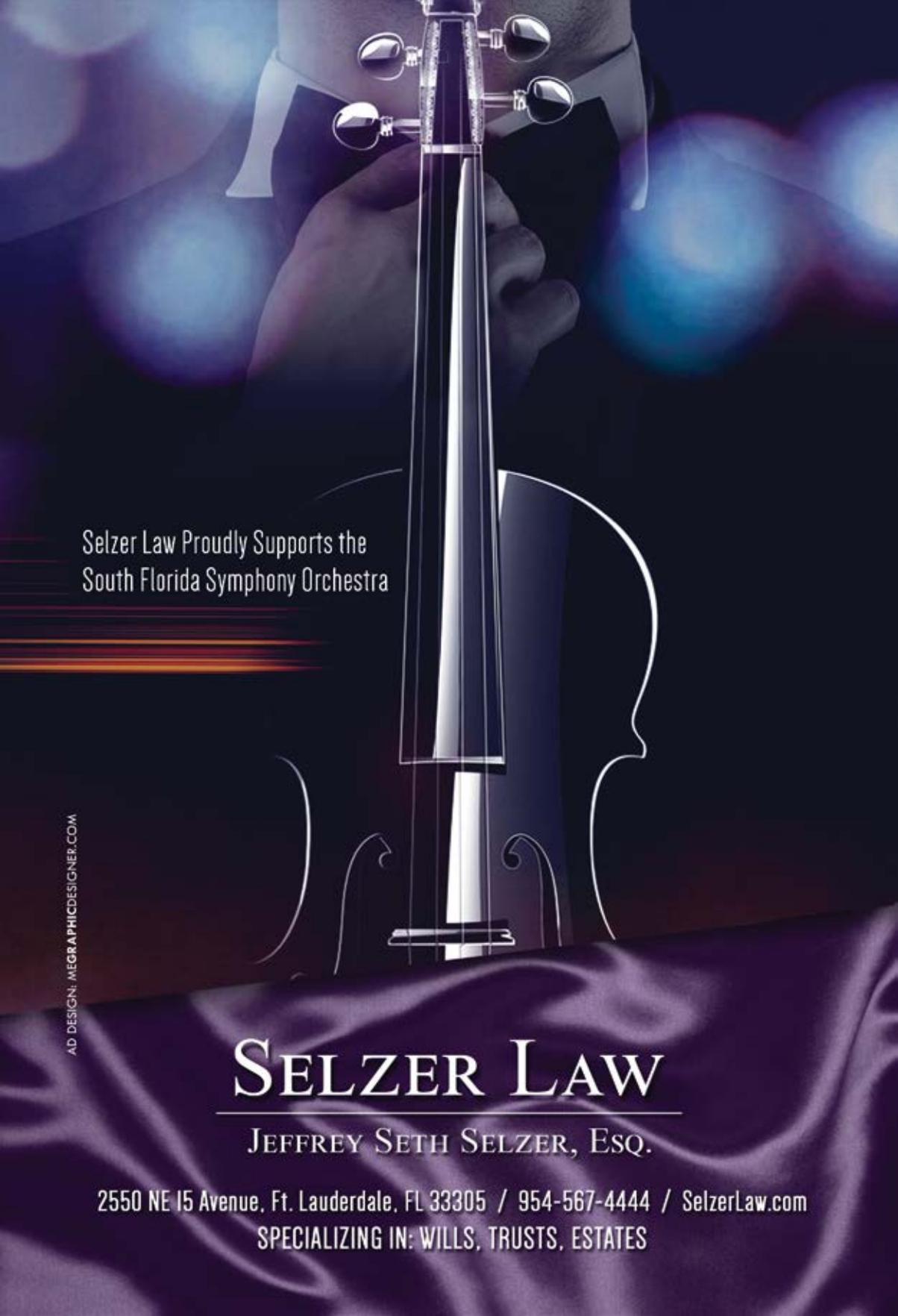
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On The Cover

Miss Richfield 1981 aboard
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On behalf of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau it is my pleasure to welcome you to "sunny" Greater Fort Lauderdale.

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Steven O. Evans, PhD
CEO & Editor in Chief
Steven.Evans@OutClique.org

Darren Loli
Chief Information Officer
Darren.Loli@OutClique.org

Arthur Wood
Associate Editor
Arthur.Wood@OutClique.org

Kevin McPherson
Director of Photography
Kevin.Mcpherson@OutClique.org

Silvio Carvana
Sales Manager
Silvio.Carvana@OutClique.org

Sach AD Group
Director of Graphic Design
Sach.Elore@OutClique.org

Steve Smith
Account Manager
Steve.Smith@OutClique.org

Steve Wroblewski
Event Support

Contributing Writers
Holam Antonetti, Jameer Menz, Adam Cohen,
Dr. Beau Nelson, Jimmy Rodgers,
Patrick Rogers, Gregg Shapiro

A publication of OutClique, LLC
11900 Biscayne Blvd, Suite 840
Miami, FL 33181
OutClique.org

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LOVE IS LOVE

In the spirit of Valentine's Day, I decided to ask a few ladies of our community two questions:

- 1) How do you show love to your community?
- 2) Define "love is love."



Christina Crespo
Palm Beach County
SVP of Operations, Outsourcing Consumer Services

I show love by supporting (emotionally, physically, and financially) anyone in our community that is working towards a good cause.

It's not about a specific gender. Love is a feeling that represents many different emotions that cannot exist without respect and honesty.



Dawn Colantuono
Broward County
Executive Assistant & Consultant

I show my love to my community by attending and supporting all LGBTQ events. I shop at nonprofit stores that support rescue animals. I try to volunteer whenever I can. I love that I can walk down the street and be a part of the energy of Wilton Manors.

Love is love to me means a personal attachment; a deep affection towards someone no matter who or what they are.



Carrie Fisher
Broward County
Regional Director for CTM Media Group & IDW Media Holdings

First, I do not define my community by my sexual identity, but by those I care about, live amongst, and call family. That being said, I try to personally help all those I can, be it physically, financially, or emotionally. I also try to help through charitable donations, fundraisers, and work. Some things include CTM Media and IDW Comic Love is Love project for Pulse, in which the proceeds go to Pulse victims and families. But mostly, I support my girlfriend, Holam, so she can do all of the heavy lifting in the community.

When you love yourself enough to be able to care about another living being more than you care about yourself, to give without expectation, it is that expectation that crushes one's heart and soul. Love is the art created out of combined chaos.

Remember that love is kind. It is the one thing we all need. Let's embrace each other and strive to give more love in our daily lives!

Happy Valentine's Day!

Yours truly,
Holam Antonetti



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SPOTLIGHT ON OUR COMMUNITY

GAY MEN'S CHORUS OF SOUTH FLORIDA

By Jameer Menz



Mark Kent's love for music stems back to his childhood. His fond memories of singing with his seven brothers while they played on their electric chord organs are golden to him. He even dabbled in some musical theatre productions as a young boy. So it was only natural that as an adult he would still find himself surrounded by music. However, as the Executive Director of the Gay Men's Chorus of South Florida (GMCSF) he performs behind the curtain and leaves the limelight to the active members of choral group.

It's been a blissful high pitch for the robust GMCSF. After only seven years in existence, a group of only 42 men hit an octave of 140 voices strong. Their powerful voices and their heartfelt songs of love and inclusiveness captivate people's rhythm as well as their minds. So, we here at OutClique couldn't help but make them our Community Spotlight organization for February. And who else better than their Executive Director Mark Kent to let us know more about the appealing choral group.

Who established the GMCSF and why?

The Gay Men's Chorus of South Florida was started by a group of about 42 men in 2010. They were looking for a different approach to the gay choral experience and formed the Gay Men's Chorus of South Florida.

What purpose do you believe the GMCSF serves in South Florida?

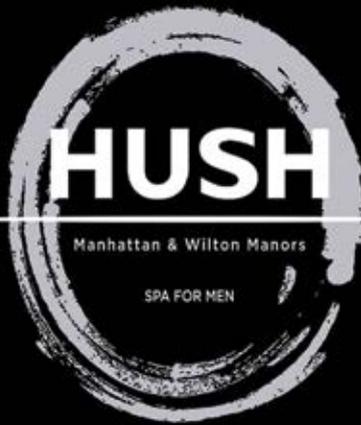
We open hearts and change minds through the power of music. We believe that by sharing our messages of love and inclusion through high-quality performances, we can build a more receptive and accepting society for the LGBT community. We see ourselves as [one of] the voices of the LGBT community. Last season, we reached a little over 12,000 people.

How do you think you as a group have helped to better the LGBT community?

We believe our performances bring the community (LGBT and nonLGBT) together. We see our membership and our audiences as a beautiful mix of individuals of various ages



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from various backgrounds. We are so proud that about 25% of our audiences are comprised of individuals who do not identify as LGBT. This allows us to communicate and educate individuals about the LGBT experience, while also celebrating our common humanity. The end result is a more accepting and inclusive community in Florida.

How common is it for your choral group to get mistaken with the two countydesignated choral groups, Miami Gay Men's Chorus and the Fort Lauderdale Gay Men's Chorus?

It's very common because it's unusual to have several gay men's choral groups so close together in one region, so folks understandably assume there is just one. There is even a wonderful group in Palm Beach County, Voices of Pride. We're the new kids on the block, but we've made a huge impact and have quickly exploded in size and reputation. We often hear folks talking about why so many groups exist. [But I Say] with nearly 5 million people residing in the tricounty area, one gay men's chorus could never begin to reach even a fraction of the population.

What sets the GMCSF apart from the other three?

We certainly stand out in terms of our size, but particularly our size and growth in a very short period of time. Recently, the chorus's size and growth garnered us a place at the table with the top 12 LGBT choruses in the country. Our hallmark is our quality sound and musicianship in which we deliver important messages of celebration and love combined with highcaliber concert production values.

Do you have to know how to sing extremely well in order to become part of the chorus?

You do not have to be an amazing vocal artist to join the chorus. However, we do audition

our members to be sure they have the ability to match pitch and deliver a pleasant tone suitable for choral singing.

What are some of your upcoming chorus events?

This season we're reaching new audiences by performing in various venues. On February 17, our smaller ensemble will perform with guest artist Liz Callaway at Aventura Arts & Cultural Center. On March 24, we will be onstage at the beautiful and new Lauderhill Performing Arts Center performing "We Are Family," which will be an amazing event. We'll close out the year at Parker Playhouse on June 24 with our Pride Concert, "Generation OUT!" Also in the Spring, we're launching some of our new youth programs.

Is there anything I didn't mention that you think is important to communicate to our readers?

Yes! It's important to note that absolutely nothing I've outlined would be possible if it weren't for the amazing people in the chorus and on our Board of Directors, who are the heart and soul of our organization. In addition to working long hours preparing for our concerts, they give back to the community through various community outreach projects. Some of their projects include collecting over two thousand teddy bears to give to the Broward County Hospitals' Pediatric Auxiliary, chaperoning at a gay youth prom, and walking and raising money for AIDS Walk. In addition to donating their time and talent to a host other charitable endeavors in our community, the chorus has also volunteered at bowling for Poverello, a local charity providing food and clothing to those living with HIV/AIDS and collecting plastic caps and lids for Caps of Love to provide wheelchairs to disabled children. I came to South Florida to be with my family, but I truly feel as if I've found yet another family in this caring and dedicated group of remarkable people.



To learn more about the Gay Men's Chorus of South Florida or to tryout in one of their three seasonal membership auditions, visit their website at www.gmcsf.org
You can also email them directly at info@gmcsf.org.

THE (ALMOST) 40 YEAR OLD DISNEY VIRGIN

By Adam Cohen



OK, I'm going to admit a secret. I'm 39 years old, have traveled around the globe, studied at some terrific schools, and had the opportunity to live in a number of fun cities up and down the East Coast. But this past weekend, after years of hearing about the pros and cons, the heartstrings and the heartbreaks I finally lost it on the streets of Orlando. A mere two and a half hours north of my home, I finally did it for the first time. I visited Disney World. The amount of "shock and awe" that had built up on my Facebook page was unprecedented. People laughed at me. They guffawed (I've always wanted to use that word in a public piece). They even accused me of being untruthful. But no, somehow I made it this far along in my life without hugging an oversized Mickey Mouse, living in the 80's glory of Epcot, or gnawing on a cooked turkey leg in public. Perhaps things would have remained that way forever, but destiny (in the form of a wedding invitation to the marriage of two dear friends) beckoned me to a weekend in Orlando, where I finally decided I'd give in and visit the House of the Mouse.

Now the first thing people question is my upbringing. Was I raised on the moon? Was I hatched? (Don't answer that, the debate is still

raging.) No, I was raised in a stable, happy home, but grew up in a family of "vacation noncommitters." Vacation meant drinks on the beach, sun tanning, and long, gourmet meals. My parents were just not the type to meticulously plan a rigid day of activities, including tickets, FastPasses, extended periods of walking, waiting in lines, screaming children, parking lots full of strollers, and anything that required an extensive map. And that's shaped me into the vacationer I am today. In fact, my favorite vacation from the past couple of years involved shacking up by myself in the Brazilian Court Hotel in Palm Beach with no people involved except the room service staff who brought me unending martinis and room service food as I lay around my room taking bubble baths and watching TV rerun marathons.

But back to the task at hand. I traveled to Orlando with my brother and his girlfriend, both of whom had been to Disney World a number of times (my brother shed the "curse" years before me). I asked them this: "What would be on the itinerary of an (almost) 40 year old Disney virgin that would like to see some of the most thrilling sites at the park, avoid screaming children, wait the least amount >

of time, and still walk away with a sense of satisfaction?" And boy, did they deliver.

The first task at hand was the purchasing of the "Park Hopper Pass," which gives access to all 4 Disney theme parks (Disney's Hollywood Studios, Epcot, Magic Kingdom Park, and Disney's Animal Kingdom Theme Park). As a Florida resident, you are entitled to a significant discount, although you will need to budget cash for food and other incidentals. In the short time I had available to me, I chose to attend 3 out of the 4 parks, as I was involved in wedding festivities throughout the weekend. The list below is by no means an exhaustive list, and I am sure readers will be challenging me with "How could you miss THAT?" But again, I was most interested in getting the

DISNEY'S HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS

Our first stop was Disney's Hollywood Studios, the theme park based on their years of moviemaking and gives the appearance of being on a real movie set. We used our first "FastPass" on "Rock 'n' Roller Coaster Starring Aerosmith," a thrilling loopde loop roller coaster racing through the streets of Los Angeles to follow Aerosmith on a gig. For someone that hasn't been on a roller coaster in years, I screamed my butt off and laughed like a little kid. From there we embarked on "The Great Movie Ride," a fun and relaxing 20 minute tour of recreations of movie sets. It includes an impressive collection of memorabilia,

EPCOT

As a kid growing up in the 80's, I had heard tales of wonder about Epcot, Disney's vision of future technology. Although there have been some updates throughout the years, it was a bit of a treat to see this vision still literally trapped in one of the coolest decades ever. A lot of the exhibits seemed a bit outdated in some respects, but the kitsch factor is fabulous. We chose to use our FastPasses at "Soarin'," an absolutely, amazingly photographed thrill ride that has you paragliding



most bang for my buck. With each Park Hopper ticket, one is entitled to two "FastPasses" per day, which entitles you to enter an attraction at a prescheduled time by entering through a separate entrance and essentially cut the line. We used ours at some of the most popular attractions.

highlighting the Golden Age of Movies with all the greats Hepburn, Bacall, Bogart, the "Indiana Jones" franchise. It is truly a mustsee for gay men obsessed with the glamour of Hollywood. The last attraction we saw at Hollywood Studios (and where we used our second FastPass) was the "The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror" (which was my personal favorite). It is an exquisitely decorated oldtime Hollywood hotel in ruins, where you freefall drop in a "maintenance elevator," while being guided by the voice of Rod Serling, definitely a thrill! Following the rides, we grabbed a quick lunch and headed out to make the most of our time.

through some of the most beautiful locales around the world definitely a "don't miss!" We used our second FastPass to experience "Test Track," a relevant, uptodate attraction featuring future car technologies. However, the most thrilling part was zipping on an outdoor track in a race car at top speed. The last attraction we visited was "Living with the Land," an old Epcot educational ride documenting man's relationship with the land and agriculture, as well showcasing the park's

impressive gardens and hydroponic grow rooms. The Attraction also provides produce for the park's onsite restaurants and hotels. We ended the day by "eating and drinking around the world" (obviously any theme park attraction involving alcohol is a thumbs up in my book). The park beautifully reproduces adjoining areas focusing on different countries around the

MAGIC KINGDOM PARK

To me, a 39 year old Disney virgin, the pièce de résistance was seeing the Magic Kingdom. I'll be honest, the jaded me screamed like a little kid when I saw all the staples of classic Disney like Cinderella Castle, Mickey and Minnie dancing through the street the whole shebang. However, if you have an allergy to children, this is the park to navigate the most carefully. We used our FastPasses to experience the two most thrilling "adult" rides in the park, Space Mountain roller coaster (I still have visions of Dorothy and Sophia from "The Golden Girls" riding this), and Splash Mountain, a fun log flume with some big drops.

Having arrived at the park's opening hour, we were also able to tackle a couple of other noncrowded rides, including the beautiful Jungle Cruise (with lifelike animals), Pirates of the Caribbean, It's a Small World (in all its

world, each having a beautiful display with shops, as well as live shows, food, and drinks native to the region. We had beers in Canada, wine in France, Schnapps shots in Germany, and ended our wonderful day with a delicious authentic Mexican meal, replete with Disney's epic fireworks.



creepy glory with the song that will never leave your head), Haunted Mansion, and Seven Dwarfs Mine Train. Despite inclement weather, a terrific time was had by all.

I was unable to partake in the final park included on my Hopper Pass, Disney's Animal Kingdom Theme Park, but there are also some terrific exhibits there, including animals native to many of the world's exotic regions.



Photo by Adam Cohen

And THAT is the juicy story of my first time. Just remember, you're going to see more bad jean shorts on people than should be permitted by law, you're going to eat junk food, your feet and legs will ache for days, and if you go with a group of people, you're going to be fighting by the end of the day (trust me, it WILL happen). But if you drop certain pretensions, go with an open heart and mind, and try to go with the mindset of an amazed child, Disney World can be a spectacular vacation even for a 39 year old.

Adam Cohen is a South Florida based corporate suit by day and wannabe Carrie Bradshaw by night, who has proven that New York City (where he was born and raised) is not the only sexy city in the world. He relocated to South Florida in 2004 from the Big Apple and has never looked back. Contact him at adamrobertcohen@gmail.com or follow him on [Facebook](#).



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HOW TO CREATE A LOVE THAT LASTS

By Beau A. Nelson, DBH, LCSW

Making love last and fulfilling takes time, energy, and work. It comes with a reward that has delighted poets and songwriters for ages. If you want that, it's time to roll up your sleeves and invest yourself in a grand adventure!

So many articles, books and blogs have written about this subject that I doubt I can add to the advice and scholarship on this subject. Speaking from my clinical and personal experience, I think there are a few good ways to address what makes a relationship work for both of you.



Love takes work. Fantasies about unlimited sex, fun, and money go by the wayside, my friend. Relationships have ups and down. That's obvious. Living through it, or even better, growing to the point to resolve issues, takes effort. Having a relationship means that there are three entities in this equation. Think about you, them, and the relationship. I often represent this to couples with two circles that overlap in the middle. The middle area is what you share together and the other part of the circle is your personality, goals, past, etc. and the same for your committed other. You have to work on each part.

Be open to letting your partner have friends and interests, whether or not you participate. Controlling your partner or being joined at the hip without identities for each of you are the two extremes that don't work. Don't be black or white, think gray zone. Also, remember to develop yourself and grow as a person. Sometimes this will be with your relationship and sometimes it will be for your relationship. Your happiness depends on pursuing a career, enjoying interests and friends, and taking time for yourself. If you or your partner are not happy individuals, you will not be happy in a relationship. Growing each other helps your relationship to grow.

Now you need to work on the relationship as a separate part of just you or your other. New

relationships are often called "the honeymoon phase." This has nothing to do with the long-term. It is a chemical and emotional reaction to something new and exciting. People who are only good on first dates don't keep love. There is something more to making it work in the long run. It takes commitment and putting your relationship above, or in balance, with you, them, and the rest of life. Make time for each other. Share experiences. Give time and energy into new memories and expressing love for each other. The time you invest creates an account that you will draw on later in life or in times of trouble. Make sure you don't forget to deposit into that account!

The truth is, people get together for many different reasons. Sometimes we get with someone because we feel broken, we want to be loved, we want someone to take care of, we are afraid of being alone, we want a life with more resources, and sometimes, just sometimes, it is for pure unselfish love and connection with someone we can't see going on in life without sharing ourselves with them. Whatever your reason, be honest with yourself. Many of us get into loves that don't work because we aren't honest about our own humanness. So, start by cleaning out your own emotional closet before you start to rearrange your new love's closet. This step makes such a difference! If love never seems to last, if you never feel connected, if you never feel enough,

it may be time to talk to a friend or a professional – or take time to talk with yourself about what is really going on (easier said, than done). Many times our reactions come from a deep place that we have not yet been able to see. It comes out of nowhere, we are surprised, and we may try to hide it. But our past, our love ideas, and emotions are real and need to be seen for what they are and dealt with for love to grow.

Once you have had a good talk (or usually more than one) with yourself, open up and talk with your love. Communication and honesty are central to building a trusting and safe relationship. We can all remember when we betrayed or disappointed another through our actions or inaction. Stories of broken hearts, hurts, and deception could fill every book on the planet. These shape us. When it is someone doing something to us, we respond based on our choices for self-preservation and happiness. When it is something done by us, we can learn from it and grow into a better person, if we choose. Communication about life, love, hurts, and triumphs develops the care and concern in a relationship. If only we could treat our significant one like we treat our best friend in life. We cultivate friendships and gravitate to others we like in friendships. What a great thing to do in your relationship as well.

Relationships are peppered with compromise, forgiveness, and compassion. Humans are fragile beings. We all want to be loved and most of us want to love. Feelings are fickle things that are not always logical, in fact they are rarely logical. Things are said and done and they are not always what we think we see. Step back, take a few moments before you play the tit-for-tat argument game. Apologize when you are wrong. Take stock of the infraction of the moment and decide if it can be forgiven or calls for a tough decision on your part. Perfection is not the goal; it is the roadblock. No one can always be right. Recognize that sometimes, when taken in a more productive way, the tough times can grow a relationship, depending on how they are handled. Give what you want to receive. It may change your outlook on the problem.

Love is an adventure. It is often the roller coaster that becomes our life. Taking the time to be the person you want to have in your life can reap great rewards. Most importantly, be the person you feel good about being. At the end of the day, be able to say you did what you could to make your relationship the best it could be. Should it last, or not, you will go away with few regrets and maybe a few lessons learned or a love that grows over time. I hope I have given you some thoughts on relationships that will help you to make the most of your love!



Dr. Nelson has a psychology practice in Fort Lauderdale focused on helping people live their best life. Information about his practice can be found at www.ImproveYourMood.com.



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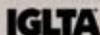
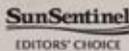
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AMY & FREDDY

A NIGHT OF MUSIC AND LAUGHTER

By Steven O. Evans, PhD

Amy Armstrong and Freddy Allen are known for their musical versatility and unique wit and comedy. Amy's deep, echoing alto voice that escalates to her full and rich, high soprano range make for an unending list of musical sections, styles, genres, and timbers. 70's, rock, show tunes, Broadway, pop songs, or oldies, Amy can belt them out. Her accompanist, Freddy, adds to the 88's all the backup she needs. But their blend of personalities creates a unique comedy that sets them apart from many other productions. Get ready to laugh and be entertained. You'll be engaged with the performers in their own way of entertainment.

OutClique magazine had the pleasure of speaking with Amy about their shows, their relationship with each other, and what audiences can expect.



Photo by Paul Van Vleck

SE: Give us a snapshot about your musical shows.

AA: Well, people have said that I have the voice of an angel, but the mouth of a sailor. I just love to laugh and enjoy what I do. My shows are full of singing and laughter. I really seem to have no filter when it comes to what I say. That's part of what makes my shows so unpredictable. I try to talk about everything that comes to mind and what people in the audience are thinking.

I do a mixture of music in my shows. I do a lot of show tunes, but I also throw in some jazz and contemporary numbers as well. As time has gone on, I've started to add some 70's music and rock, just to give the show even more variety.

I love to do Bette Midler, Liza Minnelli, and Rosemary Clooney. They are tried and true. Their music is timeless. I'm also starting to do stuff from the musical Waitress. Nora Jones is another of my favorites that I work in to my song selection.

SE: Tell us about the dynamics between you and Freddy, your accompanist.

AA: Freddy and I have worked together for 22 years. He knows my every move.

The thing about our shows, is that nothing is scripted. I chat with the audience, he vamps, and we know when to come in together. He's the peanut butter to my jelly. He's the salt to my pepper. As a singer, I'm always comfortable on stage with him as my accompanist.

And he should appreciate me. [Laughs]. I married him to his husband!

We just clicked from the very first time we met. It's always been a very special relationship.

SE: You have gotten to work with some big name celebrities. Tell our readers about some of your favorites and why.

AA: Well, Leslie Jordan is just fun. And, he likes the boys a lot. Abigail and Kristine W were both really awesome to work with. ➤

On the Queen Mary, I got to work with Judith Light, Ann Hampton Callaway, and Anthony Rapp.

I've learned that if performers are cool off stage, they are going to be great on stage. I'm just me on and off stage. What you see is what you get. I'm very open about what happens to me. I don't really do gay or non-gay comedy. I just do comedy. I say what's in my head.

SE: Who has been your greatest musical influence?

AA: I have always admired Bette Midler. I used to watch her videos all the time. She would do comedy and sing. I remember watching Divine Madness a lot. Another was Liza Minnelli in Cabaret. I'm dating myself, but I watched it on VHS back then because I was broke and didn't have a lot of money. They are some tried and true women.

I thought I would just do music, but I have ended up doing comedy, as well. I want to be like these women and never stop. Like Ella Fitzgerald, she worked until the day she died. That's how I want to go. I want to just do a final number, walk off the stage, and drop dead, all doing what I love most.

SE: How do you find the passion and drive to perform and entertain?

AA: It's in me every day. A day not on stage is not a good day. When I'm on stage, I feel like nothing can stop me. The energy is addictive, but without the booze or drugs.

I talk about things now that I didn't in my 20's. Back then, I would talk about drinking all night, and now it's about some new ailment or medication. Whatever it is, I just feel "it" every day. Last night I performed before a sold out show of 125 people. That was an amazing feeling.

A big part of it, to me, is bringing good energy to people. A guy came up to me recently after

a show and said, "You made me forget about all the bad stuff that's been happening lately. You made me enjoy just 'being.'" It's about continually helping people remember that life is good. We can get through anything. Music is my therapy.

SE: You are a regular on RSVP Cruises. How would you describe these "gaycations" from a performer's point of view?

AA: I often joke that it's like a big gay Love Boat. It's really a blast with all the boys. It's not the floating bathhouse that many think it is. It's what you put into it. If you don't drink, then don't, but go to the Friends of Bill W meetings. If you want to work out, go to the gym on the ship. See the shows. Do what you want to do. I've been to over 20 countries in 18 years doing these cruises. I remember once, in Rome, I looked at Freddy and said, "Do you believe we get paid for this?"

But above all, the people that go on these cruises become like family. You make friendships, and each subsequent cruise is like a reunion.

And yes, there are a few women on board too. We joke that there are 40-50 lesbians on board to pull up the anchor if needed.

SE: Do you have plans in the works for another album, and if so, what can we expect?

AA: There's not one at the current time. But, I want to do one of new Broadway stuff. [Laughs] I know all the gay guys will be excited about that.

I would really like to do an album with all different performers and myself. I've gotten to work with really great people and to do an album with them would be awesome.

I'm excited to come to Wilton Manors and the Village Pub. Both have always been so good to me and Freddy.

For more information, check out their website, www.AmyFreddy.com

Amy & Freddy will be performing at the Village Pub in Wilton Manors, FL,
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MISS RICHFIELD 1981

FROM TRAILER TO STARDOM





What was it like growing up in Richfield, MN?

It's always been a beautiful suburb, and actually the first suburb of our Minnesota! So you can imagine how modern and stylish it is – a land where butter is a spice, gravy is a beverage, and bingo is not viewed as gambling! The only drawback is the cold winter months, which can be treacherous when scampering across the icy walkways in 11inch stilettos!

Your fabulous career as Miss Richfield 1981 all started with the infamous pageant. Tell our readers about it and how it started your whirlwind, lifetime tour.

It was a beauty pageant July 4, 1981, on a simple plywood stage in Richfield. And like so many beauty queens, I won that title with my natural beauty, booming baritone vibrato, and a fire that horribly disfigured all 11 other contestants when Trudy Olson lost control of her flaming batons. I was the only contestant to stop, drop and roll, which is also how I do my hair. So after they hauled off 9 contestants to the burn unit, and a couple others to the morgue, I was the only one left to receive the lovely, handglittered sash, shiny tiara, and a power lawnmower! Our local True Valu is very involved in Richfield beauty!



Our readers want to know how the women of your home fellowship, A Mighty Fortress is Our God Lutheran Church, support your ministry.

Those Lutheran gals are real givers! You might not be aware that the day after I received my beautytitle, Miss Richfield 1981, the church gals were instrumental in starting a fund to buy me a bus ticket to go someplace else. And that support has remained since 1981. So for the last 36 years, every time I get back to Minnesota, there on the screen door of my trailer is taped another bus ticket for me to go someplace else! It's embarrassing, they just adore me!

You have an amazing show in Provincetown. What can our readers expect when they go to your show?

My new "2020 Vision" show has new music, new videos, new chatter, and most importantly a new message for our new world! These are some strange times, my dears, so I want to offer people a message of hope – or at least survival! And I adore doing this show. It's supreme happiness to hear the folks go



crazy with my upbeat music, informative videos and audience interaction! It's also always a bonus when I remember the words to the songs! And the Sunshine Cathedral is a wonderful facility that does not require you to be a Christian to attend the show. So bring neighbors, coworkers, friends, or enemies! Just think about who deserves it, and bring them along!

You are wellknown for your appearances on cruises by Atlantis Events. Tell our readers about these unique vacation experiences.



I know it sounds glamorous, but I do not have a lot of free time on the ships as the homos have me running country dances and bingo and ice skating during the day. Then I usually work a night shift in the laundry to pay my bus fare home. I also do a few shows in the main theater, which can seat up to 1,500 people. It never sounds like that many since most of the homos refuse to put down their cocktails to clap. It's quite an affair, and fortunately for me, seasickness is never a problem. After all, with my 11inch heels and my hair sprayed to Jesus, motion isn't a choice, it's my life.





You have traveled the globe. Share with us one or two of your favorite travel stories.

Well, you can imagine with my milelong bus pass on the Greyhound, I'm always sitting in the front seat visiting with the driver while we motor to another fascinating destination. One of my very favorite places to visit is the Port of Labadee, which is in Haiti. It's a lot like Hialeah, only most of the people there speak English. I have to say that some of the nicest foreigners I've ever met were those Mexicans in Haiti! And that reminds me that Fort Lauderdale is also at the top of my list! In fact, I'm hoping someday to relocate there and enjoy the beautiful weather. I think it'll be easy because you have ample parking, so I can just drive my home down from Minnesota.

Tell us about future plans for your ministry and travels as Miss Richfield 1981 continues her outreach.

I have a hectic schedule this Spring, which includes San Francisco, Seattle, Vancouver, Tulsa, Tampa, Philly, and that godless mecca, New York City – all before I head to Ptown for the summer at the Crown & Anchor. And along with all that, I'm trying to find a boyfriend. And you know most single gals in my stage of life are more likely to be killed by a terrorist, than find love. So I'm thinking I might relocate to Iraq to better my chances. And speaking of terror, I should probably end in a Bible verse. I like the one where Jesus says, "It's important to be nice, but it's nicer to be important!" Amen! See ya soon!

COUPLES WE LOVE

By Arthur Wood

WESLEY PENNINGTON & DR. RAY WHETSTONE

Wesley Pennington and Ray Whetstone have been together for 27 years. It all started “in 1990, Ray was on vacation in Florida, and some mutual friends took him to dinner at a supper club where Wesley was playing piano.” The best date experience was “enjoying a picnic lunch on china and silverware of fried chicken, melon & prosciutto, and wine on a sunny day on the Charles River in Boston,” as Ray puts it. On the other hand, Wesley said to the worst date experience, “In 27 years we have had movie dates where the film was rotten, dinner dates when the food was bad, outdoor dates that got rained on, but it never mattered as long as I could be with Ray!” They get through the tough times with laughter and talking. When it comes to laughing, “We have a secret code of single words and hand motions that trigger memories. They always make us laugh. We often buy each other the same greeting card and sometimes even the same present! We sometimes get dressed in separate rooms,



then meet in the living room wearing the same outfit. This always cracks us up!” Ray admires Wesley’s creativity and his enduring patience and constant love. Ray wins for best cuddler “just because he is!” Their advice? “Know what you are looking for. Don’t settle for less. Make a list and give it to the Universe. Everything happens at the right time.”



DON LEACH & MARK SCHRECK

Don Leach and Mark Schreck have been together for 18 years this February. They met playing volleyball in Columbus, OH. Mark said his best date experience was when “Don was bartending at one of the leather bars that was in Columbus and I enjoyed going there when he was bartending. We also played an RPG [role playing game] on the PS2 for a whole weekend.” On the reverse, Don said the worst date experience was when “we went to a buffet and few days later Mark was in the hospital with appendicitis. He still blames me.” They laughed together. Mark said, “When I laugh he laughs.” Mr. Tibbles, their cat, is the best cuddler and does some of the funniest things. They get through the tough times by appreciating the





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differences in one another. "We talk about it, put our cards on the table, and deal with it," Mark said. Mark admires how Don "is well regarded and doesn't let things go to his head." Don admires Mark's "compassion and empathy for people and animals in even in less than ideal situations." The advice they'd like to pass along

to our single readers is to "be yourself; don't become somebody else to make a relationship work. Find the person that compliments you. You can't order a boyfriend on Amazon Prime. Marriage is a beautiful thing, but that doesn't mean to do it after 3 days."

OREN & MICHAL KIRIAT

Oren and Michal Kiriati have been together since Thanksgiving Day, 2004. They met at a family event in Brooklyn, NY. Their best date experience was "nestling into hot springs beside a Costa Rican volcano. The dark, misty air and volcanic heat were amazingly romantic." The worst date experience for these two? "That time they caught us on the airplane." When it comes to the tough times they get physical, "Mostly sex. Sometimes talking helps, but the results are usually better along the physical route." Who's the better cuddler? "Oren. We aren't sure, but Michal's Israeli military training perhaps innately limits her cuddle factor." Oren admires Michal's love, toughness, and extraordinary ability to reach her goals. Michal admires Oren's blue eyes and washboard abs. They laugh about everything



together. "We laugh a lot. We love to laugh and enjoy time with each other and our four young kids, ages 3 and 5 (twin 3 year old girls and twin 5 year old boys) and our Boston Bulldog, Iggy Pop." Their advice is, "Have fun! And, just be."



HARRY HARKINS & JOHN GARGER

Harry Harkins and John Garger met on November 20, 2014 when Harry went into Bed Bath & Beyond for a clothes hamper. They got married exactly two years later here in Fort Lauderdale, FL. "It was instant for me. That was it. This was the one!" John said. Their best date experience was their first time at Stork's when they sat across from one another. They were excited to get to know one another. Everything was so much in common. John's worst date experience was a night they went out to dinner, had a lovely time, and Harry wanted to go to Enforced Dress Code at Ramrod. It's really not John's thing, but he took Harry there and dropped him off. "I missed him,"



John said. Harry's worst date was while at a Leather SIRS dinner "a guy that was interested in me came up and stood between us. I introduced John, he said, 'Hi,' and then turned around to continue talking to me." As Harry smiles, "John stood his ground." Harry is the better cuddler as he's able to wrap his arms into John's chest fur and make him growl. John admires Harry's caringness, not just for him, but for other people. "He brings the best out of everyone and accepts you for who you are."

Harry admires John's heart, his honesty, and his work ethic. "Character is very important to me and I know I can trust John with literally anything." As far as laughing goes, what don't they laugh about? They sing together, every night they go to bed laughing, and as John said, "Life is too good." The advice they pass along is to "be honest. Be who you are. Don't limit yourself by artificial barriers. All those barriers are limiting and could keep you from meeting the man of your dreams."

BOB DREWS & PAUL MILLER

Bob Drews and Paul Miller have been together for 20 years. They met at a holiday party hosted by Paul's roommate. All of their dates are memorable, but one of their best memories is when Paul took Bob to the mountains in Arizona and hiked in their underwear, getting lost, taking pictures, and hoping that no one would intrude on their private time together. In the beginning, there were a few times they weren't sure the relationship would continue. "Misunderstandings, not seeing things clearly, touching and kissing other guys in front of one another, etc. were basically part of our learning boundaries and limits." To get through those tough times, "We consistently lean on each other and discuss everything. Our faith unifies our decisions and perspectives as we believe in a higher sovereign power." Bob is the better cuddler for sure. Paul gets rapid claustrophobia and needs his space unless, of course, cuddling will result in sex. When it comes to admiration, Paul admires it all and Bob is more discerning. "Actually, we both have an active sense of humour and remain calm in most situations." Paul is optimistic. Bob is realistic. Paul is always planning, moving, and wanting to make everything better for both of them to enjoy. Bob is a team player, a fast learner, and flexible with change. The things they laugh about? "Everything, each other, [and] things we can't control."



The advice they pass along is, "Enjoy every day, every moment. Learn from your mistakes, accept responsibility for your actions, and never give up. We met at 40. Our life experiences prepared us for one another."

SINGLE IN THE CITY

By Arthur Wood

VEN DANIEL



Ven is a personal trainer and teaches group workouts at BodyTek Fitness. He grew up here in South Florida and just returned as a Broadway actor in New York City for 14 years. He admits to not using pick up lines. When meeting a guy, he first notices his smile, build, or walk. His

biggest turn off for a first date is body odor. On a scale of 1 - 10, he ranks age as 8, looks as 7, career as 6, money as 4, and a guy's friends as 5. A sure-thing is a welcoming confidence. He offers loyalty, humour, and being a good listener to a potential mate. He doesn't cook, but he can eat! All you can eat crab legs are his favorite. When it comes to cuddling he gives himself a 5 because he gets hot too quickly. A nice hybrid between being pursued and doing the pursuing is his sweet spot "where each person isn't super aggressive and it just works out."

GREG PHELPS



Greg is one of the owners of Village Pub. Although he grew up in Paintsville, KY, he has lived in South Florida for 26 years. His best pick up line is "the only reason to kick you out of bed would be to [wrestle] you on the floor." This is after

he notices their smile, their body build, and a sense of humour. He likes to pursue. When on the first date, his biggest turn off is someone who doesn't engage in conversation. On a 1-10 scale, age and friends are important, but money really isn't. Honesty, communication, and intellect are the best qualities he offers a potential mate. Cuddling is great up until he falls asleep, "then I get hot." He cooks anything southern and is known for his collard greens and derby pie. His sure thing is flattery.

RON RICH



Ron is a southern boy from Birmingham, AL, but has lived in Fort Lauderdale for four years as a retired banker. "Do you like that?" is his best pick up line. He notices a potential date's smile, the way he appears happy in life, and the

way he looks at him. He likes to be pursued, but winds up doing the pursuing. His biggest turn off on a first date is cell phone usage. A date's age and money are moderately important, but their friends are very important. He's funny, laid back, and street smart. His cuddling skills are a 10, "If I like the person." He cooks every meal as he rarely goes out for food. A best dish of his consists of baked salmon, brown rice, and a veggie of his choosing. A sure tactic when meeting a potential mate is Facebook.

JASON PELKY



Jason is a leather craftsman at LeatherWerks. He's originally from Tulsa, OK and has lived in South Florida for 8 years. His best pick up line

is, "Just wanted to say I thought you were handsome." He first notices a guy's eyes, smile, and his butt. "Checking their phone while we're on a date" is a really big turn off. On a scale of 1-10, looks and friends are an 8, and he rates his cuddling skills a 10! His best offerings are that he has a job, a vehicle, and his own place. He's usually the one who does the pursuing and flirting is a sure fire tactic when meeting a potential mate. His best dish when cooking is enchiladas.



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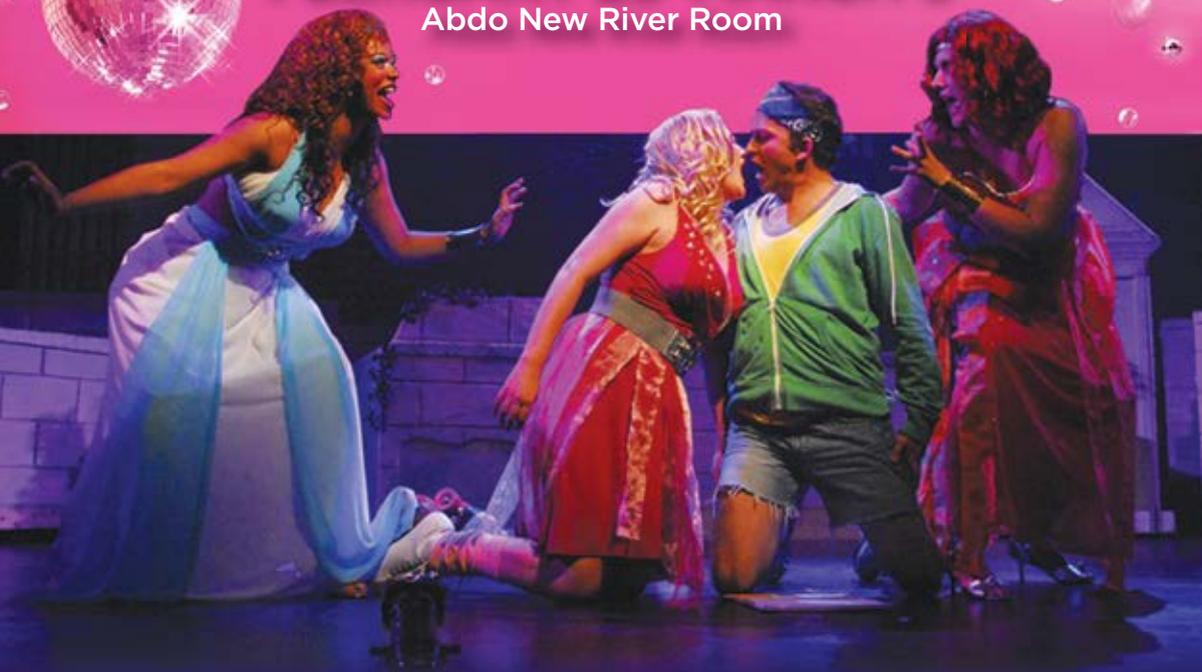
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Sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. Funding for this project is provided in part by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners as recommended by the Broward Cultural Council.

BRYAN WILSON



Bryan Wilson is the Director of Community Relations and Grants for SunServe. He grew up in Odessa, TX and has lived in Broward County for almost 8 years. He first notices a potential date's smile, build, and how they treat others. When on a first date, his biggest turn off is texting without excusing themselves. "If one needs to make a call or send a text it's so easy to say, 'Do you mind if I respond to this text? It's work.' Simple." His best pick up line is, "Hate to interrupt since I see you're here with a group, but you are very handsome and I like that you seem to be a happy guy enjoying your friends. If you happen to be single, I'd love to take you to grab a drink or go for a walk sometime."

TYESHA BEST



Tyesha Best is a flight attendant from Dallas, TX and has lived in South Florida for 3 years. She first notices a potential date's smile, how she's dressed, and the first compliment given. When she's on a first date her biggest turn off is bad teeth and bad breath. She admitted that "Hey mama, what's your number?" was the worst pick up line

ALAN KURLAND



Alan Kurland is a small business owner originally from Miami and has lived in Wilton Manors, FL since 1998. He first notices a potential date's smile, energy, and personality. He likes to be pursued. "Have you ever seen the city via boat?" is his best pick up line. When it comes to the first date, his biggest turn off is when they talk

He offers a potential mate kindness, communication, and adventurousness. As far as pursuing, he likes it both ways. "If we are not both enjoying pursuit and enjoying pursuing, we will never see our 50th wedding anniversary." Having a career and friends are very important, where money is moderately important. When it comes to cuddling, "I'm a power cuddler. Everyone says they love to cuddle, but when I sleep I want to hold you or be held the entire night, and yes, even if we get hot and start to sweat." He likes to cook for people. "I'll make vegan tacos for Bible study or a romantic basil scallops dish for my boyfriend, but if I'm solo I'm going to Tijuana Flats!" His best dish is cactus filled chicken breast with cauliflower mash. When meeting a potential mate he reminds himself, "Out of 7 billion people on earth, this person is probably not 'the one' for you, Bryan. Just remember to learn something from them because everyone has value and an interesting experience."

I've heard in my entire life." Loyalty, sense of humour, and adventure are the best qualities she offers a potential mate. She likes doing the pursuing and being pursued as she said, "I'm a versatile person, it just depends." Having a career and friends are very important where age is moderately important. When it comes to cuddling, "I love cuddling, so I would rate that an eight." She cooks and bakes when she's actually home and not in the air. Chicken Lo Mein is her best dish. Financial and mental stability are her surefire tactics when meeting a potential mate.

about work. He offers a potential mate mental stability, a sense of humour, and being a romantic. A date's friends are very important to him, but looks and money are not so very important. Alan adds, "I might see something in someone that others might not have seen." As the cuddling question comes up, there was no hesitation, "Oh, I love to cuddle. I'm a toucher and a cuddler. It's a biggie for me. If they're not a cuddler, it's a problem." He's a vegetarian with his best dishes being five cheese mac 'n' cheese and a caesar salad. His sure-fire tactic is confidence.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

OUR MODERN DAY FREEDOM FIGHTERS

By Jameer Menz

It's amazing the number of brave and resilient LGBTQ identifiers and allies we have in our South Florida community. But with a hearty group of warriors, not all get to shine at once. Our champions live with a purpose courageously every day and we here at OutClique will always recognize them for their hard work and dedication to our community. Here are but only a few of South Florida's modern day freedom fighters that we are honored to share with you.



Richard Anthony Forbes
SunServe Youth Life Coach
and Case Manager

Richard Anthony Forbes is a native Caribbean who had to suppress his true self as a youngster in fear of family and friends' responses in Kingston, Jamaica. But coming of age and now as a young adult, he lives in his truth every day. He spreads that truth outwards to touch the lives of all he comes in contact with on a day-to-day basis. Fear has no more room in his life these days, rather his life is full of excitement and fun activities. Forbes just

finished performing in the cast of *Dreamgirls*, the musical, with the Marquee Theater Company. On top of being an LGBTQ youth life coach and local thespian, Forbes is also a chair of SunServe's Caribbean LGBTQ Pride Festival committee. Regardless of what Forbes is doing or special project he is working on at the time, the busy body commits his life to our LGBTQ youth with one-on-one peer support and vital linkage services from therapy and housing to education and life skills group.

Forbes' passion runs deep for helping others and making a positive impact on other people's lives. He always says, "Come together as one! Stand up, stand by what you believe in, and make yourself heard."

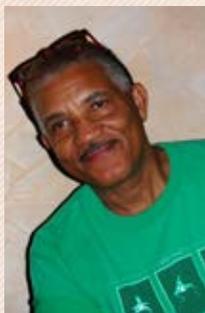


Aryah Lester
Director of National Alliance
of Transgender Advocates and
Leaders (NATAL) & TransMiami

Aryah Lester feeds off of humanity and empowerment. Although her life is a continual struggle of personal and professional growth, she doesn't allow negativity and despair to derail her from her path of enlightenment and mentorship. Lester arrived in South Florida in 2005 and immediately realized the need for a support system in our trans community. She buckled down to fill the void plaguing a group in our very

own community. As the director of the NATAL and TransMiami, she is out there in our community and in the public eye every day lending her voice to uplift our trans and black brothers and sisters. When she's not working, her altruistic personality still empowers her every move as she uses poetry, writing, and her personal story of gender identity to touch the lives of others.

Lester wants everyone to remember, "Your voice is just that, yours. It's undefined and at most times unreachable by others. You are the sole owner of the map to your destiny, the only one who can read the language. Love and trust in yourself, it may make things easier to deal with."



Paul Smith
Licensed Clinical Social
Worker (LCSW)

Paul Smith has lived a full life from adolescent feelings of inadequacy in the segregated south to an assertive selfconfidence in adulthood that has contributed to his lifelong successes. As the eldest of six siblings in an impoverished black neighborhood, he was forced to leave his childhood behind and step up to the plate as a young adult. But his family situation, segregated community, and introverted personality didn't stifle his dreams and aspirations. He went off to college and worked to better himself, which led to two successful careers: 21 years in the Armed

Forces retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel and working as a clinical social worker helping the LGBTQ community. Today, Smith continues to relish his life as a proud father of two, a cheerful grandfather of 5, a loving husband of 12 years to the man he adores, and a spiritual soul who gives back to our community everyday as a retired volunteer clinical supervisor and instructor to young graduate student interns at the SunServe mental health clinic.

Smith says to everyone struggling to find their voice, "When you enter a room filled with people, you are usually there for a reason. You enter the room with your head held high. You look pleasant, greet them cordially, and you speak with a strong clear voice. I've found that my presence and passionate voice are usually welcomed wherever I go."



Dr. Sonia Mitchell
Clinical Psychologist and
Philosopher

Dr. Sonia Mitchell adheres to a life philosophy of selfawareness and inner love that shines outwards in everything she does.

From an early age, she learned how to rely on her ability to love and trust in herself. That ability has helped her transform her selflove into a life of helping others. Dr. Mitchell's presence is joyful and in abundance. Her smile is bright and inviting. Her words are welcoming and encouraging. That's why she was the perfect spiritual being to form the Florida Youth Pride Coalition, a nonprofit that strives to empower, support, promote, and engage the LGBTQ and ally youth with educational, civic,

and cultural activities. In her own youth, she was always a visionary and dreamer. Now as an adult she is passing on those inspiring traits to the young lives in which she interacts on a routine basis. She teaches them to look beyond one's own physical being: their skin color, their looks, and their body index. Dr. Mitchell places so much trust in our youth that she props them up on a pedestal in their own organizations, putting them side-by-side with their adult counterparts as youth executives on the coalition's executive board.

Dr. Mitchell wants everyone, especially our youth, to always "love and embrace with honesty that in which you are. Never judge others as they [might] do you because the greater powers are kind and generous and come to each person full force. Love must matter first."



Jakari Roundtree
The Kiki Project Program
Specialist

Just call Jakari Roundtree the “Kiki Specialist.” For those of you who don’t know the phrase Kiki, it’s a term that grew out of

black and Spanish culture meaning to have the camaraderie of laughter. The term is a perfect definition for Roundtree’s effervescent and animated personality. Mix those two personality traits with his authentic self and you have an unapologetic, fun-loving guy who’s at his best when he’s helping and caring for others. The Pride Center of Equality Park in Fort Lauderdale, FL gave Roundtree the

opportunity to be his best at his job. The Kiki Project is a social program that reaches out to black men who “love” other men for the purpose of teaching them how to better themselves and that of our LGBTQ community it’s a group experience of learning and growing together. The program fits perfectly with Roundtree’s optimistic philosophy on how to encourage more blacks to become leaders in the LGBTQ community. He is leading by example promoting how to agree to disagree and to use what he’s learned to be heard and seen in a positive way.

Roundtree has a simple, yet easier said than done, philosophy of life, “Find yourself and be that no matter what; everything else will fall into place as long as you put in the work. Don’t trip, everything will end up just fine!”



Karen Prescod
Health Insurance President

Karen Prescod is more than just the president of a health insurance company. She is a leader, a mentor, a survivor, and a go-getter.

Besides recruiting, training, coaching, and motivating sales agents in the health insurance world, she is a proud member of the Gay and Lesbian Business Exchange (GLBX), a council of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce. She by no means started from the top. The Trinidadian native came to the States when she was 20 years old, starting out as an entry-level crew member at McDonald’s. The hardworking Caribbean Islander quickly moved up the ranks to manager and shortly moved on

to managing multimillion-dollar retail stores. Eventually, she transitioned to self-employment using her natural gift of motivating people to better themselves and their situation. Even after suffering personal health issues of her own, which she is still recovering from, the resilient Prescod continues to empower people to be self-reliant. On top of a passion for helping people with preexisting conditions find reliable healthcare, she is in pursuit of opening up her very own nonprofit organization, Prescod KIDS, by October of 2017. Prescod’s body might still be in recovery from a past neck fusion surgery, but her determination and willpower are still as strong as ever.

Prescod’s advice to the world and a motto that she lives by everyday in her own life is, “Never give up, [but] be conscious of what works and what does not. Be present and always be true to yourself.”



Dr. Van Bailey
Director of the LGBTQ Student Center at the University of Miami

Dr. Van Bailey has overcome gender identity struggles and homelessness to now stand strong as a support system for those in our community that face similar problems he himself struggled with. The doctor's life struggles and perseverance through them are the exact reasons why he commits his professional and personal life to bettering the college experience for the LGBTQ community. His passion is so strong for his life work that the University of Miami is actually the third LGBTQ student resource center that he has worked for, including one at Harvard. He knows

what it is like to lose a biological family, yet find a loving support system that can only be considered a true family. That is but one goal he pursues for his students. When Dr. Bailey was in the throes of life, his chosen family were those who helped him most. Besides building a culture of belonging and acceptance as the director of the University of Miami's LGBTQ student center, Dr. Bailey projects his voice on the international stage speaking about the experiences of queer people of color and what it means to persevere in life despite individual obstacles.

Dr. Bailey encourages everyone in life to "be gentle with yourself and remember that you are necessary. Your voice is necessary. It's okay to be unapologetically you. You may be different, but what wondrous things aren't different?"

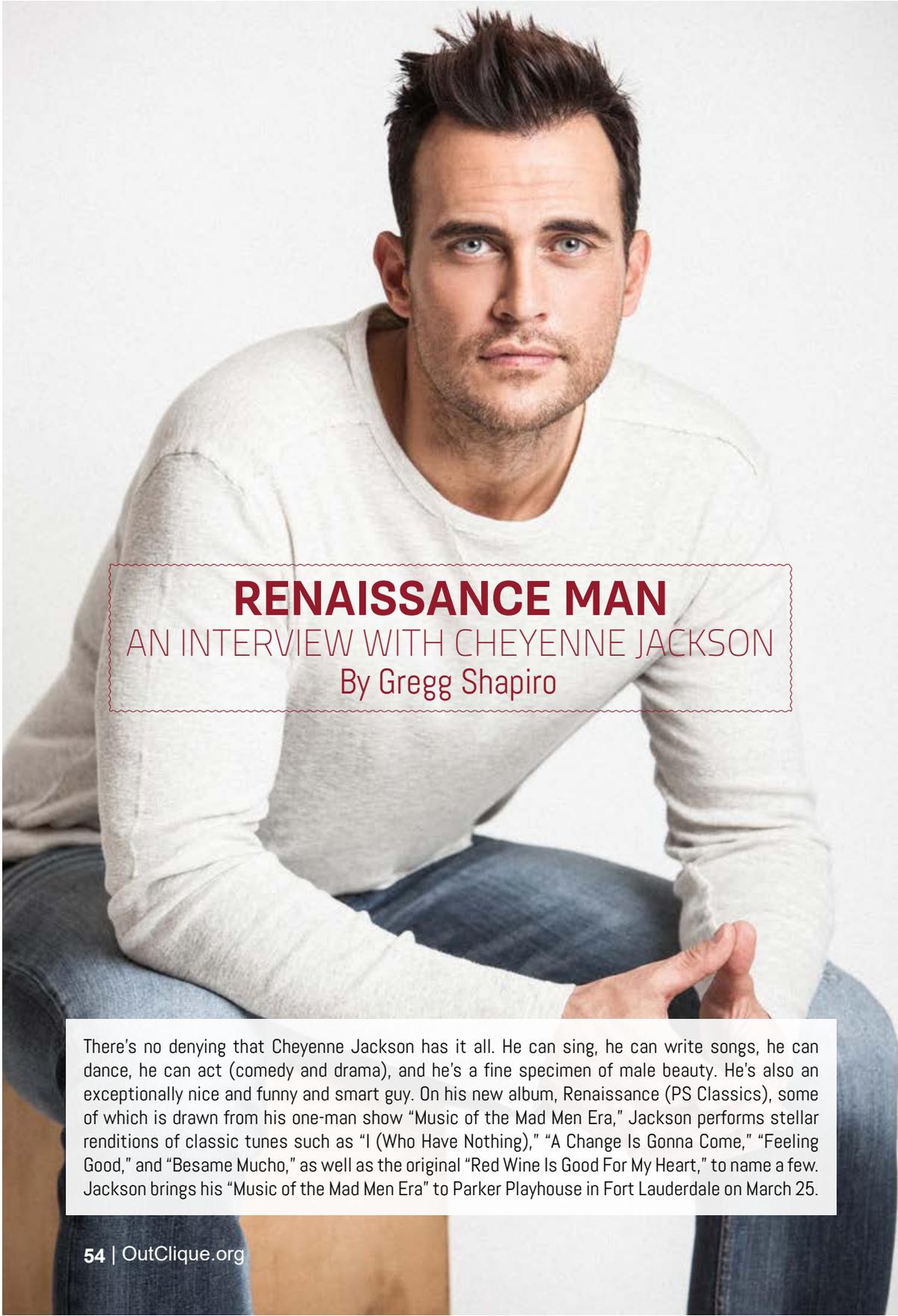


Ebonni N. Bryant
Entrepreneur and Community Activist

Ebonni N. Bryant is a committed ally in our community that has worked and volunteered her time to our causes and nonprofit organizations. In fact, Bryant is hard at work with the event planning company, Event 360 Inc., which is heading up Florida AIDS Walk & Music Festival on March 19, 2017. Her passion for our community stems from a simple truth about herself that she realized early in life, she always wanted to work at bringing businesses, communities, and people together to become more successful, engaged, and connected. She's doing just that with the Florida AIDS

Walk & Music Festival. Bryant's strong will and strength to challenge societal norms was ingrained in her at an early age by her young progressive parents. They taught her how to be a freethinker with a humble heart, and those childhood lessons still stick with her today. Bryant is completely committed to helping people achieve their goals. She thrives off of seeing people's ideas flourish into reality, and she's there to help them along the way. Even her own personal goal to build a beautiful office space where people can work on community projects is intertwined with helping others transform their dreams into reality.

Bryant has a heart of gold and she has realized her true potential to help others. She can't help but to suggest to others, "Quiet your mind and your space long enough to hear what is real for you."



RENAISSANCE MAN

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHEYENNE JACKSON

By Gregg Shapiro

There's no denying that Cheyenne Jackson has it all. He can sing, he can write songs, he can dance, he can act (comedy and drama), and he's a fine specimen of male beauty. He's also an exceptionally nice and funny and smart guy. On his new album, *Renaissance* (PS Classics), some of which is drawn from his one-man show "Music of the Mad Men Era," Jackson performs stellar renditions of classic tunes such as "I (Who Have Nothing)," "A Change Is Gonna Come," "Feeling Good," and "Besame Mucho," as well as the original "Red Wine Is Good For My Heart," to name a few. Jackson brings his "Music of the Mad Men Era" to Parker Playhouse in Fort Lauderdale on March 25.

Gregg Shapiro: Your new studio album Renaissance is adapted from your one-man show “Music of the Mad Men Era.” With so many great songs from that period from which to choose, what was involved in the process of selecting songs for the show and, by extension, for the Renaissance disc?

Cheyenne Jackson: It’s true; there are so many songs from that era that I love. I was a 12 year old kid in Northern Idaho listening to Billie Holiday and Lena Horne and Sarah Vaughan and Nat King Cole. This whole genre of music is a part of who I am. Yes, it was difficult to choose. Initially, in starting to pick the songs for the live show, it was really a matter of picking songs that I loved over the years. As far as the album goes, it happened very naturally. Over the last two and a half years I’ve been touring in different venues – from clubs to huge performance halls. You sing songs hundreds of times over and over, but certain ones just morph and naturally, as you age and get life experience, take on a different form as well. When I was looking at songs for the album, I thought, “Which are the ones that connect with me the most? What do I think would work in album form?” Almost all of them I’ve done in shows. Only a couple (of them) are new. That’s how it happened.

GS: If you could have been a character on Mad Men, would you liked to have played one that already existed on the show or would you like to have played a new one of your own devising?

CJ: [Laughs] Probably a new one, specifically for me. I love that era and the whole vibe. I’ve always been drawn to that. I’m definitely drawn to things that are new, so something specifically for me would have been fun.

GS: A trio of early ‘70s songs – Joni Mitchell’s “A Case of You,” the late Leon Russell’s “A Song For You” and Elton John’s “Your Song” – can be found near the end of the disc. What was the appeal of these songs for you?

CJ: I grew up listening to Joni Mitchell’s version of “A Case of You.” My mom

was a huge Joni Mitchell fan. Joni Mitchell, Joan Baez, Judy Collins – that was my mom’s era. I came up on Diana Krall’s jazz arrangement of “A Case of You” several years back. I’ve always wanted to pay homage to both her version and Joni’s, and by proxy, my mom. She’s the one that introduced me to that music. I’ve been doing that (song) over the years in concert, but I wanted to cement it with an actual studio performance. “Your Song” is kind of the same thing. I’ve always loved Elton John and that is one of my favorite songs by him and Bernie (Taupin). The American songbook is ever-expanding and I feel like it works well with what I was trying to say. This was the first time I ever sang “A Song For You.” I’ve always loved it. I love Donny Hathaway’s version and I’ve loved subsequent covers of it. Looking at the original lyrics as I was preparing it, I thought, “Wow! I feel like it was written for me.” That’s what a great song does. You don’t have to do a lot of homework. You can just say the words and it springs to life.

GS: The CD booklet contains a delightful Tina Fey quote. Do you have an especially fond memory from when you were playing Danny Baker on 30 Rock?

CJ: There are so many! It was so much fun to have my very first TV (performance) be the holy grail of comedy, in my opinion. Alec Baldwin and Tina Fey! A highlight would definitely be the episode where Tina and I were secret boyfriend and girlfriend. We had to keep our shenanigans on the down-low. She had all of these fetishes and she would dress me up as all of her childhood crushes. I was the guy from CHiPs and then I was Grizzly Adams. It was hysterical. We got to make out. It was really crazy, fun television.

GS: Speaking of 30 Rock, Jane Krakowski, who played Jenna on the show, joins you for the “Something Stupid” duet. Please say something about working with Jane.

CJ: I love Jane. Jane’s been a dear friend for maybe a dozen years. We’ve worked together on many shows and concerts and readings. We did Damn Yankees together and then we did Xanadu. Jane did all the >

workshops of Xanadu before it moved to Broadway. She's hysterical and our voices blended. We had a similar sensibility. Then she shot the pilot for 30 Rock and the show got picked up and she couldn't carry the show (Xanadu) over to Broadway because of her commitments. Jane's a pro, she's fun, she's classy and old school. I love her dearly.

GS: Is it just me or was there something creepy about the Frank and Nancy Sinatra duet of "Something Stupid"?

CJ: [Big laugh] I've thought about that, too. I kind of suspended my disbelief. That was a little "huh"?

GS: The disc also contains an original song co-written by you and Michael Feinstein, "Red Wine Is Good For My Heart." How did that come about?

CJ: A few years ago, when I was writing songs for my first album, I was staying with Michael Feinstein as I often did. I was working on a pilot. My grandma was very sick at the time. She died of complications from alcoholism. She always used to say [in his grandma's voice], "Red wine is good for my heart. That's what my doctor said." And we'd say, "Yeah, but not for breakfast." Unfortunately, it was the thing that killed her. I felt inspired to write a song about her and what that meant for her life and for all of us. I was writing it in Michael's house. He came downstairs and I was at the piano. I said, "Hey, do you want to finish this song with me?" I was having trouble with the bridge. He popped in and it became this great thing. It's an emotional moment when I do it onstage. But I really like the melody and people respond to it. I decided to put it on the album, too.

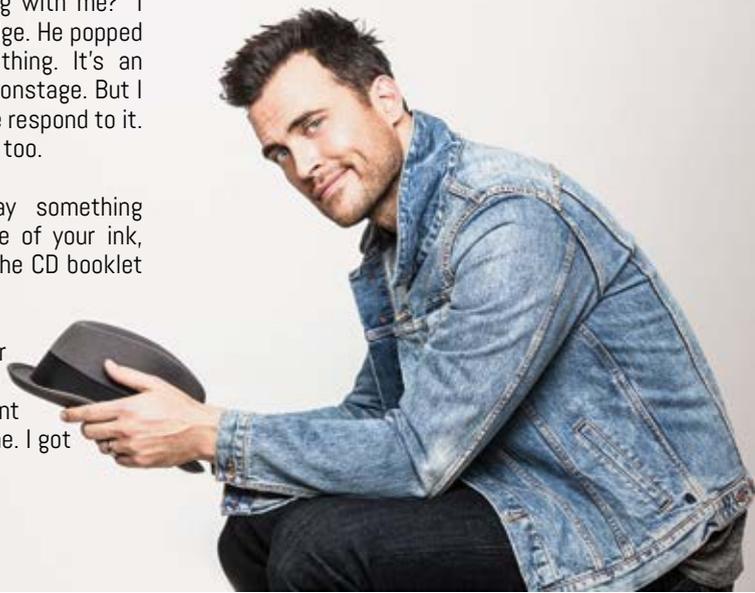
GS: Cheyenne, please say something about the significance of your ink, some of which can be seen in the CD booklet photos.

CJ: Over the last three or four years I've gotten different tattoos for different things that were important to me. I got

sober a few years ago and went through some big life changes and really wanted something to mark these events in my life. My very first tattoo was for my dog, Zora, who died in my arms in New York. Right where her heart stopped beating I got a "Z".

GS: Lastly, the June 2016 Pulse Nightclub massacre made me think of your character Michael in Six Dance Lessons In Six Weeks, who is seeking a sort of retribution from the widow of a homophobic preacher. Can you please say something about that character and also about what happened in Orlando?

CJ: I was devastated, like so many people. I didn't really leave my house for three days afterwards. I was glued to CNN. Like many people, feeling powerless, [asking] "What can I do?" I've been drawing strength from speaking to other people who are feeling the same way. Donating money and loving people and having great, deep conversations. [Sighs] It was a horrible thing. Michael, from Six Dance Lessons...it's funny because I didn't make that connection until you said that. He was somebody who had a lot of self-loathing; being a gay man who lost his family and felt ostracized. It was an interesting character to play. He was so bitter and jaded about life. Even though I'm not like that personally, everybody has a side of themselves that tends to look at the negative side of things. He was an interesting character to play.





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THIS MONTH!

WHERE TO BE AND WHAT TO DO IN LGBTQ SOUTH FLORIDA

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2/4/2017 | Village Pub

SUPERBOWL SUNDAY PARTY

2/5/2017 | Village Pub

BLACK HISTORY ART EXHIBIT

2/5/2017 | Pride Center

PAM ANN

2/11/2017 | Sunshine Cathedral

ALL I CARE ABOUT IS LOVE

2/12/2017 | Coral Gables Congregational Church

KRISTIN CHENOWETH

2/14/2017 | Broward Center

MATTHEW MORRISON

2/17/2017 | Parker Playhouse

THE WET SPOTS

2/18/2017 | Broward Center

LAMBDA MEN'S BROTHERHOOD POOL PARTY

2/9/2017 | Windamar

POVERELLO CASINO NIGHT

2/22/2017 | Hunter's

XANADU

2/23/2017 | Broward Center

MISS RICHFIELD 1981

2/25/2017 | Sunshine Cathedral

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RAY BOLTZ

THE STORY OF A GAY, CHRISTIAN SINGER



Ray Boltz is a singer-songwriter who came to notoriety through contemporary Christian music (CCM). His music tells stories of faith and inspiration. Over his 30-year career, Ray has been the recipient of multiple Dove awards from the Gospel Music Association for songs such as "Thank You," "The Anchor Holds," and "I Pledge Allegiance to the Lamb." Ray's music has continued to inspire deep faith in his listeners. He and his ex-wife of 33 years have 4 children. But to the shock of much of the contemporary Christian music world, Ray came out as gay in 2008.

After a great deal of prayer and with the support of his family, Ray publicly announced his sexual orientation in an interview with *The Washington Blade*. His revelation shocked the Christian community. He received thousands of emails and messages from people who were hurt and angered by his announcement. Most of these messages listed Biblical passages assuring him that he was "bound for hell". But Ray responded by writing gay affirming songs like "I Will Choose To Love," "God Knows I Tried," "Who Would Jesus Love," and "Don't Tell Me Who to Love."

Ray and his partner currently reside in Fort Lauderdale, FL. Although he has retired from the CCM industry, Ray continues to write, record, and perform. He is also actively involved with a local, affirming church.

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing Ray regarding his incredible spiritual path and journey.

Rev. Patrick: What is it like living in South Florida where, generally, diversity is looked at in a positive light as compared to the decades of living and working in a conservative Christian environment.

Ray: I love living in South Florida. Many years ago, I was employed by the state of Indiana as a snow plow driver. It happened to be during one of the biggest blizzards in the history of the Midwest. I made a promise to myself, that if I could ever get out of the snow, I would do it. I used to do concert tours here during the nineties and even owned a condo on the gulf coast. After I came out, it just seemed like the right thing to do. I enjoyed the fact that many of my neighbors are gay and I can walk down the street with my partner and it isn't really a big deal. Moving from a small town in Indiana to a big city like Fort Lauderdale also allowed me to just be myself. I still love it here, although I am often in Indiana visiting my family.

Rev. Patrick: Your music addresses faith and the message so often dwells on "choices" that we make. How do you respond to those who believe that you have made a choice to be gay?

Ray: I suppose I would just respond to that kind of comment with a question. "When did you choose to be straight?" It is not that I was really attracted to girls and then one day said,

"I think I will try this gay thing." My orientation has been with me from the beginning. At least as far back as I can remember. I spent years doing everything I could to deny these feelings. I pretended they were not real. I prayed. I fasted. I went through deliverance. I went to Christian counselors. I did everything the church told me to do. It did not change me.

Rev. Patrick: How have others who are singers and songwriters in the Christian community who are struggling with their sexual orientation reached out to you for advice and support?

Ray: I have been contacted by many struggling believers during the last seven years. Usually they write to me via my website (www.rayboltz.com) or my facebook page. I have heard from other singers, writers, and even megachurch pastors. The one thing I can't do, however, is tell someone what they "should" do. Coming out is a very personal decision. In the case of pastors or Christian musicians, it could mean the loss of their positions, ministries, and even

their families. I always encourage people to find a good therapist or counselor, one that will not impose their religious beliefs. I suggest they find a person who can help them understand that they are not alone, they are not a monster, and they are wonderful creations just the way they are. Therapy has helped me find my way through the darkness. It hasn't been easy, but it is possible.

Rev. Patrick: Share with us some stories of your journey and your choices to embrace who God made you that have had a positive influence on others?

Ray: I always appreciate emails and comments from people who are touched by my music or by my story. There have been some dramatic ones. People who were ready to end their lives and somehow heard a song of mine that gave them hope in their darkest moments. I think it is just such a wonderful thing to discover that we are not alone in our struggles and our feelings.



To learn more about Ray Roltz, visit www.RayBoltz.com or look for him on Facebook.

Rev. Patrick Rogers, MDiv is Senior Pastor at United Church of Christ Fort Lauderdale, 2051 NE 30th Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33306 www.UCCFtL.org

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WORLD OUTGAMES MIAMI SEEKING GLOBAL ARTIST SUBMISSIONS FOR OFFICIAL EVENT POSTER

World OutGames Miami 2017, a ten day multisport, human rights, and cultural event from May 27 - June 4, 2017, is inviting artists worldwide to create an original poster image that promotes the spirit of the event. This commemorative art design will wholeheartedly embrace the three core pillars of the World OutGames: sports, culture, and human rights.

Each art submission will be judged by an esteemed selection committee who will choose three designs to be uploaded to www.outgames.org for voting by the public during early April. The design which receives the most votes will be used as World OutGames Miami 2017's official commemorative poster, to be the featured program cover and more. The winning artist and designer will receive a cash prize of \$500 and a VIP Cultural Arts Pass to attend the World OutGames Miami and discounted rates for travel and lodging.

The submission deadline for is March 5, 11:50PM EST. The winner will be announced mid-April.

"We are excited to engage the artist community to develop a powerful symbol of our global event," said Ivan Cano, CEO of World OutGames Miami. "Art is at the forefront of our culture pillar and we are excited to select a submission that best celebrates our inclusive sports, human rights, and cultural offerings."



For more information or to enter the World OutGames Miami 2017 official poster design contest, please visit miamioutgames.fusesport.com/registration/578/.

ABOUT WORLD OUTGAMES

World OutGames is a multisport and cultural event that is licensed by the Gay and Lesbian International Sport Association (GLISA). Every

four years, World OutGames brings together athletes from all over the world in

unprecedented numbers for a celebration of sport, culture, and human rights, many from countries where homosexuality remains illegal and hidden.

Previously hosted in Montreal, Copenhagen, and Antwerp, World

OutGames is open to all who wish to participate, without regard to sexual orientation. There

are no qualifying standards, although competitions are arranged according to the skill levels of the competitors.



For more information visit www.OutGames.org , www.facebook.com/OutGamesMiami , www.twitter.com/OutGamesMiami , and www.instagram.com/OutGamesMiami .

FEEDING YOUR HEART

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU FED YOUR TICKER (OR EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT IT)?

By Jimmy Rodgers

Ah February . . . the month of love, red roses, Hallmark™ cards, and lots of chocolate. But the most important aspect (and maybe less exciting) is that it is American Heart Month. Go figure!

Whether you are feeling stressed planning an evening for that special someone or just hanging at home with your four-legged bestie, there is still a thought process and almost a pressure that may tap you on the shoulder around this time.

If you are with that special someone, there may be some anxiety in making the perfect dinner reservations, picking out the ideal bouquet of roses, finding a very specific type of chocolate, or for some, hoping that rock in your pocket will produce the reaction you desire.

On the other hand, if you are not partnered, you may wish that you were. You may also hate the time around the 14th of the month because you are only spending it with your cats while having a pity party and eyeballing that case of bubbly. On the contrary, you may be just fine not being dragged into the scheme of Valentine's Day, relieved that you have zero expectations or any of the usual obligated duties.

Regardless, if your heart is full of love for someone else or just you and your pet, it is essential to have it working to its best potential. Most people diet for personal and health reasons. Unless you have had heart issues, thinking about eating for your heart probably hasn't crossed your mind. Until Now!

I mean, why not support the one thing that supplies life to every part of your body? Hmm . . .



Here are some edible options that will have your heart beating out of your chest (well, not really).

■ Salmon and other fatty fish (sardines, mackerel) contain omega-3 fatty acids that lower the risk of arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat) and atherosclerosis (plaque build-up in the arteries). They also decrease triglycerides (too much could result in a possible stroke).

■ Oatmeal is high in soluble fiber which lowers cholesterol. No, I did not say instant oatmeal! Old-fashioned rolled oats and steel-cut are both wonderful superfoods and take little time to prepare. Other whole grains such as bread, pasta, and grits are equally good as long as they still contain the entire grain. Notice I did not say white bread or white pasta. Nothing white (bleached) is a whole grain, nor is it in any way beneficial for that matter.

■ Berries (blueberries, strawberries, cranberries, raspberries) contain phytonutrients, soluble fiber, and specifically the antioxidants needed to lower the risk of a heart attack by decreasing blood pressure and dilating blood vessels . . . and really, who doesn't like berries? I put some in the freezer for a quick snack and a healthy sugar fix. Watch out for brain freeze though - you've been warned!

■ Dark Chocolate (see, not so boring am I?) must contain at least 70% cacao to be effective. It contains polyphenols which may help blood pressure, clotting, and inflammation. It also relaxes arteries and increases blood flow. Make sure your dark chocolate does not contain any additives such as palm oil which has saturated fat.

■ Soy products have high levels of polyunsaturated fats (good fats), fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Their isoflavones

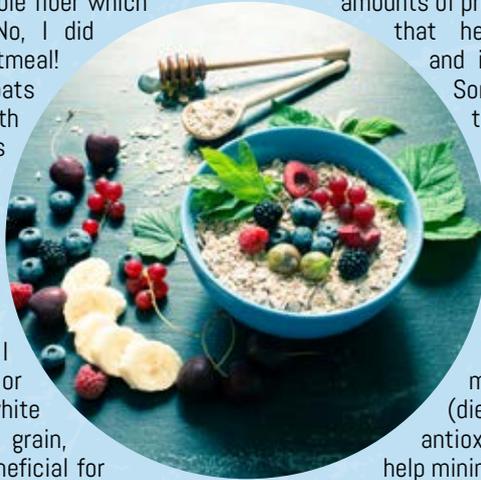
help to reduce LDL (bad) cholesterol and their niacin helps boost circulation. Soy contains no cholesterol and is naturally low in fat.

■ Red Wine (which goes great with dark chocolate . . . just sayin') helps improve HDL (good) cholesterol levels. The types of Madirans and Cabernets contain large amounts of procyanidins, an antioxidant that helps reduce cholesterol and increases arterial health. Some research suggests that any type of alcohol in moderation works. Moderation does not mean the whole liquor cabinet!

■ Avocados are rich in monounsaturated fats (more good fats) that may lower cholesterol (dietary). They're also high in antioxidants and potassium to help minimize blood cholesterol and blood clots. Avocados are just an amazing fruit to eat in general and supply a plethora of benefits. Yes, it is a fruit.

■ Nuts (almonds, walnuts, pistachios, peanuts, macadamias) contain good-for-your-heart fiber. Some, like walnuts, are high in omega-3 fatty acids, fiber, Vitamin E, and folate - all of which promote healthy hearts. They're also high in polyunsaturated fats. Some people avoid nuts because they're higher in fat . . . which is ridiculous and so the wrong fat to avoid. Grab them by the handful and eat up (unsalted, of course)! They are a great snack and one good handful a day is all you need.

■ Magnesium is one of the six essential minerals that the body needs in large quantities, as it helps lower blood pressure. The highest amount of magnesium within the whole body is in the heart, specifically the left ventricle. Magnesium naturally balances the body's cholesterol. Studies have shown that magnesium supplementation can cause slight



JIMMY SAYS

Start to be more intentional about your food choices. Nothing good can come from anything fast or instant. If you are someone constantly on-the-go, pack a few healthy snacks or even a meal. You are eating to live. Remember?

decreases in both total cholesterol and LDL (bad) cholesterol, while increasing HDL (good) cholesterol. This is optimal! It also helps prevent calcium buildup in arteries, which leads to calcification, or the hardening of arteries. Magnesium works with calcium to support proper blood pressure levels and prevent hypertension (HBP). Calcium works to contract muscles, while magnesium

helps those muscles relax. Without a proper balance of magnesium to other minerals like calcium, a heart attack can happen due to muscle spasms. Foods highest in magnesium are green vegetables, whole grain cereals, nuts, beans, and seafood. Good examples include halibut, mackerel, boiled spinach, bran cereal, almonds, cocoa, cashews, and pumpkin seeds.



All of the above can be prepared as daily meals and snacks. Unless you have specific dietary restrictions to any of them, they should all be in your cabinets, cupboards, and fridge-freezer. Obviously, non-genetically modified organism (GMO) and organic is recommended and preferred.

It's always great to diet or create strict eating habits toward whatever goals you may have. Just try to remember to think of the other major parts of your body (not just your midsection) that

need some TLC, especially if they are running the show!

Along with the good comes the bad. Here are the perpetrators that go against having a healthy heart. These should drastically be limited or removed from your diet, especially if heart issues come-a-knocking: soft drinks (simple sugars and artificial), baked desserts (with added sweeteners), refined carbs (ketchup, salad dressings), margarine (trans fat), bacon (saturated fat), and hot dogs (the heavily processed ones).

Jimmy is a Holistic Health Coach who received his training from the Institute for Integrative Nutrition in New York City. He is also board certified by the American Association of Drugless Practitioners. He provides continual support in the areas of food, nutrition, and lifestyle to locate the balance needed to achieve personal health and wellness goals. SuperJWellness@gmail.com www.SuperJWellness.com

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