TALK WITH KRISTIN

KIRSTIN CHENOWETH OPENS UP ABOUT CURRENT EVENTS, CAREER

PAGE 36
TRUMP OPPOSES THE EQUALITY ACT

The House is expected to vote on the historic legislation Friday

With a vote on the Equality Act in the U.S. House expected on Friday, a senior administration official indicated exclusively to the Washington Blade that President Trump opposes the bill.

“The Trump administration absolutely opposes discrimination of any kind and supports the equal treatment of all; however, this bill in its current form is filled with poison pills that threaten to undermine parental and conscience rights,” the senior administration official said via email.

More details about Trump’s position on the Equality Act may come soon from the White House, which traditionally issues a Statement of Administration Policy when legislation comes to the floor of either chamber of Congress.

The statement is arguably a change in position for Trump. In 2000, when Trump was exploring a presidential run as a Reform Party candidate, he said in an interview with The Advocate he likes the idea of amending the Civil Rights Act to include sexual orientation — a key component of the Equality Act.

“I like the idea of amending the 1964 Civil Rights Act to include a ban of discrimination based on sexual orientation,” Trump said. “It would be simple. It would be straightforward. We don’t need to rewrite the laws currently on the books, although I do think we need to address hate-crimes legislation. But amending the Civil Rights Act would grant the same protection to gay people that we give to other Americans — it’s only fair.”

The Equality Act, as it will come up in the House, would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Fair Housing Act to ban anti-LGBT discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, jury service, education, federal programs and credit.

But the Equality Act goes further than what Trump said he supported in 2000. In addition to transgender inclusion, the bill seeks to update federal law to include sex in the list of protected classes in public accommodation and expands the definition of public accommodations to include retail stores, banks, transportation services and health care services. Further, the Equality Act would establish that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act — a 1994 law aimed at protecting religious liberty — can’t be used to enable anti-LGBT discrimination.

The White House statement is consistent with the Trump administration’s anti-LGBT actions, such as the transgender military ban, withdrawal of guidance to schools assuring transgender kids have access to the restroom consistent with their gender identity and actions taken in the name of “religious freedom” seen to undermine LGBT rights.

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Arianna’s Center empowers, engages, uplifts, and advocates for the transgender community in Florida. The center focuses its attention on South Florida and works with the trans LatinX community, undocumented immigrants, people living with HIV/AIDS, and people who are homeless or who’ve experienced incarceration.

“Arianna’s Center is a grassroots organization that’s led by trans, binary, and gender non-conforming people,” CEO Arianna Lint said. “It’s the first resource for many people coming to Florida.”

The center currently serves more than 300 people living in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties. Arianna’s Center organizes a monthly outreach event for the trans community at Boardwalk Bar in Wilton Manors. The next event is May 20. Doors open at 8:30 p.m. It’s an opportunity for trans people and their allies to network, relax, and engage in self-care.

That self-care is reflected in HIV and other STD testing at the event, along with Hepatitis A vaccines. There is also linkage and referrals to case management, healthcare and mental health resources, among others.

The next Boardwalk Bar event will also feature a red carpet and a show contest with a first prize of $250 and a prize of $100 for the runner-up. Boardwalk has $5 drink specials. Tickets at the door are $15, but entrance is free with an on-location HIV test.

The center’s April event had more than 100 attendees. The monthly event is held the third Monday of every month through November. The final event of the year will take place to commemorate Transgender Remembrance Day.

ARSOL

Local News

Denise Royal

Photo via Facebook.

Arianna’s Center welcomes Goddesses at May 20 event

Denise Royal

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Cuban authorities last week refused to allow Washington Blade International News Editor Michael K. Lavers to enter the country.

Lavers arrived at Havana’s José Martí International Airport on an American Airlines flight from Miami shortly before noon EST. A customs agent pulled him aside and a supervisor took his passport. The supervisor’s colleague approached Lavers about 15 minutes later and asked him how many times he has been to Cuba, what his profession is and why he was attempting to travel to the country.

The official informed Lavers the Cuban government was not going to allow him into the country. Lavers asked the official why and he said his name appeared on a list without any additional explanation.

Lavers spent more than six hours in the customs hall before he boarded an American Airlines flight to Miami shortly before 7 p.m.

His iPhone was confiscated shortly after 3 p.m., but he was able to text contacts in the country through his Cuban cell phone. Lavers was not officially detained.

Lavers has traveled to Cuba seven times since 2015, with his most recent trip from Feb. 28-March 4 of this year on a “tourist card.” Lavers has filed dozens of stories from Cuba after authorities allowed him to enter the country with both press visas and a “tourist card.”

“We are deeply disappointed in this action by the Cuban government,” said Washington Blade editor Kevin Naff. “The Blade has traveled to Cuba seven times in four years covering the plight of the LGBTQ community and we are committed to fair, accurate journalism. Barring our reporter from the country is a disturbing development that we hope is an aberration that will be remedied.”

Lavers landed in Havana two days after the Cuban National Center for Sexual Education (CENESEX), a group directed by Mariela Castro, the daughter of former President Raúl Castro, announced the cancellation of marches in Havana and the city of Camagüey that would have commemorated the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia.

Cleve Jones, a San Francisco-based activist who was to have been the Havana march’s grand marshal, was on Lavers’ flight and spoke with him before he passed through customs.

LGBT activists who work independently of CENESEX sharply criticized the decision to cancel the marches. Reports also indicate they are planning to stage a march in Havana on Saturday.

Other IDAHOBIT events sponsored by CENESEX will take place as scheduled. They coincide with increased tensions between Washington and Havana over Cuba’s continued support of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro.

Reports also indicate authorities on Wednesday arrested Luz Escobar, an independent journalist.
Joe Ousalice, 68, a bisexual British Navy veteran served for 18 years before being kicked out and stripped of his awards in 1993.

The British armed forces banned LGBT service members until 2000, according to CNN. Now, Ousalice will sue the Ministry of Defense if it doesn’t restore his medals and awards for his time in service.

“I was made to feel like I was disgusting and in the end I was hounded out on some trumped-up charges, and told that because I was attracted to men, my 18 years of service counted for nothing,” Ousalice told CNN. “It was heartbreaking. It took me years to recover.”

Ousalice was accused of indecency in a civilian court, indecent assault, and conduct not suited for the Navy. He was also forced to come out publicly as bisexual. All Ousalice wants now is recognition for his 18 years in service.

A decision last week from the Court of Arbitration for Sport ruled that a female athlete with intersex variations has to lower her testosterone levels to compete. The Kenyan team has now dropped two female athletes with high testosterone levels.

Sprinters Maximila Imali and Evangeline Makena were kicked off the team after taking blood tests, according to AFP via The East African. In order to compete as women, they would have to take suppressant treatments to lower their testosterone, but Imali rejects this.

“Were we summoned for the blood tests at the team hotel last Friday and when the report came out on Monday, Athletics Kenya officials inform us about the result outcome,” Imali told AFP. “This is a scheme to demoralise us. I am not ready to quit athletics, nor to take a suppressant treatment. I am so happy the way God made me to be.”

Imali also took a blood test in 2015, revealing high testosterone, which got her removed from the world championships in Beijing. SFGN
Chinese transgender men and women are using black market drugs and performing surgeries on themselves in an attempt to transition.

A report from Amnesty International, a human rights group, uncovers the hardships and discrimination transgender people face in China, and what they resort to as a result, according to CNN.

"Interviewees give examples of them being discriminated against at work, being told by employers not to wear [their] hair long, or not to wear to wrong clothes — ‘You’re driving away customers.’ At home their family will tell them to suppress their gender identity: ‘Be a man or have a child,’” Amnesty International China researcher Doriane Lau told CNN.

To legally have a gender-affirming surgery in China, a patient has to be over 20, unmarried, and have gone through a year of therapy, CNN reports.
**CARIBBEAN**

**ACTIVISTS ARRESTED AT CUBAN UNOFFICIAL PRIDE PARADE**

After the Cuban government cancelled its 12th annual conga against homophobia, activists organized their own unauthorized march, but were detained by plainclothes officers.

The march only proceeded for four blocks before it was stopped by officers, according to reporting by Reuters via The New York Times. At least three activists were arrested, and all the other participants were ordered to leave. However, some say the march should serve as a warning to the government.

“Social media is playing its role, and civil society demonstrated it has strength and can go out onto the streets if necessary,” Maykel González Vivero, an independent journalist and LGBT activist said, according to the New York Times. “And from now on, the government will have to take that into account.”

Despite the march being cut short, activists are still proud they organized a march independent of the government or an institution.

**EUROPE**

**CHECHEN POLICE ALLEGEDLY ABUSE GAY, BISEXUAL MEN**

In a revival of the anti-gay crackdowns in Chechnya, police have allegedly detained and abused men suspected of being gay or bisexual.

Human Rights Watch put out a report saying at least 23 men were detained between September and April. This is the third crackdown in recent years, but unlike the others, Human Rights Watch said the police felt the inclination to detain gay and bisexual men independent of the government.

“Russian authorities should immediately investigate the new wave of torture and humiliation by the Chechen police of men they believe to be gay and, finally, carry out an effective investigation into the purge of 2017,” Rachel Denber, deputy Europe and Central Asia director at Human Rights Watch said.

Chechen authorities have denied the reports of abuse, according to Human Rights Watch.

**OCEANIA**

**GAY ASIAN WOMAN MAY BECOME AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER**

Sen. Penny Wong could be the highest ranking gay Asian politician in Australian Parliament.

That’s if the opposition Labor Party wins an election this week, and Wong becomes the foreign minister, according to CNN. Wong, 50, said her win would send a message to the world about Australia as a multicultural nation.

“What would be significant... is what it says about us. What it says about who we are,” Wong said in a speech, according to CNN. “Narratives matter, as do perceptions. There are times when Australia’s past attitudes on race can be evoked in ways which are neither accurate nor helpful.”

The contested election will be held on May 18. Wong would be the third woman to take on the role of foreign minister.

**ASIA**

**GAY MODEL VISITS BRUNEI, SAYS IT’S SAFE**

Sinon Loresca, a gay model known for sporting high heels and dresses in public, traveled to Brunei following new laws implementing the death penalty for gay sex.

The harsh Sharia laws were instituted early last month, and Brunei received worldwide backlash and faced boycotts. Loresca, however, said he felt safe as a gay man in Brunei, according to Gay Star News. He also said that the media exaggerated the laws.

“I must say BRUNIE is one of the safest country on earth. Lovely and friendly people. Some news so exaggerated - stoned to death is not real NOT AT ALL. BRUNIE is a beautiful country. Period,” Loresca wrote on Facebook.

But a gay refugee speculated whether someone in power invited Loresca, and guaranteed his safety, according to Gay Star News. Other Facebook users alleged that the Brunei government paid Loresca to mend its image, according to Q News.
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There is No ‘Shortest Way’ To the White House for Buttigieg

Lisa Keen

The last paragraph of Pete Buttigieg’s autobiography, “The Shortest Way Home,” could almost serve as a summary of “The Wizard of Oz.” The protagonist rushed to “escape the hometown that had shaped me,” then “slowly and imperceptibly” came to see “the meaning I sought was to be found very close to where I had begun....”

But Buttigieg is not in Indiana anymore. The path that was the “shortest way home” in his previous life is not the one he must travel to get to the White House. His campaign to become the Democratic nominee for president in 2020 has put him on a road many candidates have traveled before. And on that road, he has already encountered many wicked adversaries, a wide variety of supportive friends, and the metaphorical fields of poppies that can pull down any candidate’s campaign.

South Bend, Indiana Mayor Buttigieg has, so far, demonstrated skill in fending off the metaphorical wicked witches. First, openly gay ambassador to Germany Ric Grenell accused Buttigieg of creating a Jussie Smollett style “hate hoax” against Vice President Mike Pence. Then, late evangelist Billy Graham’s son tweeted his opinion that Buttigieg should not be “flaunting” his being gay but “repenting” it.

Last week, two Republican operatives tried to promote false accusations that Buttigieg had sexually assaulted two men (both of whom denied the claims). And just last Friday night, his speech was interrupted multiple times at a local Democratic Party event in Dallas by anti-abortion activist Randall Terry and several others, who yelled things like, “Remember Sodom and Gomorrah.”

“Politics can be ugly sometimes,” he told The Daily Beast, “but you have to face that when you’re in presidential politics.”

In collecting support, Buttigieg has racked up numbers that are unprecedented for such a relatively unknown candidate. Several polls in April — both national and Iowa and New Hampshire specific — show potential Democratic voters consistently putting him in third place. One New Hampshire poll even showed him tied with U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders for second (behind former Vice President Joe Biden in first). And in fundraising, his campaign reported slightly more than $7 million during the first quarter of 2019.

Those “support” numbers have to be looked at in context. With the polling, most of these early surveys including Buttigieg are measuring likely Democratic primary and caucus voters or voters who at least “lean Democratic.” These voters tend to be more progressive than the general voting population.

The most recent poll in New Hampshire, by the Boston Globe and Suffolk University April 25-28, found Buttigieg tied with Sanders for second when polling more than 800 adults who broke down roughly 37 percent independent, 32 percent Republican, and 29 percent Democrat. Looking at the raw data, only 52 percent of those 800 said they would likely vote in the Democratic primary.

When it comes to collecting dollars, the only hard data available is from reports campaigns had to file with the Federal Elections Commission. In an even broader context, it’s worth noting that President Trump has raised $30 million, but only $7.3 million of that was in individual contributions. (He’s behind Sanders with $18 million from individual contributions, Harris with $12 million from individual contributions, and Beto O’Rourke with $9 million in individual contributions.)

That said, if one looks at how much money came in from individual contributions (from individual persons and $2,800 or less per election), Buttigieg’s $7 million (all of it from individual contributions) ranks fourth among the Democrats. (He’s behind Sanders with $18 million from individual contributions, Harris with $12 million from individual contributions, and Beto O’Rourke with $9 million in individual contributions.)

In an even broader context, it’s worth noting that President Trump has raised $30 million, but only $7.3 million of that was in individual contributions.

These dollar figures are only one marker of a candidate’s potential viability in the race, and data from contributions and polling are hurdles candidates must clear in order to secure a spot in the Democratic primary debates which start in June. Buttigieg has qualified, along with Harris, O’Rourke, Sanders, Warren, and businessman Andrew Yang, according to fivethirtyeight.com.

A closer examination of FEC records indicate that, in the first quarter, Buttigieg received almost no money from the LGBT community’s best known politicos. For instance, FEC records show no direct individual contribution to Buttigieg in the first quarter from San Francisco philanthropist James Hormel, Chicago Cubs co-owner Laura Ricketts, Hollywood producer David Geffen. Former Clinton appointee Robert Achtenberg contributed to the campaigns of both Buttigieg and Harris in the first quarter, as did D.C. Democratic activist Steve Elmendorf.

But it’s simply too soon to pronounce where the LGBT community is investing its money in the presidential primary. Most voters, including many LGBT voters, simply didn’t know Buttigieg for much of the first quarter, and Buttigieg has, in recent weeks, just started going to LGBT fundraisers in big cities to seek the community’s support. And it’s too soon to predict whether LGBT donors will decide to put their money behind an openly gay candidate if they feel forced to choose between him and a supportive Democrat who is seen as a better challenger to President Trump.

On April 30, the Boston Globe released a poll showing that, of 439 voters likely to vote in the New Hampshire Democratic primary, only 5 percent said they thought Buttigieg could beat President Trump in the general election. (That compared to 35 percent who think Biden can and 13 percent who think Sanders can.)

And then, there are the poppies — those
Politics can be ugly sometimes,” he told The Daily Beast, “but you have to face that when you’re in presidential politics.”

-Pete Buttigieg

unpredictable issues that pop up in every campaign — issues a candidate must march through without getting pulled down.

Already, Buttigieg has had to explain — and essentially apologize — for using the phrase “all lives matter” in the context of a South Bend conflict between police and the black community in 2015. Many people feel the phrase “all lives matter” is an attempt to undermine the efforts to draw attention to pervasive attacks on black people, especially by police. Confronted about the 2015 statement last month, Buttigieg said he “did not understand at that time” that “all lives matter” was starting to be used as “a sort of counter-slogan to Black Lives Matter.”

“Since learning about how that phrase was being used to push back on that activism,” said Buttigieg, “I have stopped using it in that context.”

He’s had to deal with continued criticism, too, for his decision not to release audiotapes secretly recorded by South Bend’s African American police chief, whom Buttigieg demoted. Supporters of the police chief want the tapes made public in hopes of exposing the racist attitudes of some South Bend white police officers.

Buttigieg said he wouldn’t release the tapes because they were made in violation of the Federal Wiretap Act. He said he demoted the police chief because the chief failed to notify him that the chief was the subject of a criminal investigation by the FBI and, so, he felt he could not trust the chief.

He’s had to address smallish dust-ups around his being a fan of Eminem, a rapper notorious for anti-gay lyrics, and chicken from Chick-fil-A, a company that has funded and promoted anti-gay candidates and positions.

Buttigieg, asked about both on “The Breakfast Club,” a nationally syndicated radio talk show, said he admires Eminem’s “militant pride” in his hometown of Detroit but “it’s not like you can excuse the homophobia.” As per Chick-fil-A, he said, “I do not approve of their politics, but I kind of approve of their chicken.”

“We’ve got to find a way to use our identities to reach other people,” said Buttigieg. “There’s two things that can happen when you are conscious of your identity. One is it turns into all these ways of separating ourselves from each other, and it just turns into one big, ‘You don’t know me.’ But the other way we could do it is we can say, ‘OK, I’ve got this experience, you’ve got that experience, what can we talk about that brings us together. What do we have in common?’”

There’s no doubt Buttigieg’s identity of being gay will be another — perhaps the most difficult — of the poppy fields he’ll have to negotiate along his road to the White House.

A poll released April 30 by Quinnipiac University found that 70 percent of 1,044 voters polled nationwide (including 46 percent of Republicans) are “open” to electing a gay man president. But 52 percent of voters are not ready to do so. (margin of error 3.5 percent).

The New York Times published a story last week suggesting the “wall” against electing an openly gay candidate might be crumbling. The Times asked the New Hampshire Democratic Party’s openly gay chairman, Ray Buckley, whether voters “need to see something else first, something other than gay?”

Buckley said that was true of “any candidate that isn’t a straight white male.”

“Can Mr. Buttigieg win the presidency?” asked the Times.

“Obama’s victory proved everyone can dream of becoming president, Trump’s victory proved anyone can become president,” said Buckley. “Buttigieg has just as much the ability to win as anyone else.”

“OK, I’VE GOT THIS EXPERIENCE, YOU’VE GOT THAT EXPERIENCE, WHAT CAN WE TALK ABOUT THAT BRINGS US TOGETHER. WHAT DO WE HAVE IN COMMON?”

-Pete Buttigieg

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE
Pete Buttigieg and Donald Trump traded jabs this week as the presidential campaign continues to develop.

As of May 3, President Trump had a 46 percent job approval score from Gallup. In Panama City Beach last week, a puffed up Trump took the stage in front of prominent Florida Republicans.

During a chest-thumping 1-hour and 24-minute speech, Trump paused to ridicule Buttigieg, the young gay mayor of South Bend, Indiana.

"You have this young man, Buttigieg, Buddha-Edge-Edge. They say, 'Edge, Edge,'" Trump blustered. "He's got a great chance doesn't he? He'll be great. He'll be great. Representing us against President Shee [Xi Jinping] of China. That'll be great. That'll be great. I want to be in the room, I want to watch that one."

Off-stage Trump compared Buttigieg to a character from Mad Magazine.

"Alfred E. Neuman cannot become president of the United States," Trump said. Neuman is the mascot of Mad Magazine, an American humor magazine in publication since 1952. Campaigning in Los Angeles, Buttigieg dismissed the attempted insult as a generational joke.

"I didn't get the reference," he told reporters. "It's kind of funny, I guess."

As for the remarks on China, Buttigieg thoughtfully addressed the topic.

"I was thinking of the Chinese proverb that goes: When the wind changes, some people build walls and some people build windmills," Buttigieg said. **SFGN**
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This article discusses two meetings. It reports on the HIV Planning Council (HIV-PC) meeting. It reports on the South Florida AIDS Network (SFAN) meeting.

The Broward HIV Planning Council (HIVPC) oversees the Ryan White Care (RWC) Program of Broward (RWC-Broward), also known as RWC-Part A.

The South Florida AIDS Network (SFAN) advises the RWC program of the Florida Department of Health in Broward (RWC-FL DOH Broward), also known as RWC-Part B.

**THE HIV PLANNING COUNCIL MET ON APRIL 25**

Most of this meeting concerned funds left unspent at the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2018.

The Planning Council sets priorities and allocates RWC-Broward funds. Lorenzo Robertson discussed the Priority Setting and Resource Allocation (PSRA) process. This process starts if either of two things happen. The award may differ from the requested amount. Some providers may either be under or over providing services. When either happens, the PSRA committee submits proposals to the HIV-PC to move funds between providers.

Leonard Jones (RWC-Broward) reported that the Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) had between $180,000 and $190,000 left unspent. This program focuses on black men and women between the ages of 18 to 34. It only began in November 2019 with three months to spend its funds. The MAI can carry these unspent funds over into FY2019.

The peer training program has reached its final stages, according to Jones. Most peer trainees have either found a new job, or their current job will use their new peer skills.

Jones announced a two month goal for dual online certification in RWC-Broward (Part A) and AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP).

Josh Rodriguez (RWC-FL DOH Broward) discussed the Emergency Financial Assistance program. This program pays for emergency expenses. These emergency expenses include paying for antiretrovirals before ADAP can. He estimated that this program will have over $10,000 left unspent at the end of FY2018.

**SFAN MET ON MAY 3**

Most of this meeting also concerned funds left unspent at the end of FY2018.

SFAN made multiple requests of RWC-FL DOH. SFAN requested that RWC-FL DOH Broward explain the unspent $12,201 of the Emergency Financial Assistance category. In March, 178 clients failed to re-enroll in ADAP. SFAN wanted to know how many of these were lost to care. SFAN members requested more information regarding this.

Joey Wynn has resigned as the Broward alternate delegate to the Patient Care and Prevention Planning Group. This statewide group plans HIV services for the state. Greg Beltran has agreed to be the new alternate.

Ronald Henderson, Statewide Minority AIDS Coordinator, called in from Tallahassee. He reported on new HIV cases among gay and bi men in Florida. Black gay and bi men had the largest number of new HIV cases from age 13 to 24. Latinos aged 25 to 49 had the largest number. After age 50, white gay and bi men had the largest number of new HIV cases.

Broward differed slightly in new HIV cases among gay and bi men. Black gay and bi men had the largest number of new HIV cases from age 13 to 29. Latinos aged 30 to 39 had the largest number. After age 40, white gay and bi men had the largest number of new HIV cases.

Next SFAN Meeting: Friday, June 7, at 10 a.m. at Holy Cross Healthplex, 1000 NE 56th St., Fort Lauderdale. SFAN welcomes newcomers.

Next HIVPC meeting: Thursday, May 23, at 9:30 a.m. at Broward Government Center, Room GC430, 115 S. Andrews Ave.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The World AIDS Museum is conducting an oral history of HIV. They are looking for personal stories. Call 954.390.0550 for more information.
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Claudia Harrison

Remember being a kid? The cliques, the bullies, the homework, the effort to have a social life, and the fear of looking uncool?

LGBT youth today face unique challenges, like school rules that keep them from using the bathrooms and locker rooms that make sense for them, and the way social media allows all those school-day pressures to follow them home when the bell rings.

For kids in Palm Beach County, an oasis exists in the midst of these tough times - the youth group at Compass Community Center. Since 1992, Compass has been a safe haven for LGBT youth, holding meetings twice a week that include small group discussions with mentors and fun activities like karaoke night and local cultural events. Regular attendees to the youth group tell staff they feel safe and accepted here, and that it’s a place they can freely be themselves.

Transgender youth are at a higher risk for suicide and bullying than almost any other group in their age group. For this reason, Compass started a support group specifically for trans youth, which meets every Friday as an offshoot of the regular youth group.

Since 2017 this program has been funded by Palm Beach County Youth Services Department (PBCYSD), and it is the only one of its kind in the county. The transgender youth program coordinator regularly assists parents looking for resources to help their child who is struggling with gender identity.

Compass also offers a free behavioral wellness program to PBC youth, with both group and individual therapy sessions offered by two dedicated professionals, who are also educators at FAU. This program, also funded by PBCYSD, is on track to help dozens of young people this year alone through ongoing therapy and crisis interventions. Affordable behavioral healthcare is inaccessible by many young people in desperate need of it, so we at Compass are committed to providing it to as many as possible.

The youth also take part in community events like The Lake Worth Street Painting Festival, where they design their own piece of art, and in Compass’ signature event Palm Beach Pride, where they help guests with fun craft activities and talk about the program. They are encouraged to raise funds for activities they want to do, and for their own special events like Equality Prom, coming up later this month.

Equality Prom happens every year in late May as an antidote to school-sponsored spring dances, where LGBT youth often are not allowed to dress the way they want, or bring the date of their choice. The youth group decides on a theme and helps with decorations. This year the dance will be an outer-space-themed Galactic Gala, on Friday evening, May 24. Equality Prom is open to all youth in Palm Beach County. Students interested in attending can sign up here: 2019EqualityProm.eventbrite.com

Claudia Harrison is Compass’ Chief Information Officer. For more information about any aspect of the youth program at Compass, please contact Amanda Canete at amanda@compassglcc.com.
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Padilla v. Kentucky, 559 U. S. 356, 369 (2010), U.S. Supreme Court

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There are two major holiday seasons in Judaism, the High Holidays in the fall and Passover/Shavuot in the spring. Passover, the celebration of freedom from slavery is connected to Shavuot, the celebration of God’s gift of Torah on Mount Sinai by the Omer, the 49-day period between them during which we are invited to consider again our spiritual lives within the context of our history. How do we understand the changes that must be made when we move from the mindset of being a slave to being a person who is responsible for their lives.

Of course we are encouraged to consider our spiritual lives every day, but with jobs, laundry, and taking care of the family, the time for spiritual pursuits typically is hard to find. The Jewish calendar, however, puts it on our “to do” list, using the Omer period in particular for making the spiritual path clearer and easier to follow.

The calendar shows that there are 49 days between Passover and Shavuot, equaling seven weeks. Each week is assigned a main character trait that is matched with the six subordinate traits of that week. (The model found on the map of sefirot above uses only the lower seven traits for our purposes). During week 1, day 1 we examine Chesed within Chesed; on day 2 we examine Gevurah within Chesed; day 3 is Tiferet within Chesed, continuing on with Netzach, Hod, Yesod, and Malchut. Week 2 examines Gevurah, so that on week 2, day 1 we examine Chesed within Gevurah; week 2, day 2 is Gevurah within Gevurah, etc. When this article is published, it will be on Omer day 26, Hod within Netzach, or contemplating “Humility within Endurance.”

Endurance, the character trait for this week, is the trait that has us persisting in an endeavor. It’s the urge to learn a new skill, to work for a social or political ideal. The Hod, or humility aspect of endurance asks if we are capable of recognizing when we should maintain endurance and when we should yield. Is this the time to be an oak, unbending and solid, or to be more like a reed bending to accommodate a hurricane. Hod also asks how we are presenting our endurance to others, whether we quietly go about our work or loudly announce with a sigh that we are once again going to volunteer.

The practice of counting the Omer can help us learn more about our own character and be more sensitive to the passage of time. It encourages loving and compassionate self-reflection so that we can be a better person and continue to improve the world as we improve ourselves.

Gevurah within Chesed; on day 2 we examine Gevurah within Chesed; day 3 is Tiferet within Chesed, continuing on with Netzach, Hod, Yesod, and Malchut. Week 2 examines Gevurah, so that on week 2, day 1 we examine Chesed within Gevurah; week 2, day 2 is Gevurah within Gevurah, etc. When this article is published, it will be on Omer day 26, Hod within Netzach, or contemplating “Humility within Endurance.”

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The practice of counting the Omer can help us learn more about our own character and be more sensitive to the passage of time. It encourages loving and compassionate self-reflection so that we can be a better person and continue to improve the world as we improve ourselves.
Florida’s legislative session has been called “the 60 most dangerous days of the year” and 2019 has been no exception. We’ve seen extreme legislation pass but we’ve also celebrated some incredible victories and historic progress as well.

By session’s end this month, Florida legislators had passed bills to vilify immigrants; put guns in classrooms by arming teachers; and limit Floridians’ access to democracy, including voting rights. At the same time, we emerged from the session with unprecedented bipartisan support for adding LGBT protections to civil rights laws, made enormous progress on top priorities like updating Florida’s HIV laws, and helped secure funding for a Pulse memorial. Most importantly, we blocked passage of bills that threatened to repeal hard-won local nondiscrimination protections.

In fact, for over twenty years, Equality Florida has been defeating a wide array of bad legislation and gaining ground toward statewide equality. We have been the voice of our LGBT community in the state Capitol and in that time we have seen tremendous progress in shifting the culture, educating policymakers, and defeating measures that would do our community harm.

This year’s legislative session was one of our most ambitious, and included one of the broadest legislative programs we’ve ever had, from advocating for fully inclusive and comprehensive civil rights laws, to banning conversion therapy, to decriminalizing the lives of people living with HIV, to advocating for abortion rights and personal autonomy in healthcare, to fighting for common sense gun safety reforms in the wake of Pulse and Parkland, to pushing back on anti-LGBT and anti-immigrant fear mongering. There was unprecedented progress on our top legislative priorities and Equality Florida’s record of defeating or neutralizing every anti-LGBT bill remains intact.

Within a week of the start of the 2019 legislative session, Equality Florida launched its annual Lobby Days program. More than one hundred grassroots activists packed the Capitol and spent two days talking face-to-face with legislators and sharing personal stories. At home, hundreds of Equality Florida members participated electronically via the Equality Florida Virtual Lobby Days program.

The importance of our grassroots lobbyists cannot be overstated. In addition to helping secure 74 cosponsors for the Florida Competitive Workforce Act, they gained 5 new sponsors for the legislation banning conversion therapy on minors, and rallied unprecedented support for legislation that would finally update Florida’s outdated and dehumanizing HIV laws.

Below is a breakdown of all the legislation Equality Florida worked to pass and defeat in 2019. Session comes early next year, and with your support we will be ready to push our legislation forward and win full equality in Florida—nothing more and nothing less.

### CIVIL RIGHTS PROTECTIONS

The Florida Competitive Workforce Act (FCWA) which would add sexual orientation and gender identity to Florida’s civil rights statutes emerged as one of the most cosponsored bills this session. Filed this year by Florida’s first out lawmaker Jennifer Webb (D - St. Petersburg), and Jackie Toledo (R - Tampa) in the House and by Darryl Rouson (D - St. Petersburg) in the Senate, the Florida Competitive Workforce Act would protect the LGBT community from discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations. In short it provides the same protections against discrimination as every other Floridian.

By the close of session, 74 legislative cosponsors had signed on to the Florida Competitive Workforce Act - the most in the history of the bill. In the Florida House where 61 votes are needed to pass legislation, we secured 57 FCWA cosponsors with a dozen more Representatives pledging a vote in support. In the Florida Senate, where 21 votes are needed to pass, 17 Senators are FCWA cosponsors in 2019. It has never been more clear that we have the votes to prevail.

Another complication emerged this session. An employment-only bill was introduced that carves the LGBT community out of the protections in the Florida Civil Rights Act related to housing and public accommodations providing only 1/3rd of the protections afforded other Floridians. Supporters of the bill argue it was introduced as a way of making protections more palatable to those who oppose full equality. Within days of its introduction this bill and strategy were opposed by national, state and local LGBT legal and advocacy groups, including Equality Florida.

Not only did this limited bill fail to move but it drew only a handful of cosponsors and failed to garner support from any member of the Legislature who wasn’t already a supporter of comprehensive and fully inclusive protections (FCWA). We will continue to oppose legislation that designates LGBT people as separate, unequal and less worthy of equal protection than our fellow Floridians. We have never been closer to victory and we cannot back down from fighting for full equality. This is not the time to divide ourselves. Now is the moment to stand together and bring unprecedented pressure on the leadership in the House and Senate who refused to hear any legislation addressing discrimination against our community.
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Some claim it’s an actor’s job to play roles outside their own experience, while many people with disabilities and their allies argue able-bodied actors are taking jobs away from actors with disabilities — a group that is already underrepresented in the workforce across several industries.

As an accessibility consultant and a blind consumer of entertainment, I can say a lot of films and TV shows not only lack disability representation, but also accessibility features.

A few weeks ago, the internet erupted with outrages over the casting of Perry Mattfeld as the leading role of Murphy — a blind woman in The CW's new series “In the Dark.” The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) protested outside CBS studios, which owns The CW, in New York City and launched the hashtag #letusplayus.

While I was disappointed that, yet again, my community would be represented by an outsider, I was happy to hear the show did have one blind supporting character and a blindness consultant on staff. Thus, I decided to give the show a chance. Using Comcast’s audio description feature, which automatically plays the narration for the blind for shows and commercials that offer it, I sat on my couch to listen to the first episode during its Thursday night airing.

None of The CW's shows offer descriptive audio for the blind, and “In the Dark” was sadly not an exception. Still, I was surprised because Calle Watson, the visually impaired actor who plays Chloe, a blind teen, and Lori Bens, the show's blindness consultant, who is also legally blind, did an interview where they emphasized the importance of descriptive audio.

Some networks, such as Fox, TNT, and TBS, are wonderful about descriptive audio for the blind, while ABC and NBC are hit and miss. I reached out to gay and blind writer Robert Kingett, who singlehandedly got Netflix to add descriptive audio to the streaming service, to weigh in on film and TV access. He said, “Most of the time, people see audio description, especially on federally mandated TV, for example, as a chore they have to do or else — whoops! — don’t want to get a fine from the FCC.”

“This, in turn,” he continued, “causes studios and otherwise to plunk down the bare minimum.”

Kingett believes financing plays a major role when it comes to accessibility features for film and TV. Also, the studio must have the desire to not do a sloppy job when it comes to access. It took Kingett five years of calling, emailing, and blogging to get Netflix to add descriptive audio, and now they are the leader in providing access to films and shows to the blind.

With the second episode of “In the Dark,” I took a different approach. I recorded it with my Comcast DVR, which also would have recorded the descriptive audio feature had it been available, to help me understand the events in the scenes. A 42-minute show turned into an hour and a half of constantly hitting the rewind button. Ultimately, I got frustrated with the show and stopped listening to it.

Up to this point, I had enjoyed the acting of Calle Watson, who plays Chloe. The banter between her and her father is heartwarming and fun, while Murphy, played by Perry Mattfeld, came across as forced and very stiff. I was also horrified by how Murphy treated her guide dog, and was unclear why her mother did not know how to interact with her blind daughter. Yet, based on Watson’s performance alone, I recruited Peter Gawtry, who works at the Center for Academic Excellence at Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, MN, and is well-versed in working with students with disabilities, to provide me with descriptive audio for the third episode of “In the Dark.”

Over the phone, Gawtry narrated the scenes and described the characters to me. I soon learned the show has flashbacks, and that was one of the reasons why so many of the scenes were unclear. I also discovered that Murphy slept on a mattress without a bed frame, and confirmed that she was physically distant from her guide dog — even though she ran a guide dog school her parents opened up just so she would have a place to work.

I could not help but wonder: how can a show with a blindness consultant get the blind experience so wrong? I reached out to Greg Shane, artistic director at CRE Outreach, an arts nonprofit that provides performing opportunities to under-served populations, and is the home of Theatre by the Blind, to shine some light on this topic. He shared, “I would recommend for studios wanting to do disability-themed productions, to hire at least 2 or 3 consultants. It is limiting to think that one person alone can hold the experiences of an entire community.”

“Hiring multiple disability consultants,” he continued, “will not just provide a representative range, but also give jobs to people with disabilities.”

I reached out to “In the Dark’s” publicist, Cyndee Ellefson, for commentary, but did not get a reply. I also took a look at the show’s viewership and was not surprised to see it was not doing so well.

Mattfeld was described to me as tall, thin, and pretty, and if the show gets cancelled, she will have the ability to go on and get roles playing all types of characters. In fact, we may see her on another CW show playing a sassy friend, strict teacher, demon, super hero, or beautiful enchantress. However, Watson, the stronger actor, will have limited roles to audition for over the next few years. Studios may see her talent, but ultimately pass on her because she would have limited credits to her name — a result of also losing parts to sighted actors.

Belo Cipriani is a disability advocate, an award-winning journalist, the prize-winning author of Blind: A Memoir and Midday Dreams, and the spokesperson for Guide Dogs for the Blind. Learn more at www.belocipriani.com.
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Gilead Sciences, the pharmaceutical company that makes Truvada, the only FDA-approved drug for PrEP, is having a great week in the public relations department. First, Gilead announced they were surrendering their patent for Truvada a year early, and now federal officials have announced that Gilead will donate enough Truvada for 200,000 people in the United States.

Don’t fall for this. Gilead is engaged in a brilliantly self-serving marketing ploy and dressing it up like charity. Their deeply entrenched ownership of our governmental and community HIV response is as clear as ever. This ownership isn’t absolute; there are activists and national community leaders who see this ploy for what it is. #PrEP4All has met the news with great skepticism, and national non-profit leaders, who depend upon Gilead funding, have damned the announcement with faint praise or silence.

HERE ARE FIVE REASONS WHY GILEAD IS SIMPLY BUILDING PROFITS AND IGNORING PLEAS TO DO SOME REAL GOOD.

1. Gilead is offering no-cost Truvada for 200,000 people when they could make it affordable for everyone.

It costs Gilead pennies to make Truvada. They charge $20,000 a year for it. If Gilead really wanted to end this epidemic – and make no mistake, they have the ability to fundamentally alter the trajectory of HIV in the United States – then they would lower the price of Truvada across the board, for everyone. And by lower, I mean by a lot.

And the math is way off. We don’t need 200,000 more people on PrEP. In the United States alone, we need a million more people on PrEP.

Did I mention that Gilead will claim many, many millions of dollars in lost revenue on their corporate taxes as a result of their generosity?

2. Gilead is only providing Truvada for non-insured persons. People with insurance need it just as much.

There are people with health insurance who still face barriers to PrEP. They have high deductibles and co-pays, for instance, or they take one look at the bureaucracy of prior authorizations and co-pay assistance cards and just give up.


This might be Gilead at their most vile. By offering free Truvada to 200,000 people, they are creating a customer base for the arrival of their new drug, Descovy, which awaits FDA approval for use as PrEP. Descovy does not cause the side effects that Truvada patients have had. Gilead knew about the Truvada side effects years ago, but they waited all this time to introduce Descovy because they wanted to run out the clock on Truvada’s patent, yes, even while knowing Truvada was causing debilitating side effects in thousands of people along the way. This is just another chapter in the rich, sick history of Gilead’s corporate profiteering.

4. Gilead is unloading an obsolete PrEP drug and charging full price for their new one.

Once Descovy is FDA-approved next year for PrEP, Gilead will have an additional 200,000 new Truvada customers that they can try and talk into taking their new, improved version. For which they will be charging the full price of $20,000 per year.

5. The Truvada-as-PrEP patent belongs to U.S. taxpayers. Where are the royalties we deserve?

Which brings us to the topic Gilead really, really wants everyone to stop talking about. The patents for Truvada-as-PrEP belong to the United States taxpayers because the research was done by the CDC, not Gilead. Considering Gilead makes $3 billion a year on the sale of Truvada, those royalties could fund our national HIV prevention response. The CDC will not discuss this.

Oh, and the CDC owns patents to Descovy-as-PrEP, too. Don’t expect all the #PrEP4All activism to fade when Truvada goes generic. It won’t.

Gilead is hoping that their one-day headline about their Truvada donation will appease critics of their profiteering. It does not. And from what I am hearing, there are many more headlines to come in the days ahead.
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My high school is currently dealing with a transgender bathroom issue. A student came out as transgender and the school board supported allowing this student to use the restroom and locker room that matched his gender identity. Then parents found out about this student sharing the locker room with their kids and suddenly 250 people were showing up at school board meetings. The school board decided to take the parents’ opinions into account. The school plans to spend $1 million to create entirely single-stall locker rooms in the high school. Until that renovation happens, the school board voted to require students to use the restrooms and locker rooms according to their biological sex.

At the school board meeting, my wife and I showed up in support of a trans person’s right to use the bathroom and locker room based on their gender identity. Even though I was visibly shaking, surrounded by such a conservative and transphobic crowd, I spoke up, even though my voice wavered.

Here’s an excerpt of my speech:

My name is Atticus Ranck and this is my alma mater. I am a trans man. My wife, who is here, is a trans woman.

We live in a heteronormative world that tells trans people that we don’t want you in our schools, in our locker rooms, in our bathrooms. We don’t want you. This type of rhetoric leads 57 percent of trans youth to attempt suicide. Fifty-seven percent. Trans people are not trying to infiltrate gendered spaces in order to sexually harass other students, or to prey on different genders. There are very few places in this world specifically for queer people. Cisgender people, that is non-transgender people, can go anywhere in the world. Anywhere. Trans people cannot. If we must use a locker room or bathroom, we just want to change in peace. A trans person is not going to bring attention to themselves in the locker room. We want to go unnoticed.

A person’s rights should NEVER be up for debate. Nobody’s rights should ever be up for debate.

1. We respect, validate, and accept the trans person
2. We do not accept transphobia

Do not force the trans person to use the bathroom or locker room based on their assigned sex at birth. Do not force a trans person to use a private or single-stall locker room or restroom. By singling out a trans person and saying they are not allowed to use the correct bathroom or locker room, it’s a form of othering and it says, “We don’t trust you with the general population, you don’t belong with everyone else, and your gender is invalid.”

To all the trans people who may be here tonight, I see you. You are not a predator, you are not trying to assault anyone, you are not infiltrating differently gendered spaces. You are valid. You are loved. You are worthy. You deserve to live in peace and to pursue happiness. I am a trans person who grew up right here, whose parents and siblings are still right here. And I’m here to tell you that you can be trans and be successful. You can be trans and find love.

I said earlier that 57 percent of transgender youth attempt suicide. This is true. However, that number drops to just 4 percent with the support of their family. Be the support a transgender youth needs by allowing them to use the correct bathroom and locker room. You can save a life.

Atticus Ranck is the Health Programs & Supportive Services Manager for Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center in Allentown, PA. Previously, he was the Director of Transgender Services at SunServe in Wilton Manors. Atticus is a trans man who advocates for the LGBT community through his work, trainings, presentations, and everyday encounters.
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5.15.2019  •  29
color me jealous when I hear another gay man talk about his close friendship with his father. That wasn’t in the cards for me. I have always blamed my father for our lack of closeness, because he clearly didn’t want to be friends with his children. His generation believed “Father Knows Best.” He was the father, and you obeyed.

My father had to have been as disappointed in me as I was in him, because I didn’t give him what he wanted either, which was a son who did what he was told. I wasn’t the rebel who had parties at the house in my parents’ absence, but rather the one who questioned everything. My dad never got the satisfaction of ending the conversation with, “Because I said so.” Even if I didn’t win, I had the last word.

It embarrasses me now when I reflect on how critical of my father I was for many years, including how he ate, drank, drove, farted, belched, blew his nose, smelled, and spoke. That was then. This is now, and I, at times, eat, drive, fart, belch, blow my nose, smell, and speak like my father when he was my age. Justice. As you judge, so shall you be judged. But, I am without children of my own, and my grand nieces and nephews have a friendship with me that makes it less likely they’ll be as mercilessly critical.

I was lucky in having a mother who wasn’t afraid of losing respect by being friends with her offspring. My mom was spared my critical eye. Instead, I was protective of her. It sounds like a gay cliché, but I suspect most straight men had a similar relationship with their fathers and mothers. Among those straight men who feel they were close to their fathers are many guys who considered sharing sports and politics with their dad an indication of mutual intimacy. Most sons are protective of their mothers, often because they feel their fathers are not fully appreciative of them.

If I had a child that I nurtured from birth, providing them with everything they needed to learn, and grow into their own lives, I think it would be very difficult for me not to love them, and not to expect in return both respect and loving kindness. That’s the rub. Children aren’t obligated to respect or love, but only obey. I obeyed until I didn’t, which is the first sign of individuality, something a parent should value. You hold them and keep them close until it’s time for them to fly. Many leave the nest and don’t look back. Others find reason to stay. Neither choice is an indication of friendship or of love.

It is the time of year for Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. I used to give my parents “Spiritual Bouquets” as an indication of my love. The less I felt love at the time, the more I pledged to attend Mass and say rosaries in their name. My dad got promises of more Masses than I have or intend to attend.

When I had money, I bought cards and gifts. I always called, as did each of my siblings, all competing to see whose gift, card, or call got most mentioned by my parents to the others. Those Sundays pass unattended today, and would be unremarkable we’re it not for the occasional email from a niece or nephew thanking me for my presence in their life.

Our dog, Lincoln, has two dads, but there are no cards, no Spiritual Bouquets, no boxes of candy, or even long focused attention. But there is gratitude for providing him the love he needs to feel safe and protected, and there is no embarrassment of our appearance or behavior. We’re totally accepted, obeyed, and appreciated, and have been by all of the dogs we’ve had.

My dad had a dog that followed him everywhere. My dad was never a disappointment to the dog, and the dog was my dad’s best friend. The Universe, in its wisdom, makes dogs and cats available to both fathers and sons, and in them we all find the intimate relationship we missed having. I’m grateful to my dad’s dog for giving him something his children couldn’t.

Brian McNaught has been a leading educator on LGBTQ issues globally since 1974. He has made his many books and DVDs available for free at Brian-McNaught.com. The New York Times named him “The Godfather of gay diversity training.”
Welcome to our Out Social Spotlight, where we feature the sponsors of our monthly networking mixer, Out Social. We encourage readers to frequent these businesses and non-profits. We are a free newspaper that survives on the success of our advertisers so we encourage our readers to support those who support us.

While most agencies say that they “serve Latinos, too,” clients walking into any of Latinos Salud’s three South Florida locations know that our staff not only speak the same language, but also share their culture and perspectives.

You may ask, why do our gay, bilingual, and certified staff focus on Latinos at all, especially since our agency also serves the entire LGBT population? The CDC reports that new HIV cases are finally decreasing for all populations except for two: gay Latinos, and younger gay people (including younger gay Latinos).

Miami-Dade ranks number 1 and Broward ranks number 2 in new HIV infections (out of 3,000 counties nationwide), and HIV+ gay Latinos in South Florida only live two-thirds as long as their non-minority peers.

Latinos Salud’s mission is to reduce these health disparities in South Florida. We opened over a decade ago in Wilton Manors, expanded five years ago to Miami Beach, and added our southwest location in Westchester in 2016. Each of our locations features a welcoming “living room”, where we offer cultural events, peer-leadership development, youth activities, and opportunities for making new friends.

Many of our members come for these connections, and then stay for our free health education and screening services.

We offer free walk-in HIV rapid testing, STD screening, PrEP navigation, linkage-to-care, one-on-one “life coaching” for members living with HIV, help with insurance and patient access programs, support groups, and mobile outreach weekly from our two vans. We also personally introduce our members to partner agencies who can help with other life needs.

Each year, we offer 5,000 HIV tests, and 6,000 STD tests. Perhaps the most important way we measure of our impact is “one”: each person who comes in our doors because a friend told them that here is a place you will be treated with respect, not handed a number.

We’re open weekdays from 11 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Whether you are Latino or not, we say “welcome” (“bienvenido”) to all members of the LGBT community.
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No, She Didn’t!

Hey, hookers! America’s favorite Tupperware saleslady, Dixie Longate, has broken her parole and is setting up shop tonight at 7 p.m. at Hunters nightclub in the Shoppes of Wilton Manors. She’ll be peddling amazing plastic food storage solutions—and more—to benefit the Smart Ride. This will not be your grandmother’s Tupperware party, you can be sure! Tickets are $35 and $100 at TheSmartRide.org.

TUESDAY 5/21

COMEDY

Hilarious Las Vegas puppeteer and comedian Jerry Halliday is back with a bevy of babes on his arm! Halliday will present his “Divas Gone Wild” show tonight at 8 p.m. at Club Silver, 2209 Wilton Dr. in Wilton Manors. Joan, Bette, Mae, Tammy Faye and Carol will be there, along with his new character, Twinky Boy, the real diva of the bunch. The show is free, but reserve seats by texting or calling 954-818-2803 today.

J.W. Arnold
jw@prdconline.com
5.15.2019

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“It's an interesting time to be alive,” said actress Kristin Chenoweth. “I don't know how to describe it. This is a time of transition in the world. Overall, I know we’re very, very divided. I never like to lead with politics, but it's the elephant in the room.”

That revelation might surprise fans who grew to love the petite Oklahoman who portrayed the gutsy deputy press secretary Annabeth Schott on television in “The West Wing.”

“I find myself asking how we are going to fix our problems. It sounds very ‘Pollyanna,’ but music is a healer. When I feel down about a school shooting or something like that, I look to these shows as a healing time for me, but I hope that my audience can also forget for 90 minutes. That’s the gift that music brings us.”

When Chenoweth takes the stage at the Hard Rock Event Center in Hollywood on May 25, she plans to take the audience on a musical journey beyond the headlines of the day.

“It’s going to be nothing but fun; some Dolly Parton, Broadway — of course, I always give everybody ‘Popular’ (from ‘Wicked’) — Leonard Cohen. My show is eclectic and ever-changing,” she explained. “It’s very much going to depend on how I feel that day. I change my shows up every day, depending on what I feel like or what’s happening in the world. I try to listen to my inner self.”

She still remembers her 2016 Broadway concerts. The 2016 elections fell right in the middle of the two-week engagement.

“I’m looking at the audience—I’m not a politician, I’m a singer—half were devastated and half were happy. My job was to cater to both,” Chenoweth explained. “It’s difficult to look at it that way, but I’m an artist. I rarely do anything for the money and I want to inspire.”

Chenoweth has certainly been rewarded for her efforts over a two-decade career. She has won Tony and Emmy Awards and her albums have topped the charts.

“This is my constant battle, my constant struggle. To be a great artist, you have to have time and my well is extremely empty. That’s due to me. I love what I do more than anything, but I’m learning,” Chenoweth admitted. “I might not want to multitask anymore. I’m doing a movie, the concerts that I love, I have an album coming out. I need some down time to continue to be inspired and inspire.”

Chenoweth frequently reminds herself of the sage advice her mentor, Oklahoma City University voice professor Florence Birdwell, offered years ago: “If you can’t see yourself doing something else and being happy, then you’re doing the right thing.”

Chenoweth added, “I’m a work in progress, I’m still trying to figure out. I say no a lot, but I say yes, a lot. I’m not 30, I’m not even 40, and I’m still trying to learn. Every day is an opening night. That’s who I am.”

Kristen Chenoweth will perform at the Hard Rock Event Center at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood on Saturday, May 25 at 8 p.m. Tickets start at $45 at MyHRL.com.
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**BROWARD COUNTY**

**Dance Now! Miami**  
Friday, May 17 at 8 p.m. at the Broward Center Amaturo Theater, 201 SW Fifth Avenue, Fort Lauderdale. When one of South Florida's leading dance companies, Dance NOW! Miami, performs for the first time at the Broward Center's Amaturo Theater, both meanings of the word “Bridge” will be invoked. Fresh off the company's recent tour of Italy, the evening, on Friday, May 17, at 8 p.m., includes its signature sinewy and graceful choreography in the Broward premieres of their Bridges NOT Walls. Tickets $15 to $35. Visit BrowardCenter.org.

**GFLGLCC May Mixer**  
Tuesday, May 21 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Dalmer Fort Lauderdale, 299 N. Federal Hwy, Fort Lauderdale. Join us as Reyka Vodka Presents the May Mixer for the GFLGLCC - Greater Fort Lauderdale LGBT Chamber of Commerce at Sparrow (new Rooftop Lounge) located on top of The Dalmar Fort Lauderdale. Attendees will receive one free vodka drink and complementary Hors D’oeuvres. Tickets $10. Visit gogayfortlauderdale.com.

**Art After Dark**  
Fridays from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Norton Museum of Art, 1450 S. Dixie Hwy, West Palm Beach. View an exhibition, attend a talk, participate in an art activity, enjoy a performance, concert, or film, sip cocktails, and dine in the Museum’s elegant new bar and restaurant. Free admission. Visit Norton.org.

**Priscilla, Queen of the Desert**  
Thursday, June 13 to June 30 at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, 201 SW Fifth Avenue, Fort Lauderdale. Based on the smash-hit movie “The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert,” the blockbuster musical adaptation is a heartwarming, uplifting adventure of three friends and performers in a Sydney-based performing trio who agree to take their show to the middle of the Australian outback. Tickets $47 to $60. Visit BrowardCenter.org.

**Cruel Intentions**  
Sunday, May 19 at the Coral Springs Center for the Arts, 2855 Coral Springs Dr, Coral Springs. Seduced by revenge and fueled by passion, the two diabolically charming step-siblings place a bet on whether or not Sebastian can de-flower their incoming headmaster’s daughter, Annette Hargrove. As the two set out to destroy the innocent girl—and anyone who gets in their way—they find themselves entangled in a web of secrets, temptation, and the cruelest game of all: love. Tickets $35. Visit TheCenterCS.com.

**Slap & Tickle**  
May 16 to June 9 at the Empire Stage Theater, 1140 N. Flagler Dr., Ft. Lauderdale. “Slap & Tickle” by David Parr is a generational portrait about how drugs, politics and HIV have changed the landscape for gay men in America from the early 1980s to the early 2000s. Set in a New York City bathhouse and told through the kaleidoscopic view of 26 characters, many of them recurring. Warning: This play contains male nudity. Tickets $35. Call 954-678-1496.

**Palm Beach County**

**Gladys Knight**  
Friday, May 17 at the Norton.  
**Day as American as apple pie and jazz, with Doris Day**  
Wednesday, May 15 at 7:30 p.m. at Keith C. and Elaine Johnson World Performing Arts Center at Lynn University. Celebrate the icon Doris Day with Oberlin as she delves into the life and music that made the intriguing Day as American as apple pie and jazz, with a charm that touched hearts the world over. Tickets $40. Visit events.lynn.edu.

**Secret Love: A Tribute to Doris Day**  
Wednesday, May 15 at 7:30 p.m. at Keith C. and Elaine Johnson World Performing Arts Center at Lynn University. Celebrate the icon Doris Day with Oberlin as she delves into the life and music that made the intriguing Day as American as apple pie and jazz, with a charm that touched hearts the world over. Tickets $40. Visit events.lynn.edu.

**Miami-Dade County**

**The House of Blue Leaves**  
Friday, May 17 at 8 p.m. at the Don & Ann Brown Theatre, 201 Clematis Street, West Palm Beach. The House of Blue Leaves is about “humiliation and the cruelties people inflict on each other.” A play about dreams, this piece explores “how we carry our dreams carefully so that we don’t lose sight of that which is hoped for, that which is possible. And what happens when those dreams die.” The play is also about our celebrity-obsessed culture and the outrageous things people will do for a few minutes of fame or notoriety. Tickets $75 to $90. Visit palmbeachdramaworks.org.

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I know bad things happen to good people...
**TOP PICKS**

**Dance Now! Miami**
Friday, May 17 at 8 p.m. at the Broward Center Amaturo Theater, 201 SW Fifth Avenue, Fort Lauderdale. When one of South Florida’s leading dance companies, Dance NOW! Miami, performs for the first time at the Broward Center’s Amaturo Theater, both meanings of the word “Bridge” will be invoked. Fresh off the company’s recent tour of Italy, the evening, on Friday, May 17 at 8 p.m., includes its signature sinewy and graceful choreography in the Broward premieres of their Bridges NOT Walls. Tickets $15 to $35. Visit BrowardCenter.org.

20th Anniversary Celebration of The Grand Resort and Spa
Friday, May 17, 6-10pm at The Grand Resort and Spa, 539 N. Birch Road, Fort Lauderdale. Doors open to everyone. Food and drink will be provided by several local businesses. Entertainers include local celebrity and Joan Rivers impersonator, Joe Posa; RuPaul’s Drag Race All-Star, Latrice Royale; and music by DJ Sushiman. A $20.00 admissions fee will be required at the door for this event - all proceeds will be donated to The Pride Center, SunServe and Broward House. Guests can RSVP at Facebook.com/GrandResortSpa > Events. Parking for this event is for registered guests only - Uber/Lyft or carpooling suggested.

**BROWARD COUNTY**

**“Weird Al” Yankovich and Symphony**
Thursday, June 6 at 8 p.m. at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, 201 SW Fifth Avenue, Fort Lauderdale. “Weird Al” Yankovic will bring his 2019 Strings Attached tour to the Au-Rene Theater at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts. The high-energy, rock and comedy show features costumes, props, a video wall, and - for the first time - a full orchestra. Tickets are $49.50 to $129.50. Visit BrowardCenter.org.

**Priscilla, Queen of the Desert**
Thursday, June 13 to June 30 at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, 201 SW Fifth Avenue, Fort Lauderdale. Based on the smash-hit movie “The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert,” the blockbuster musical adaptation is a heartwarming, uplifting adventure of three friends and performers in a Sydney-based performing trio who agree to take their show to the middle of the Australian outback. Tickets $47 to $60. Visit BrowardCenter.org.

**Veronica’s Position**

**Cruel Intentions**
Sunday, May 19 at the Coral Springs Center for the Arts, 2855 Coral Springs Dr, Coral Springs. Seduced by revenge and fueled by passion, the two diabolically charming step-siblings place a bet on whether or not Sebastian can de-flower their incoming headmaster's daughter, Annette Hargrove. As the two set out to destroy the innocent girl—and anyone who gets in their way—they find themselves entangled in a web of secrets, temptation, and the cruellest game of all: love. Tickets $35. Visit TheCenterCS.com.

**Slap & Tickle**
May 16 to June 9 at the Empire Stage Theater, 1140 N. Flagler Dr., Ft. Lauderdale. “Slap & Tickle” by David Parr is a generational portrait about how drugs, politics and HIV have changed the landscape for gay men in America from the early 1980’s to the early 2000’s. Set in a New York City bathhouse and told through the kaleidoscopic view of 26 characters, many of them recurring. Warning: This play contains male nudity. Tickets $35. Call 954-678-1496.

**Friday Night Sound Waves Music Series**
Fridays from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at The Hub, Las Olas Boulevard and A1A in Fort Lauderdale. Enjoy live, outdoor music spanning genres and tributes every Friday evening through November. Free. Visit FridayNightSoundWaves.com

**The House of Blue Leaves**
Friday, May 17 at 8 p.m. at the Don & Ann Brown Theatre, 201 Clematis Street, West Palm Beach. The House of Blue Leaves is about “humiliation and the cruelties people inflict on each other.” A play about dreams, this piece explores “how we carry our dreams carefully so that we don’t lose sight of that which is hoped for, that which is possible. And what happens when those dreams die.” The play is also about our celebrity-obsessed culture and the outrageous things people will do for a few minutes of fame or notoriety. Tickets $75 to $90. Visit palmbeachdramaworks.org.

**Secret Love: A Tribute to Doris Day**
Wednesday, May 15 at 7:30 p.m. at Keith C. and Elaine Johnson World Performing Arts Center at Lynn University. Celebrate the icon Doris Day with Oberlin as she delves into the life and music that made the intriguing Day as American as apple pie and jazz, with a charm that touched hearts the world over. Tickets $40. Visit events.lynn.edu.

**Music for the Mind**
Tuesday, May 21 at 7 p.m. at the Harriet Himmel Theatre at Rosemary Square (Formerly CityPlace) in West Palm Beach. A performance by afterschool arts enrichment program Faith’s Place. With classes in piano, violin, music theory, brass and woodwind, steel drums, dance, musical theater, choir and drum line (all taught by certified music teachers and artists in residence) these youngsters blossom into performers who will astound you. Tickets $15. Call 866-149-2489.

**Free Friday Concerts**
Fridays at 7:30 p.m. at the Delray Beach Center for the Arts, 51 N. Swinton Ave. in Delray Beach. Enjoy live music from the comfort of your picnic blanket or lawn chair every week, for free! Returns in October. Call 561-243-7922 or visit DelrayArts.org.

**37 Postcards**
April 26 – May 19 at Main Street Players, 6766 Main Street, Miami Lakes. After years of traveling abroad, Avery Sutton is happy to return to the comfort of his home in Connecticut. Unfortunately, almost nothing is as he remembered it: the entire house is tilted at a distinct angle; the dog hasn’t been fed in five years; and Avery’s grandmother, who everyone thought was dead, is still alive and kicking. Tickets $30. Visit MainStreetPlayers.com.

**Outdoor Music Series**
Third Thursdays at the Perez Art Museum Miami, 101 W. Flagler St. in Miami. A collection of comedy mixing the likes of improvisation and sketches. Tickets $12. Call 305-375-3000 or visit PAMM.org.

**The Big Show**
Fridays and Saturdays at 9 p.m. at Just the Funny Theater, 3119 Coral Way in Miami. A collection of comedy mixing the likes of improvisation and sketches. Tickets $12. Call 305-693-8669 or visit JustTheFunny.com.

**KEY WEST**

**Taco Brunch and All Day Happy Hour**
Every Sunday (opening at 8 a.m.) at Mellow Cafe and Gastropub, 1605 N. Roosevelt Blvd, Key West. Spend the day drinking and downing tacos at this all-day happy hour, each week on Sunday!

**The Tea Dance After Party**
Sundays from 7 p.m. until close at Mangos, 700 Duval St. Upstairs Ricky Ricardo Room. Boogie the night away with a little help from delicious drinks, great music and free admission. SFGN

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