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NICK JONAS

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Well, THIS hasn’t gone so smoothly. When curiosity about the true nature and historical significance of the First Nations’ two spirit gender persona stimulated this story, the first three native historians I interviewed had never heard of the term. In fact, the first expert, who called himself ‘a traditional man’ (always a red flag), politely refused to even discuss the history of the gender spectrum in native cultures.

“Because we shunned these people in the past, I don’t want to talk about it, even though today people consider it more acceptable.” This is when he brought up the ‘traditional man’ label and, you will find out, he is apparently wrong.

While a homophobe, he was at least polite, but declined to be named. Tina and Jeanette, both of the Tsuu T’ina Culture Museum (also native themselves), had not heard of the term two spirit either. They were, however, willing to direct me to sources of information that might provide some historical perspective. Alas, those sources too were futile.

Until I spoke to Joanne Schmidt, the Collections Technician at the Glenbow Museum’s Indigenous Studies area, I was drawing blanks. Not only had she sat in on a two spirit seminar, she was also able to connect me to the collection’s former advisor, Cliff Crane Bear.

“I see (gay couples) on the (Siksika) reserve, men (or women) holding hands, and their life is their business. It doesn’t bother me,” he said. “That’s how I was raised.” He sees a change in Siksika/Blackfoot attitudes around this issue happening most significantly since the 1950s, “because of the way media shows them,” he believes.

Cliff (and a Tsuu T’ina historian he directed me to) told me, “what goes around comes around”, and how one treats others will affect the Creator’s treatment of you or yours in the future.

Even this former Blackfoot Crossing storyteller needed reminding of this way of thinking. Having lived ‘in the city for a long time’, Cliff describes a situation when he and his young son discovered a clear indication of grave desecration occurring on the reserve. When he asked a band elder what they should do about it, the elder reminded him that it was not an individual’s place to ‘punish’ others, but to recognize the Creator’s ultimate responsibility for teaching such lessons.

“It may not be me, or my immediate family, but it will come back to me (if I’ve done someone wrong),” he said. And, in the pre-colonization Siksika culture, “it’s not one person’s place to judge and criticize another because of the differences between people.”

Go figure!

While ‘gay’ and ‘lesbian’ are modern (and, he says, judgmental) descriptions of people, Cliff starts off by pointing
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Tim Dunkin
Conservative commentator Tim Dunkin is raging mad that “sodomites” are allowed to adopt children, and he’s not going to take it any more! In an Aug. 2 “think”...
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out that “a place was made for differences, and the Siksika people, strongly spiritual, wanted to respect all of the things made by the Creator.”

Of great interest is how Cliff doesn’t frame these issues as a sexual: some of his stories are about ‘two spirits’ (not a native term) and their ‘gifts’. Whatever name is used, they were not shunned, but valued for what their difference (not just sexual) brought to the band. When bands gathered as a tribe, different parts of the nation could have people unique to their extended family, and mutual respect amongst those gathered was considered the norm.

Cliff mentions, as others do, that a ‘non two spirit’ man might marry a two spirit man because of the physical strength advantages ‘she’ would bring to the family, though he may have no interest in her sexually. And even if he did, relations between the two spirit and ‘straight’ native had no impact on their social standing in the tribe. In fact, it often ADDDED to the ‘straight’ man’s standing, because of the gifted aura that two spirit people have: he had slept with a blessed person.

To return to the current century, let’s talk to Argentina Hailey Dior-Santos, Her Imperial Majesty 37 of the ISCCA, (and Ms. Gay Calgary 17, Miss Gio’s 2001-02, Miss Club 2000, ‘01-’02, Miss Purdy’s 2001-’02, Gemini Empress 4 1/2, Her Imperial Sovereign Majesty Empress 31 1/2, Miss Canadian Rockies International Rodeo Queen 2011,

argentina hailey d-ni0

and Elder Princess 36 Sacred Buffalo Woman, ranging from Calgary to Edmonton to Vancouver, Winnipeg, Houston, and elsewhere).

“I have many titles,” Argentina (Cleavon) understates. “I’m still learning how we are moving forward, in the modern times, with being a two spirit person, because you hear stories about what we were once respected for. Here in my home nation (Stoney Nakoda) a lot of these kids that are in their mid-20s look up to me as being an older, positive, modern two spirited role model.

“When people ask me What does two-spirited mean? I try my best to explain that (it’s when) a person has both a man-spirit...
and the knowledge of what a man stands for, and the woman-spirit and what they stand for.”

She mentions that she is learning from her own role models, some of who are positive, and others not so much. Some were victims of the standard homophobic training “and tried to live their lives as if they weren’t gay. And others lived on the reserve as two spirited people, and were generally respected.”

“So when I was coming out (at 19), and trying to find out who I was, one of my uncles mentioned that I was two spirited, and he kind of explained to me what (that) was... as opposed to the homophobic remarks (that I was also hearing).

“I think (being two spirited) is coming back to what it used to be respected for, (instead of) what most of the older generation were taught: I think it’s mostly from the residential school era.”

Argintina agrees with what Cliff and other historians say about the inclusiveness of pre-colonial tribal culture because of what she has learned herself: “People were always accepted for being who they were. (However), there were certain clans that believed in the Bible, so they were more against people that were two spirited.

“When I started to explore myself, my mother was like that. She would say (I was gay) because of hanging out in the city, with friends that were not part of our culture... She would say That’s their way; it’s not our way.”

To be continued. ☞

Deep Inside Hollywood
Two and A Half Men to exploit gay marriage
Jon Cryer and Ashton Kutcher are getting married. Or, rather, their alter egos on the long-running CBS sitcom Two and A Half Men are getting married. No, they aren’t in love. No...

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Loud & Queer Cabaret
Showcase of queer arts grows to cover two nights

By Krista Sylvester

Western Canada’s longest running Queer writers’ and performance showcase is back again with the “Let me be Perfectly Queer” Loud & Queer Cabaret.

Since its inception in 1991, the Loud & Queer Cabaret has produced dozens of writers, performers, musicians and theatre hits with artists from all over Canada and the U.S, according to co-creator and writer/producer Darrin Hagen of Guys in Disguise fame.

“It’s an event to showcase queer artists, and we ask for your best 15 minutes,” Hagen explains. “Whether it’s poetry, plays, music, dancing, drag, spoken word, comedy or even belly dancing – we will put your best 15 minutes on stage.”

The Loud & Queer Cabaret has been blazing trails for queer arts and culture for over 20 years and, as Western Canada’s longest-running gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and queer performance cabaret, and it has debuted more than 300 works while launching the careers of emerging writers.

“We have been fortunate to premiere new works from some of Canada’s most renowned talents while discovering up and coming artists. It’s an incredible opportunity for writers to hear their words in front of an audience, and receive that imperative feedback, and use it as a launch pad before they move on to other festivals.”

While a lot may have changed in the past 20 years, the Loud & Queer Cabaret has grown into itself, and now boasts two full nights of talented works with 15 new pieces each night divided into three acts.

“The quality of the work over the years has been remarkable and this year is no different. What’s really exciting this year is we should be able to have 30 unique pieces of art with no repeats over the two nights,” he adds. “Many artists over the years have gone on to national and international success with the pieces they premiered with us.”

Hagen says they have been able to collect some of the best and most inspirational pieces over the years and put them together in an anthology called “Queering the Way”.

From the Loud & Queer Cabaret archives, the book features some of the most memorable pieces from monologues to cabarets to one-act plays. The anthology has received accolades from all over the globe regarding its diversity of the LGBTQ experience at the heart of the collection. Those who have reviewed it have said “voices ring out with stories and perspectives that will make you laugh, cry, and glow with pride”.

Hagen says those who loved the anthology will also love the cabaret, and vice versa.

“It’s really a wonderful piece of reading loaded with talent and inspiration,” he says.

Curated, directed and hosted by Edmonton’s most famous diva, Hagen says Loud & Queer features the best from new and familiar GLBTQQ voices from the queer performing arts community. This year’s event is being produced by Guys in Disguise, Fringe Theatre Adventures and Workshop West Playwrights’ Theatre and takes place November 7 and 8 at Fringe Theatre Adventures in Edmonton. Please visit for more information. Submissions are now closed.

Defy Depression
Help is waiting at the Calgary Counselling Centre

By Lisa Lunney

The tragic suicide of Hollywood actor/comedian Robin Williams has opened many eyes across the globe to the true horrors of depression: it can remain hidden behind the grandest smiles. His untimely passing has sparked the flame for Hollywood and media to strive to provide awareness and outlets of help for those battling depression. Depression is a universal disorder; it affects everyone at some point in his or her lifetime, and reported cases are rising at an alarming rate.

The Calgary Counselling Centre will be participating in National Depression Screening Day (NDSD) on October 9th as part of the Defy Depression campaign. This free public service will allow anyone to be screened, anonymously, for depression via an online survey. The test can be taken from the privacy of your computer, smart phone or tablet.

For those who have been previously afraid to speak out, this opportunity will serve as a great first step towards getting help. Depression can be effectively treated, and the earlier treatment begins, the more effective it is.

Tara Linsely spoke to GayCalgary on behalf of the Calgary Counselling Centre on the Centre’s goals for the Defy Depression campaign.

“The test does not offer a diagnosis, but points out to participants the presence or absence of depressive symptoms and offers a referral for further evaluation, as necessary,” she shared. “NDSD is part of our objective to create awareness and dispel myths and stigmas associated with mental health issues.”

Tara encourages the community to get involved and support their neighbors, co-workers, family and friends. Communities can share, support and talk about depression screening. The Calgary Counseling Centre have partnered with several organizations that are sending out the depression screening to their employees. If, as an employee or employer you are interested in participating, you can work with your health services department to have the test sent out. There are many ways to get involved.

Some statistics for thought (as compiled by the Calgary Counselling Centre):

• Every depressed person who does not get treatment affects the lives of at least three other people
• One in five employees are diagnosed as clinically depressed
• Only half of those experiencing depression will seek help
• 46 per cent of Albertans experience depression or anxiety

Visit the Calgary Counselling Centre website for more information or to take the screening test.
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Banff Pride
What happens in the Rockies stays in the Rockies

By Lisa Lunney

Banff Pride is returning for a second year, and it’s shaping up to be a weekend to remember. Joe Pembridge took the time to chat with GayCalgary about what makes Banff Pride unique and what can be expected for 2014’s festivities.

GC: Last year was the premiere of Banff Pride; can you tell readers about the event and how it was received by the community?

JP: The first Banff Pride in 2013 was a total leap of faith. Banff does not have a large LGBTQ community but it has a very supportive group of allies. We booked the best venue in town: Wild Bill’s saloon, and staged a fabulous drag show. We brought out Isolde N. Barron and Peach Cobblah from Vancouver who teamed up with Banff’s very own drag act Miss Ellen Q and the Pumas. We were hoping for an attendance of 200 people and were blown away that the event was sold out – 500 people came through the doors and the establishment had to turn away over 100 people. These numbers may not seem impressive on a city scale, but for our inaugural Pride it showed that people wanted to show their colours.

GC: What sparked the idea to create Banff’s very own Pride celebration?

JP: The team behind Banff Pride 2013 was producer Ken Fierheller, of Bow Valley Cares (a branch of Aids Calgary/now know as HIV Community Link), and artistic director myself, aka Miss Ellen Q. We could not have been more thrilled with the event itself and the outpour of community support, both locally and throughout Alberta. Sadly, funding for Bow Valley Cares was pulled in 2014, leaving myself fully in charge of the event. For the 2014 event I brought on board Corrie DiManno, a town councillor in Banff, to co-produce the event. I felt a need for this event here in Banff, as there were no visibly queer events happening in the area. I grew up in Canmore and moved to Edmonton to attend Victoria School of Performing and Visual Arts. Now, living back in this community, I feel it is my duty to make it a queer friendly place to visit and live. In the last year alone the cultural landscape has changed so much from Pride, and other events we have thrown, and I could not be more proud of this community. Homophobia starts at home and we are trying to spread the idea of integration as oppose to segregation. Let’s all enjoy this gorgeous place regardless of sexual identity.

GC: What makes Banff Pride different from other celebrations within Alberta?

JP: A community is defined by the people within it. Banff is super unique in the sense that we have a solid local contingent, but also have an influx of seasonal workers, most being 18 to 28 from places like Australia, England, New Zealand and throughout Canada. This creates a fantastic mix of people, some who have been to Pride events before and for some, Banff Pride 2013 was the first ever Pride event for them. It was great chatting with people from Jasper, Lake Louise, Calgary, Red Deer, Edmonton and so on saying that the vibe was electric. We are looking forward to that same feeling again this year.

GC: Can you tell readers what is on the agenda for Pride 2014?

JP: We have two major events this year: Friday, October 24th is our pre-pride event Avant Ski at the Aurora Nightclub. It’s our take on a foam party but, instead, we are pumping snow out at the crowd. It’s the first time an event like this has happened and we can’t wait. There will be a live fashion show showcasing the styles hitting the hills this winter and, don’t worry, the models will not be fully clothed. The event will be hosted by Calgary’s queen of sass Visa De’Klein. Then the main event is October 25th at Wild Bill’s. Awesome DJs, fierce drag queens – all within a fantastic venue. We have some great prizes to give away and expect everyone to come and show us their pride.

GC: Anything else you care to share?

JP: The Banff LGBTQ community chooses to live here because of its beauty. We know this is why people either make Banff their home or spend their weekends here. We want you to come out for the weekend, enjoy the sites, then dance your asses off and indulge in all the eye candy that our events will entail. What happens in Banff stays in Banff!!

Banff Pride
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GLBT Swim Club Makes Waves in E-Town
Edmonton to host 2016 International Gay and Lesbian Aquatics Championships

By Janine Eva Trotta

A club that has promoted fun, active swim and social meetups in Edmonton since 1999 has been granted the opportunity to showcase its city, its world-class facilities, and all-encompassing hospitality. International community swimmers from around the world will be welcomed to the largest international gay sporting event to ever take place in Alberta.

August 8th to 14th, 2016, Making Waves Swim Club will host between 800 and 1000 competitors (as well as their partners, officials and volunteers) in a contest of open water swimming, water polo, diving, synchronized swimming, and the unique Pink Flamingo event.

“The best way to describe it… ‘a fun and campy display of aquatics and entertainment’,” says Mike Stansberry, Making Waves Swim Club Organizing Committee co-chair and one of its founding members. “So teams will perform a number to music, and it will involve outrageous costumes (no glitter or frathers allowed because they clog up the pool filters) – a lot of fun for spectators.”

All events will be free to come watch throughout the week, while the finals and main attractions to take place on the Saturday will involve a nominal entrance fee or donation, which will be donated to a selected charity.

“We’re very excited to be hosting this event,” Stansberry says. Watching the club’s promotional video, and reading through their comprehensive final bid package, it’s not difficult to see why Edmonton received half of the 52 votes given at the deciding AGM that took place last August at the Gay Games in Cleveland, Ohio (Toronto came in second, garnishing 15 yays, and Auckland third with 11 votes).

Securing a $25,000 grant through Edmonton Tourism was likely a big help in forecasting a solid working budget for the event.

“Tourism Edmonton is very interested in promoting sports tourism… [in showcasing Edmonton] as a city that can host high quality, high performing international events,” Stansberry says.

The International Gay and Lesbian Aquatics Championships (IGLA) takes place every year the Gay Games does not. This means that members of the Making Waves Swim Club have become avid travelers.

“Personally, my first IGLA competition was in 2001, in Toronto, followed by the Gay Games in Sydney, Australia in 2002,” says Stansberry. “Members have been to Washington, DC and a number of other wonderful cities around the world.”

His list goes on, ending with last year’s IGLA held in Seattle. He, and other members of the club, will next head to Sweden in August to attend the EuroGames Stockholm and 2015 IGLA Championships. Playing the role of flies on the wall, they will observe the games keenly, making notes on how to make their own games and events run smoothly when they are hosts.

In addition to the competition itself, holding the IGLA also means putting on a variety of social events.

“There is a big community partnership that is part of organizing this… making sure this is a community event,” he says. “Some social partners include Pure Pride, the Fruit Loop, Evolution Wonderlounge, Buddy’s and Woody’s.”

Moving forward, Making Waves is seeking more volunteers, more participants, and more sponsorship. The more funds raised, the more entrance fees to participate in the games can be lowered, and the greater amount of people can attend.

“Getting sponsors and other grants is really critical to help lower costs, and that increases participation,” he says. At current, there are roughly 60 to 70 members in the swim club, and not all are from the community.

 “[The club has] some fabulous straight allies that are members as well,” Stansberry says.

Not in a club but love to swim? That does not need stop interested participants.

“There are individual members that come from other countries in the world that may not have a specific swim club,” he explains. “I know a few swimmers in Grande Prairie, or Saskatoon, or other parts of the province [where there is no swim club] that come… everyone is encouraged to participate.”

While IGLA teams are primarily registered in America and Western Europe, Iceland, Greece, China, Australia and New Zealand also have teams. A full team map and list of upcoming events can be found at http://igla.org.

The destination for 2017’s IGLA will be determined in Edmonton in 2016.
It has been awhile since Gob rocked out on stages in Alberta. It was 2009 when they last toured Canada, and since 2010 the band has been working on the follow up to 2007’s *Muertos Vivos*. A number of different influences contributed to the seven year gap but finally, in August, *Apt 13* was released.

“We set out to make it quickly – in 2010 I had a bunch of songs, and we got together and started working on them,” singer Tom Thacker told GayCalgary.com. “A lot of things happened within the band: Theo moved across country and back; two of us lived in New York; so it was hard to get together. Also I have been playing with Sum 41 the past seven years, so I would be on tour a lot. It wasn’t always easy to get the band together, it took awhile.”

*Apt 13* features multiple stellar tracks that will be featured on their current tour, which brings them to Dickens in Calgary on October 9th, Edmonton’s Pawn Show October 10th, and Wild Bill’s in Banff on November 3rd. Thacker talked about some of his personal highlights from the album.

“I think “New York” is a song that is a highlight. It speaks about the anxiety of the record taking so long, and needing to get home to finish it; that is what it represents. I love all the songs for different reasons so it is hard to pick ones. “Cars on Fire” is on the iTunes deluxe version. That one is about a feeling of hopelessness. When I was a kid we were driving from the PNE and saw a car on fire, and my dad got out and was seeing if there was someone in the car. My mom was screaming. It was an intense thing to see as a kid. It seemed like a good metaphor for being a band on the road. Sometimes it is hard…. A feeling of helplessness – that is what that song is about.”

The first single “Radio Hell” reflects on being in a band, and the current state of music.

“We just shot the video for it. [Radio Hell] is about resigning yourself; that you are going to be a musician. I didn’t think I would still be a musician. I figured I would have gone back to school and tried to learn something, and taken a different career path. There is something about music: it is in you, and you have to do it... almost like a curse. That is what that song is about. You are going to live or die by music. We want to contribute something musically and change the landscape. We don’t like a lot of the shit we hear on the radio. We want people to hear good music.”

Founded in 2003, with Thacker and Theo Goutzinakis, the band currently also includes Steven Fairweather on bass and Gabe Mantle on drums. Thacker admitted to being surprised that 21 years later the band is still at it.

“It feels good,” he said. “I don’t think I imagined we would be in a band past five years. We didn’t really think of the future when we started, we just thought about the now. Knowing we are still together, and doing it, is an awesome feeling. A lot of it has to do with the fact that every time we make a record, we make the record we want to make. It is always sort of a punk rock record, but we do our own thing, and it is a reaction to our previous record. What do we want to do artistically? What do we want to say? Just sticking to our guns has kept us together.”
Strong fan support has also played a vital role.

“We have always had an awesome fan base. It is weird that it has kind of turned over the years: someone’s little brother will pick up on us now, we have always gained new fans. I feel like older fans are coming back along with new ones. Without our fans we wouldn’t be here because we wouldn’t be able to afford to make it.”

In addition to Gob’s fresh return to the airwaves, 2014 has seen the release of new albums by The Tea Party and Moist. It seems like there is a draw in seeing and hearing music from bands who launched their careers in the ’90s.

“It doesn’t surprise me,” Thacker says. “What music has become is underground, and most of what is promoted is American Idol type acts. People want something that is real; they want the bands that they loved for years. It is kind of like the vinyl comeback. Record sales are up because it is an event to pull a record out of a sleeve, put it on a record player, and put the needle down to start playing. It is amazing you can get music so easily: buy a download, you click it and get it; there is no ceremony or anything. People just want realness.”

In addition to Gob, Thacker joined Sum 41 in 2006. There is a line in the song “Terpsichore”: you don’t want me to be in a band. Being in two successful – and consistently touring bands – grants Thacker a unique challenge. Eventually musicians usually stop and pick one.

“It is hard at times,” he admits. “If both bands are touring at the same time I am hopping between tours, which is physically and emotionally draining. My wife has her own career so it works nicely. She is busy and doesn’t need me there all the time, and I don’t have any kids. It may be different if I have kids. My wife loves that I make music so Terpsichore isn’t about my relationship. There is more pressure when you have your own band to write a majority of the songs. I love playing music so I like doing it both ways. When it is your song, there is a different pressure, and you want people to like it. But I love playing music so it is good to have both. You look at someone like Dallas Green – he wrote for both AlexisonFire and City and Colour. It would be a lot harder to have to write for both.”

Gob has played Calgary many times at many locations, from Olympic Plaza to the Max Bell Arena; from festivals like Edgefest to free shows on the Coke Stage.

“Every show is pretty awesome in Calgary. Alberta has always been one of the first places were people started paying attention to us, so we have always had an awesome time there. One time we played the Stampede and a friend was backstage grapping with Theo, and upended the entire deli tray. We got banned from the Stampede for making a mess. But then we were hired back so I guess they lifted the ban. There might have been other things too… we may have swore on stage (which is not permitted at Coke Stage shows). We try to keep it in check; swearing isn’t about our artistic integrity, we just happen to be foul-mouthed degenerates. If there are kids in the audience we don’t want to poison their ears with foul language, so we have to get creative.”

Both Gob and Sum 41 are known for their high-energy live performances. Performing at the energy level at 40 is different than when the band members were in their 20s.

“I still feel like I am in pretty good shape so it isn’t too hard. Now I have the experience to know to condition myself. Say we are going on a tour of small clubs in the summer time – I will go out and run in 30-degree heat, because then I get acclimatized to intense heat. A lot of the clubs have sweat dripping off the roof, and it is disgusting, but you have got to play there. I think that is the key: knowing your limits and how you will feel after your performance. I don’t do a stretching routine or anything, just vocal exercises.”

Calgary is the second date of an extensive tour that crosses the country and comes back, wrapping up in Victoria on November 8th. With many singles like “Give Up The Grudge”, “I Hear You Calling”, and “Soda”, as well as covers like “Paint It Black”, there are a lot of songs that will appeal to both long-time and new fans.

“There is a new-found interest in the band, so it is hard for us to pick which songs to play. We pick a bunch off each record and sub them in and out; maybe a certain set will stick by the end of the tour. Shaking it up keeps it more fresh for us too. It is the same band. We have been doing the same thing for years. Different songs, but we are gonna go take the stage and rage and put on the best show we can.”

Gob on Tour
Calgary - October 9th @ Dickens
Edmonton - October 10th @ Pawn Shop
Banff - November 3rd @ Wild Bills

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DS9 Actor attends First Saskatoon Expo

This past September was a great month for fans in western Canada, with two enormous conventions being hosted in Saskatoon and Edmonton. The Saskatoon Comic and Entertainment Expo was graced by one of the most iconic performers of Star Trek: Deep Space Nine, Nana Visitor. Visitor made a name for herself playing a firebrand freedom fighter in the black sheep of the Star Trek franchise, and earned herself a devoted following in the process. In advance of her visit, we had a chance to talk with a very forthcoming and thoughtful Visitor about her role on DS9, her poorly concealed admiration for her colleagues, and the broader Trek community.

GayCalgary: Let’s start at the very beginning: how big was Star Trek on your radar when you were first reading the part of Kira? Did you have some idea of what you would be getting into?

Nana Visitor: I had seen the original series, like every other person, every day at six before I went to the theatre; it was my little habit. I was out of town with a show in Boston, and the hotel that they were putting us up at had a convention. It was remarkable – all these creatures! It was like a flock of amazing parrots went by. And they were trekkers! And that was really it for my experience. Then this script came along and, at the time, I was reading and auditioning for lots of them – two, three a day – you couldn’t get too caught up in any one. You just kept going, and then on to the next. This one kind of stopped me dead in my tracks. It was so different, and I really didn’t take into consideration – I don’t think I understood frankly – that it was a regular character. I was doing a lot of guest-stars, and I thought it was another one. All I knew was I wanted to do this role.

GC: And it is a very iconic role. She’s thrown into this world of grey and she, at the same time, has these really strong moral absolutes as an individual, or a very strong moral clarity, and I was curious how you threaded that needle as an actor.

NV: Well, first of all, they had a bible for the show – for every character they had background – and it was very detailed, so you didn’t have to make up anything. You knew where you came from. The fact that she had a strong moral compass in what she came up against, it all kind of evolved very naturally. I have to say, when you play a character like that, it makes you think a lot. When you’re playing a character like that, 16 hours a day, five days a week, it’s very easy to go underneath the wave of it all. And then it is easy – it’s so easy – it’s like approaching the ocean. If you stand right where the waves are breaking, you are going to get hit, knocked down, over and over again, but if you dive in, you are part of it. That was really my experience – I became part of it.

GC: Would you mind discussing your experience with your colleagues a bit – what your favourite moments filming with Renee Aubergen...might be, or Armin Shimerman?

NV: You are talking about two old pros, and anytime I knew I was doing a scene with either one of those guys, it was like, all right, the day is going to go well and I’m going to have to have my game really up there, because I’m playing tennis with [guys who can] hit back anything I can throw at them, which is so fun for an actor. That is the most fun there is. It was always this deep comfort with both of them; working and just hanging around, waiting for the lights to come on. Deep comfort is what I’d say comes to mind.

GC: Is there any one singular experience with either of them that leaps to mind right away?

NV: Well, Renee has spoken about this too, but our first kiss was difficult and weird. We were friends on screen and off and suddenly, for it to become romantic, was a bit nervous-making, like you have to kiss your brother all of a sudden. And then you have to take into consideration the fact that so much rubber was involved! Luckily we could loop things afterward, so you didn’t hear the sick glop of the rubber peeling off our faces after the kiss.

GC: Changing gears, you have mentioned in other interviews that DS9 really stands up over time. There is some really incisive commentary about things like race, social stratification, social justice, politics and power. What aspects of the show – in terms of its real-world implications – do you figure have the most relevance today?

NV: Well, I mean, that question stops me cold, because the elephant in the room is the fact that I was a terrorist. And that, right there, is probably enough said on the subject. I don’t know what I take away from that fact, other than I embodied someone that, what they do today makes me cry. It is odd, to say the least.

GC: Especially since your character was presented as so sympathetic and so justified.

NV: Yes, and so spiritual.

GC: About Star Trek in general – it’s so unique in how it treats its actors, and how the community builds up after the fact. Is there anything that you have been able to do because of that platform that wouldn’t have come to pass otherwise?

NV: I’m a bit of a rockstar with people who fix computers. I can get my computer fixed really, really easily [laughs]. I have to say, the whole experience has been – I couldn’t have asked for a better one in terms of career, because I would have hated to have been a celebrity, and I don’t feel like I am at all. I feel like I am someone whose work is appreciated, and that is why. They don’t want to see me because of how I dress; they want to see me because of who I was, and what I did on an incredible piece of work, and that is just ideal as far as I’m concerned.

GC: If the stars were ever to align and you were asked to play another role in Star Trek – as Kira or somebody else – would you jump at it?

NV: Yes! Absolutely. Especially if our writers were involved.

GC: Oh yes, you had some phenomenal writers on Deep Space Nine.

NV: Oh god, yes. Oh my god, yeah. I definitely would.
It was the baby photo seen round the world.

On June 27, Toronto dads BJ Barone and Frank Nelson welcomed their baby son Milo into the world. It was a magical moment they shared with an intimate few: surrogate mom Kathy, of course, and birth photographer Lindsay Foster.

But it was a few days later, when Foster received permission from the dads to upload some of the photos to her Facebook account, when the real sharing began. Foster’s post spread like wildfire across the social media website: nearly 10K shares of her original update alone, plus countless reposts branching off from that. It was picked up by BuzzFeed, which offered the headline “These Photos of Two Dads Meeting Their New Baby Will Make You Cry Happy Tears.” (About 1.9 million views so far.) Twitter was flooded with the images of Frank and BJ, their faces overcome with emotion as they embraced each other and Milo. Local news stations came calling to interview the dads. Their story had gone viral, giving millions of viewers a glimpse of raw, honest emotion that is not often shown by mass media: two dads in love, and in love with their son.

“It’s incredible that just sharing who we are as a family has resonated with so many people,” said BJ to GayswithKids.com, a website for gay fathers. Milo’s birth coincided with World Pride 2014 in Toronto. Pride’s theme, poignantly enough, was “Rise Up”: a call for LGBT visibility.

“That it coincided with World Pride is a special factor,” says BJ. “We’re standing up for ourselves and saying, ‘This is normal.’” He recalls a special note that he and Frank shared with viewers on Foster’s Facebook: “This picture represents everything Pride is about. Love has no color nor gender nor sexual preference. Love is unconditional.”

And they’ve certainly been feeling the love from strangers in cyber-space who have taken it upon themselves to comment on the photos or reach out directly. For the most part, the response has been hugely positive, says the couple – especially from younger generations, where same-sex headed families are increasingly seen as simply part of the cultural fabric. “I’ve received private messages from some of my students, and those have been the most special to me,” says Frank. It is heartening, he says, to feel that tides of love and acceptance have turned so dramatically. “It makes me so hopeful that one day our son and others his age will look at this photo and wonder what all the hoopla was.”

“I got one message from this guy in the States, saying, ‘I’m a redneck opposed to same-sex marriage, but this really opened and changed my heart.’ That one made me cry,” adds BJ.

It’s not only strangers who have reached out with more open arms. The photos have also opened doors to dialogue with some members of BJ’s family in Italy, with whom his sexuality has been an issue. (Their story made the Italian newspapers too.) “My Italian family comes from a small town, and I’ve received messages from them before that what I do is wrong, that I should be ashamed of myself. Asking me how I could do this to my parents. But I just got a message from my cousin the other day; he wrote saying, ‘Congratulations, the baby’s beautiful. Hopefully you can come together to Italy.’”

“Sometimes people are just afraid of the unknown. They’re afraid of how people will react,” continues BJ. “Having this opportunity has allowed my family to see that we’re in a stable relationship and receiving love and support from around the world. It’s opened their eyes: if so many strangers can accept this, why wouldn’t they?”

The couple admits that there has been some backlash. There are still the few who choose to leave hurtful and ignorant comments on even the most joy-filled photos. But those have been in the minority, they say, and much of the negative reaction has focused on a specific element: that the dads are shirtless in the photos. “When the midwife told us we were going to be shirtless, I was like, ‘What?’” laughs Frank. They were encouraged to doff their shirts to establish skin-to-skin contact with Milo; many baby experts recommend it to release oxytocin, often referred to as the “attachment chemical.” Of course, if a mother had brought the child to her breast, it’s hard to imagine there would be much outcry. That so many were fixated on the shirtless element shows that there’s a long way to go to educating people about the experiences of dads, gay and straight, in the delivery room. “Once you explain it,” says Frank, “it seems completely natural.”

And now the dads are adjusting to the other natural new aspects of life: from feeding times to sleeping schedules. The media hubbub will soon die down, though they’re considering starting a baby blog to update Milo’s new worldwide fans. And maybe one day, they’ll grow their family again; they have embryos frozen for five more years, and haven’t ruled out returning to the delivery room.

But right now they’re enjoying the bliss of life with baby. One they didn’t always know they would have.

“When I came out to my dad, he said what upset him the most was that I would never get to enjoy being a father,” recalls Frank. “Now, my parents have been so touched seeing the journey that we went through to get here.”

“I knew I was gay ever since I was a little kid, and I never thought I would find love, be married, or have kids. I thought I’d be alone or unhappy for the rest of my life,” remembers BJ. His voice breaks. “And now here I am. I have Frank. I’m a father.”

And the whole world is watching, loving them, hitting the share button.

Read more Gay Family Spotlight stories at GayswithKids.com
Why Do You People Need to Have a Pride Parade?

Well, let me tell you...

By Stephen Lock

Even though Pride 2014, the largest Pride festival Calgary has seen since the first Pride Rally held in 1990 (that had 140 mostly masked individuals attend) has been over for over a month, reactions against it continue to hit the Letters page in Calgary’s papers. We have gone through this every year that there has been a Pride march/parade; the arguments against it are predictable.

‘We don’t have a Straight Pride parade, so why do the gays [sic] feel it necessary to have one?’

‘I don’t care what they do in private, I just don’t want to be confronted with it.’

“Why not have a march for green-eyed, left-handed, introverts, extraverts and straight sex orientated people, etc. I think it is not wrong or a special feature to be gay. So why then do they celebrate and not other groups?” a direct quote pulled from of a letter to the editor in the September 4th issue of The Calgary Sun, and it pretty much sums up the usual reactions. So, syntax aside, let’s address that.

We celebrate, dear writer, because for years we had to hide who we were. We were criminalized, hunted down, arrested for even being in a gay bar, attacked on the streets, and denied even the most basic of civil rights – like access to rental accommodations, jobs, and public services – simply for being gay or lesbian (or even suspected of being gay or lesbian). I’m not talking the 1950s here. This was happening as recently as the ‘80s and ‘90s. Lesbians and gay men in Alberta had no protection whatsoever under the then provincial human rights act, The Individual Rights Protection Act (IRPA). A handful of activists fought to have ‘sexual orientation’ included in the Act under the Lougheed, Getty, and Klein administrations, to no avail.

It took a quiet unassuming lab instructor, called Delwin Vriend, who had been fired from King’s College Edmonton for being gay, and his inability to gain redress through the Alberta Human Rights Commission because ‘sexual orientation’ was not a protected characteristic in legislation at that time, to change that. He fought his case all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. It took years – almost a decade – but in 1998 he, and all of us alongside him, won. The Klein government was told to ‘read in’ sexual orientation into the, by then, new human rights legislation of Alberta. In response, Klein threatened to invoke the notwithstanding clause of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to continue to deny protection to lesbians, gay men and bisexuals. Neither he, nor his ministers, saw the irony in using the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to deny rights and restrict freedom, but that’s a whole other story.

We also celebrate because we have built a community over the last few decades that is worth celebrating – a community in every sense of the word. An inclusive, tolerant, accepting community, by and large.

We celebrate to honour those who fought back during the Stonewall Riots of 1969 and initiated what is seen as the modern homosexual movement. I say modern because it was not the first, but rather a third wave of emancipation. The first occurred in the 1700s when men who had sex with men began to form communities, usually centered around what were known as Molly Houses. Having sex with another man was gaining perception as an innate, key aspect of someone’s identity, not just a deviation from the ‘norm’.

The second wave, and a far more organized and widespread one at that, was the Homosexual Emancipation Movement that initiated in Berlin in the 1890s and fanned out to Moscow, London, Paris, and Vienna, the then cultural centres of Europe. That movement was much like ours today – brandishing its own culture, art, literature, expression, and academic studies – and was largely spear-headed by Magnus Hirschfeld and his Scientific Humanitarian Committee and the Institute for Sexual Research which he founded in 1919. It was this movement that coined the term homosexual (from the Greek homo meaning ‘same’ and the Latin sexualis) as well as the term transvestite. Hirschfeld’s was the Kinsey Institute of its era.

All that was lost in 1933 when the Nazis looted and destroyed the Institute and burned its library and archives.

Over the years of Pride parades in Calgary, organizers and participants have had to contend with skinheads trying to pull the Imperial Sovereign Court of The Chinook Arch’s Empress out of the convertible in which she was riding (and Empress Tiffany, a petite little thing, whacked the (female) skinhead a good one with her sceptre while maintaining her Imperial composure the whole time until the skinhead let go and stumbled, a bit dazed I would think, onto the pavement); right-wing Christians showing up with placards denouncing our sin, at best, and scrawled with real vitriol, at worst. One year another skinhead/redneck showed up with two large pit bulls on chains and stood menacingly across the street from the Municipal Plaza as Svend Robinson, the openly gay NDP Member of Parliament for Burnaby-Kingsway, spoke, then wandered through the crowd until police told him to go back across the street to Olympic Plaza. He claimed he was just there to ‘see the queers’.

When Joe Clark was parade marshal for the Pride parade which, by then, had grown from a march to a full parade with a route from Connaught School, to 11th Street SW and back to the fairgrounds of Connaught School, a then well-known conservative columnist by the name of Peter Jackson showed up. Sporting a leather blazer and leather pants, he attempted to join in the parade and near Joe Clark’s convertible. Mr. Jackson had been highly vocal in his opposition to Pride and to homosexuals for some years. He was asked to leave, which he reluctantly did.

One year the Westboro Baptist Church, out of Topeka, Kansas, threatened to disrupt the parade following the legalization of same-sex marriage in Canada. They never made it across the border.

Despite all this, Pride continues to grow, perhaps because of all this. This year’s Pride parade attracted a reputed 40,000 to 50,000 people of all sexual orientations, genders and ages. I find that incredibly reaffirming. As one of the organizers of the first Pride Rally and March in 1990, I can see how far our community has come. I am no statistician, but going from 140 people in 1990 to 50,000 in 2014 is an amazing percentage jump over 24 years.

I distinctly remember a meeting with what was then Pride Calgary, a group originally formed to create a Calgary presence at the Gay Games in Vancouver and which was evolving to become the principal organizer of Pride Week, as the original group, the Calgary Lesbian and Gay Political Action Guild (CLAGPAG), prepared to hand over the reins, and having the President of Pride Calgary announce they were going to dispense with the political...
Preventing Ski and Snowboard Theft

By Constable Andy Buck

Happy fall everyone! Yes, summer is officially over, and we are faced with maybe six or seven months before we see temperatures top the 20Cs again. For me that is a very depressing thought, yet I appreciate that there are many who love this time of year. The hockey season is starting, and lots of you take to the slopes for skiing, snowboarding and other outdoor activities, so this month I wanted to pass on some crime prevention information regarding winter sports equipment.

Every winter ski equipment is reported stolen to police. Skis and snowboards are popular targets for thieves, especially at busy hills where they are often left unattended or unlocked while skiers are warming up in the lodge, having a snack, or enjoying a fun-filled après-ski. Ski and snowboard equipment is easily targeted: expensive skis, snowboards and other items can be easily resold.

To prevent ski and snowboard theft, these tips will help:

Mark your equipment. Make sure your equipment is clearly identified with your driver’s license number, initials or another mark to help police identify you as the owner.

Keep a record of the boots, skis, and poles. Include the make and model of the equipment, the serial number and any identifiable characteristics. This information should be reported to the police if equipment is missing or stolen.

Never leave equipment unattended or out of view. A few seconds is all it takes for something to be stolen. Use the buddy system or ask a friend to watch skis or snowboards while unattended.

Bring only what is needed to the hill. Leave any extra equipment at home or locked out of sight in a vehicle. Most resorts or hotels have a special area where skis can be checked either overnight or during the day. Take advantage of these secured areas to store gear safely.

Separate skis and put them in two different racks. Be sure to take careful note of where these are placed. Remember to loop poles over skis; this may not prevent poles from being stolen, but may prevent an accidental mix-up and it does make poles harder to quickly swipe and carry away.

Register your skis with the hill. Some ski hills incorporate programs that allow skis to be registered, provide methods to prevent theft, and also help owners track down stolen property.

Lock up your equipment or use locking mechanisms whenever possible. Many ski locations offer lockable racks at the base of the hill, and locks are available at most ski shops.

Secure your valuables in the lockers or check-in services provided. Always use lockable ski storage closets in hotels and other accommodations. Lock the ski rack or ski box of your car.

If your equipment is lost or stolen report it as soon as possible to hill security.

If the theft occurred in Calgary report all ski equipment thefts – regardless of insurance coverage – to the police non-emergency line at 403-266-1234. If there are no suspects or witnesses, you can also report the theft online. Make sure you tell the police about any identifying marks on your skis or snowboard. If your equipment is found, these marks will help police identify you as the owner.

If your equipment was rented, report the theft to the ski rental agency.

The Calgary Police Service focuses on recovering property, arresting the original offenders, and prosecuting those who buy or sell stolen property. Reporting your loss gives police information and a better chance to find the thieves and charge them, and to recover your property.

If you live in Calgary and the equipment was stolen at a ski-hill outside of Calgary, report it to the police responsible for that jurisdiction.

The Calgary Police Service encourages hill operators to record the serial numbers of the equipment belonging to their season pass holders. If equipment goes missing, the ski hill will have the information in a database to give to the owner or police. A central registry of missing or stolen ski and snowboard equipment is compiled each week from police and ski hill reports. This list of equipment, including the make, model and serial number, is sent to all Calgary pawnshops and second-hand consignment stores, and employees must confirm the equipment has not been reported missing before purchasing or consigning it.

Ski hills will often post descriptions of recently stolen skis or snowboards with known serial numbers, and it is worth monitoring such lists for stolen equipment.

So, there you have it: some basic steps to hopefully ensure you have a crime-free time on the slopes. As always, stay safe, take care of each other, and feel free to contact me with any questions, comments or concerns.

Do we hear the same criticisms levied against Caribfest; the Latino Festival? Do we have protesters showing up at the annual Sikh festival held in Forest Lawn, or decrying the Dragon Dance through Chinatown? These events are seen as part of the cultural fabric of a cosmopolitan city, proof that Calgary has shed its hick town image and embraced all that makes a city vibrant. Pride celebrations are also part of that. That, my friends, is what we have fought for over so many years. Equality. We are a hell of a lot more equal now than we ever were, but there is still work to be done. Pride celebrations celebrate where we came from, and highlight where we still need to go – and that is why we have Pride parades.
It’s a mecca for Halloween costumes, accessories, decorations and home ware; a one-stop shop for all your fright night needs.

“Here is where the madness starts,” says Dartyn of the Boo Crew, the Halloween to Christmas warehouse situated on Macleod Trail South, at the intersection with Glenmore Trail. The store is perfectly laid out in departments for quick shopping ease. As Dartyn toured us through the isles of carnage our eyes were drawn to Halloween villages, Zemeno divinity fairies, locally painted wine glasses, mantle pieces, dishware and a giant orange tree. For those of us that can’t resist a late October theme party this is the place to get those candy bowls and conversation items.

First up we surveyed the woman’s section, organized into different genre and types of costumes. Entire racks were dedicated to niche fits: built-in shape wear to hide one’s extra pounds, plus sizes for large men dying to wear a poodle skirt, and yes, even mommy to be costumes for the expectant lady still craving a trick or treat.

Depending on your level of classic or risqué, the skies the limit this year. Your favourite Marvel character is available in standard garb, naughty bustier and booty shorts, or downright nasty nipple and vagina stickers.

Perfect for the drag diva, Ursula is obtainable in sizes petit to large; bendy tentacles and all. Head over to the comprehensive wig section for the complete silver coiffure, or maybe just glam it up with a feather headpiece large enough to make an ornery peacock guffaw in envy (roughly a $120 price tag). Walls of boas, beaded braziers, weapons, fake wounds, the highend Cinema Secrets Woochie makeup, glasses of all sorts, coloured contacts, and fake tattoos (that last up to one week) blanket the store of gore.

“If you don’t like the pain this is the way to go,” says Dartyn of the stylish, and realistic, tattoo sleeves he merchandises. Feeling conservative this year? All the staples are still in stock: cowboy, cop, fire fighter, geisha, Star Trek characters, the Hobbit crew, LOTR, knights, pirates, Star Wars, Mortal Kombat, ninjas, V for Vendetta, Clash of the Titans, 300 – they are all there. Feeling completely outlandish? Why not pick up a giant can of Spam costume, or a life-sized hot dog, maybe a bottle of

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mustard? Now Morphsuits come with some pretty crazy prints. Not just classic green and blue and red, but fleshless body suits, wherein one can place their cell phone in a concealed pocket and simulate a beating heart organ. Monsters, zombies and evil clown prints are also available in this stretchy, peculiar, conciliatory costume style.

Feeling sexy? The Xotic Eyes brand carries beautiful waterproof, reusable facial stickies – Toxic Ivy eyes would turn anyone into an Uma Thurman portrayal double. Shiny cat suits could be used to personalize your own villain get up.

The cast of Grease was there: Rizzo, pink ladies – maybe a couples theme is your goal this year.

Drag is now made completely easy. The store offered lady versions of Robin, Spiderman, sexy assassins, devious army generals, and the usual femme fatal warrior, firewoman and police officer. For men wanting to look dazzling, clapper dresses and emerald green mermaid gowns were shimmering their splendour off the hangers. Pin ups, Disney characters, a ruby sequinned señorita – medieval and Dixy Day frocks too.

Don’t, however, expect to see any Frozen items on the racks. Dartyn said those, along with Maleficent items, were sold out as soon as the store opened in September.

Whips, chains, Cleopatra cuffs, gloves, Katy Perry blue hair bobs, bows and stripy leggings, metallic dance pants – not much is left to the imagination. Create your own super hero: be bold, be bright, and be bedazzling.

Cosplay can be done here in a pinch. All colours of the rainbow are represented on the wig wall. Over 5,000 costumes and a host of heeled footwear are offered at the store.

Thinking of matching up with your furry feline or pup? Pet costumes included Bat Man, Spiderman, Underdog, Captain America and Gumby. So yes, even your canine friends can be superheroes this year. And if a costume isn’t their thing, maybe pet-safe spray paint is.

You yourself could also sport some animal wear. Furry costumes seem to be popular at the store, including ferocious lions, blushing bunnies, fuchsia kittens, and spotted cows.

The Halloween store will be open until October 31st, after which a small window for clearance sale shopping will open, and then it’s on to Christmas around November 11th.

Enter to win store coupons at http://www.gaycalgary.com/z206 and/or two general admission tickets to the Superheroes & Villains Halloween Gala (value of $30 each) at http://www.gaycalgary.com/z196. The Gala will be held on October 31st, 8pm, at the Metropolitan Conference Centre, 333 4th Ave SW, Calgary. Entertainment includes performances by Justine Tyme, DJ Polar, the Perry Twins and Jania.
"My husband and I traveled throughout India where we encountered many homeless children on the streets and witnessed how easily they were abducted and sold into (sexual slavery)," says the celebrated LGBT fiction writer, Hans M. Hirschi. In his new novel, The Fallen Angels of Karnataka, out now, he tackles the subject of trafficking. Like his previous works, Fallen Angels is a hopeful tale. It depicts the quest for love and the belief that embracing it — in all its colorful forms — will make the world a better place.

Hirschi brilliantly sets the story at the start of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, when many gay men were afraid to love.

Where The Fallen Angels of Karnataka separates itself from his previous works is in its boldness. Hirschi’s decision to write the child predator as a gay man has some up in arms, arguing it perpetuates the myth that pedophiles are gay. Hirschi, himself a victim of child molestation (at the hands of a female perpetrator), stands by his work. “I am gay and I write about gay stories,” he says. “It wasn’t a conscious or political decision, just as most straight authors do not consciously make their main characters straight. In my mind, Charles was gay. It would have been cowardly to run away from the true story in my mind.”

We sat down with Hans M. Hirschi to discuss the novel and the controversy behind it.

**GC:** Why are children in India among the world’s most vulnerable?

**HH:** I think it’s an unfortunate combination of sheer population size combined with a very corrupt system. As Hindus and Buddhists believe in re-birth, the current life, while important and a necessary learning process, isn’t as valuable as it would be for someone who believes that the present life is the only shot we have. If you die, you’ll come back, you’ll get another shot, therefore it’s not that big a deal. Combine that with the fact that children are the weakest members of society and it becomes a very dangerous situation, where parents may even be happy to assist in the disappearance of a daughter because it alleviates the cost of a dowry they may not be able to afford.

**GC:** Why did the story turn to one of trafficking?

**HH:** When an acquaintance was convicted of owning child pornography. It had been four years since my husband and I had last seen him, but he had once been a friend! I imagined him at home with my son, sitting on our couch, eating at the table. Although a figment of my imagination, the images were so disturbing that I had a breakdown in public. The next day, my story started to change, and Charles started to morph, from an eccentric dandy to something entirely different.

**GC:** When did the story turn to one of trafficking?

**HH:** When an acquaintance was convicted of owning child pornography. It had been four years since my husband and I had last seen him, but he had once been a friend! I imagined him at home with my son, sitting on our couch, eating at the table. Although a figment of my imagination, the images were so disturbing that I had a breakdown in public. The next day, my story started to change, and Charles started to morph, from an eccentric dandy to something entirely different.

**GC:** What do you hope readers learn from the book?

**HH:** I hope readers think about what they can do to help a fallen angel. We can all open our hearts to children: as mentors, foster and adoptive parents, or through monetary donations. There are angel. We can all open our hearts to children: as mentors, foster and adoptive parents, or through monetary donations. There are

**GC:** How is homosexuality viewed in India?

**HH:** A supreme judge recently overturned the 2009 ruling legalizing homosexuality, making it illegal once more. That was a major setback. Being gay in India is difficult. Several of my best friends are out to their peers and colleagues but remain closeted to their families. One friend is even legally married to his American husband, but his family knows nothing and still hopes to marry him off to a suitable girl.

**GC:** Is it true laws are more favorable for the trans community?

**HH:** India has an interesting tradition of looking favorably at transgendered men, hijra, and recently, the supreme court recognized them as a third gender.

**GC:** Did you set out to expose the vulnerable youth of India through your new book?

**HH:** The original purpose of the book was to be a travel adventure that showcased my main character’s inner journey to maturation through his trips. Travel has always been a passion of mine and I wanted to write about some of the places I had seen. I set the story during the eighties at the start of the AIDS pandemic so I could imagine being a young gay man in the eighties.

**GC:** Why are children in India among the world’s most vulnerable?

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**GC:** What do you hope readers learn from the book?

**HH:** I hope readers think about what they can do to help a fallen angel. We can all open our hearts to children: as mentors, foster and adoptive parents, or through monetary donations. There are children in need, right where you are, and we can make a difference, even in the smallest way.

The Fallen Angels of Karnataka by Hans M. Hirschi is available digitally and in softcover on Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble (Nook), and at selected local bookstores.
2nd Annual Banff Pride | SATURDAY OCTOBER 25 2014

BANFF PRIDE 2014

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The Last Temptation (Banff) | Hello Vintage (Canmore)
Can you believe it’s been 15 years since the Jamie Babbit-directed cult comedy *But I’m A Cheerleader* happened? In that time, the awesome, now-Emmy nominated actor Natasha Lyonne (*Orange Is The New Black*) has built a career, lost a career, then rebuilt a career, and we couldn’t be happier to see her back in action. In even better news, she’s re-teaming with Babbit for a new movie, *Fresno*, co-starring another woman we love, Judy Greer (FX’s *Married*). Lyonne plays a no-nonsense lesbian and, alongside her sister (Greer), the heterosexual sex addict, the pair clean hotel rooms in the sleepy California town. Then they accidentally kill a guest. It’s a comedy. And we already love it. It needs to be in theaters tomorrow. Please and thank you.

**Anderson Cooper! Meets! Avengers’ Black Widow!**

Not that anyone was really expecting this team-up, but wasn’t it time for Anderson Cooper to appear in a Marvel comic book? I think we can all agree that it was his turn. And now he gets his chance. The silver fox CNN anchor is about to appear in *Black Widow* #12, due this November from Marvel, and his illustrated avatar will investigate the background of the Widow, aka Ms. Natasha Romanoff. Creators Nathan Edmonson and Phil Noto are interested in putting their Russian super-hero’s feet to the fire of journalistic inquiry, as Cooper seeks to possibly expose the true allegiances of this former KGB operative and assassin, now team member of America’s favorite comic book (and film franchise) crime fighting squad. One guess: She probably turns up relatively clean, otherwise they’d have to boot her out of the Avengers, right? And since she spent the last *Captain America* film trying to set up Cap with eligible ladies, maybe she’ll do a little homo matchmaking for Coop. And if this all sounds too ridiculous to be true, just remember: back in the day they built entire comic books around Superman and Jimmy Olsen meeting Jerry Lewis and retro insult comic Don Rickles (Google them, kids).

**Maria Bello drives Stephen King’s vehicle**

Did you ever think you’d read the words “Stephen King” and “Lifetime Original Movie” in the same sentence? Well, you just did. And on Saturday, Oct. 18, you’ll get the chance to see how that peanut butter responds when it’s got Lifetime’s chocolate all up in it. *Big Driver* is the name of the project and it’s based on one of King’s short stories. It stars the fairly recently un-heterosexualized Maria Bello, lesbian rock ‘n’ roll icon Joan Jett and Olympia Dukakis in a thriller about a mystery novelist (Bello) and her battle with a drifter/serial killer. After her car breaks down and she’s sexually assaulted by the man and left for dead, she fights back revenge-horror style, a la *I Spit On Your Grave*. Except about 7000 percent less offensive and gruesome. Because Lifetime Original Movie. In other news, they have not run out of Stephen King stories to turn into films and they probably never will.

**Queer Eye for some more guys. And gals.**

The *Secret Guide to Fabulous*, which, you know, isn’t weirdly retro ’90s gay-sounding at all, is a new show coming to Logo faster than you can say “rehashed concept.” The not-so-secret makeover show kicks off on Sept. 3 and each 30-minute adventure will feature four (see? totally different) fabulousness experts who will reshape the lives of unfortunately style-and-fitness-challenged people. The helping hands include Shaun T., founder of the popular *INSANITY Workout*; Rob Younkers, a fashion professor at the Parsons School of Design; Theodore Leaf, the beauty editor of *Glamour* magazine; and designer John Gidding, who moonlights as a correspondent for Rachael Ray. Who to blame for more unreasonable expectations of gays popping into your life to give you makeovers? Just Kelly Ripa and Mark Consuelos, that’s who. They’re the producers. But we’ll probably watch anyway. We like seeing busted, Cheetos-stained living rooms turned into West Elm advertorials.
I admit it: this is my favourite time of year! October’s spectacular fall colours and beautiful weather usher in a barrage of birthdays and festivities to our family, mine included. Plus there are Thanksgiving, Halloween, and many hours spent together with family and friends catching up on the summer’s activities, kid’s exploits and family gossip. For me, in particular, it is far less stressful, more relaxed and even more intimate than the approaching holiday season. I think of it like Christmas without all of the fuss, expense or insanity of endlessly driving in snowstorms.

With four generations, and over 40 people in our immediate family alone, it’s hard to keep up with everyone sometimes. Ours is truly a modern family in every sense of the word, and I never overlook just how fortunate we are to have an enlightened, eccentric, and progressive brood to raise our son around. As such, it has got me wondering, how has the landscape changed over the past decade for gay families in Canada?

According to Stats Canada in 2012:
• The Census counted 64,575 same-sex couple families, up 42.4 per cent from 2006. Of these couples 21,015 were same-sex married couples and 43,560 were same-sex common-law couples.
• The number of same-sex married couples nearly tripled between 2006 and 2011, reflecting the first five-year period for which same-sex marriage has been legal across the country. Same-sex common-law couples rose 15 per cent, slightly higher than the 13.8 per cent increase for opposite-sex common-law couples.

The census data clearly shows that legalizing same-sex marriage accounted for the sharp rise in married same-sex couples, but if you have been to any gay gatherings of late there is also something else happening: a gay baby boom. Over the past ten years, as our community saw a sharp rise in marriages, we are also seeing those couples paving the way for a new generation of the Canadian family archetype. It’s an exciting time for sure, and although my husband and I spent decades fighting on the front lines for change now that it is here, it’s still hard to believe so much progress has occurred in such a relatively short time.

Progress, yes, but we aren’t all the way there just yet. There are still some inequities, even within our own community. According to the Vanier Institute (http://www.gaycalgary.com/u688) in 2013, of the couples in Canada who identify as same-sex married couples, 9.4 per cent have children under the age of 24, and 80 per cent of those are female couples. This means just 20 per cent of same-sex couples with kids are male couples. These stats might make it seem like the lesbian moms are beating us gay dads in our endeavours to start our own families, but the number of married gay men starting families through surrogacy, adoption or guardianship is the fastest growing segment, by percentage, of all Canadian families – same or opposite sex couples, according to a CBC article (http://www.gaycalgary.com/u681).

I’m hopeful for the future of all families in Canada. In many ways, we are leading the world in our cultural acceptance of gay as a new sort of normal in society. This increasing diversity means less intolerance for our kids to have to suffer through, as more and more gay families are visible in schools, churches and events.

Does it mean that discrimination is a thing of the past? Of course not, but it will mean that my son will never have to know a country where one segment of society lords over another based on archaic stereotypes; families are just free to be.

Email me at parentingproud@gmail.com if you want to share a story or event.
Interview

Kira Isabella
We Love You

By Carey Rutherford

“So tell me again, how did this work?” GayCalgary asks, still amazed by the meteoric arrival of the Ottawa country music sensation, Kira Isabella. Derek Hauser, the Sony Music Promotions Rep for the young minstrel, enlightens us.

“No one has ever worked harder than Kira has and I know that if she didn’t get the record deal it’s because of the talent of the people who heard her.”

Kira had a friend who signed with Universal, and Kira would rehearse with them. [A Sony manager] heard her singing there, and thought “I need to take this to labels and, within a week of them hearing it, we had a deal signed with her. Because they heard her voice and said “This is a voice that doesn’t need a lot of development”. She is already there.”

And at just 15 years old.

“Kira has been singing since she was seven,” Hauser notes.

Three years later, after releasing her first album, Kira was nominated as the Canadian Country Music Association’s Rising Star in 2012, their Female Artist of the Year the following year, and has been nominated again this year for that same award.

Despite her youth, Kira’s outlook is surprisingly unaffected. In a typically down-to-earth Isabellism, Kira says that having had a fairly linear touring season, a few bumps in the road were bound to happen.

“We got into Edmonton, and we rented an SUV and drove from [there] to Red Deer, but on the way there a rock flew off the back of a truck, and the sunroof exploded!” she describes. “Thankfully there was a screen, and none of the glass fell on us… Then, on our way from Red Deer to Calgary (in a new rental), the vehicle started to die. So we had to turn around, go back to Red Deer, switch vehicles again, and finally made it to Calgary.” Does that sound like a 20-year-old country music sensation?

How about when we ask her the Steve Polvak $50 GC Question (a challenge for a new singer in this historically conservative genre): Do you have anything you want to say to your gay fans?

“I don’t categorize them like that! They’re just my fans! I don’t like putting them in a group like that… Is there a difference? Not really… My arms are open to everybody. I don’t really give a damn about anything like that.”

Kira seems so young in some ways, and wise in others. How does she write or record songs like “Gone Enough”, which is about the defunct end of a painful relationship?

“You know, I have been on the road since I was 15, so I think I do have a little bit more life experience than the average 20-year-old. I have also prided myself on being empathetic: I have always found it easy to imagine myself in someone else’s shoes, and really empathize with someone else’s story, to the point where people ask if this has happened to me. I think it’s an important part of being a writer and a musician.”

Kira mentions that the last song – “Heaven” on her new album “Caffeine & Big Dreams” – made her mom cry on first hearing it. She could relate to it to Kira’s dad’s military life, with his long absences.

“It’s really, really hard to be away from the people you love like that,” she says. “I’ve been on the road since I was 15/16. It’s really hard, sometimes, to be alone and be like this all the time. And so, I’m not ready to go (to heaven); I’m not ready to say goodbye. I have felt that really deeply.”

GC mentions that her album seems to be divided between the really secular party life of “Shake It If Ya Got It” and the more sacred side of “Make a Sinner Out Of Me” that talks about gazing at a cross while in a church, and the consequences of a relationship.

She is enthralled that we noticed.

“I think that, being an artist, and being a performer, is a constant struggle between wanting to show people things, and being afraid to… I remember doing this test in high school, Are you an introvert, or are you an extrovert? And my teacher pulled me aside after class and said I’ve never seen anybody get 50/50: literally, a line right down the middle.”

“I have this part of me that loves to get out there and rock out onstage, and be the centre of attention, and have that spotlight on me. But if you asked my parents, or pretty much anybody that knows me, I sit at home with a book in my little cocoon.

“When people hear the title “Caffeine & Big Dreams”, their response is What? It’s not a conventional album name, but it is a running theme in my life. I have had a serious caffeine addiction since I was 16 or so. And the big dreams part is kind of obvious.”

Kira gets serious for a moment. “It’s a line in the song “Coke Can”: We were running on caffeine and big dreams/I would have given you my life. I didn’t actually write that song, and I think that’s why it hit me so hard. I went through this relationship, when I was touring the first album, that was really unhealthy. I wasn’t sleeping very much, and it was kind of painful. It was a big learning lesson for me and it helped me be a stronger person, and helped propel me forward.

“It helped make me want to grow as a writer, and grow as an artist. And realize that it’s okay to be vulnerable, and it’s okay to show people that sometimes. My father told me at the time, Smart people learn from their mistakes: smarter people learn from other people’s mistakes.”

Which she, as an 18 year-old girl, of course ignored.

“Now I tell him, Dad, I think that there really are some mistakes that you have to make for yourself, or you will not learn from them. It has made me a much stronger person, and I’m thankful for it… I wouldn’t have half the songs on this record if it weren’t for that relationship.”

Despite this revelation, Kira says that she’s not “pulling a Taylor Swift” and writing her love life on her musical sleeve. These events catalyze stories, but are not the stories themselves.

For example, the first single from this album is “Quarterback”, a challenging story of date rape by the town football hero, and the difficulties the victim has in seeking justice. Not exactly standard hit-factory material for a young artist in any genre, let alone country. GC asks why a song like “Country’s Written All Over Me” wasn’t the first single, with its anthemic title and good time tone.

“Quarterback” was definitely inspired by [current events], but I try to draw away from that, and look at the bigger picture.” She points to country music’s current focus on drinking and partying as the goal for all of its listeners. “More and more beer” until it has gone too far.

“The party is great, but nobody talks about what can happen afterwards. I think that country music is the perfect platform for this. I always refer to the Brad Paisley song “This Is Country Music”. So many other genres are afraid to touch on these things, but this is country, and we will talk about it… We knew we needed to put [“Quarterback”] out there right away.”

She mentions offhandedly a gay actor in one of her videos trying to redirect her interest in him to his straight brother, but she replied saying “But I like you! I like your soul; your heart!”

We like your heart Kira! 😊
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TEQUILA CAZADORES REPOSADO
Vino, Vistas and Empanadas
A most Incredible journey through northwest Argentina

By Rod Zelles, Blue Flame Ventures

It started with Blue Flame Ventures being invited to speak at the 7th Annual GNetwork360 convention in Buenos Aires, Argentina for LGBT Business and Tourism.

Arriving in Buenos Aires, via New York, and after an 11 hour flight, I met up with fellow speakers; Michael Warner from Social to GoGo as well Joe Landry and Jim Stevens from Here Media. We were quickly whisked away to the domestic airport on the other side of Buenos Aires and, after some minor delays, we were boarding the next plane to take us to Jujuy (pronounced “who hooey”), a small city in Northwest Argentina situated between the Bolivian and Chilean borders.

Flying over Argentina granted some of the most spectacular views; even at 36,000 feet you could see the mountains and hills, which led you to think we were going to wherever Jurassic Park was filmed. Everything was so lush and such a deep green.

Once we landed, and after picking up our luggage, we were met by Vanina Salerno from Argentina Tourism, who would be with us for the entire duration of the trip, and Sofi Van Balen Blanken from Jujuy Tourism along with her team.

Hoping to just settle into the hotel for a small rest after such a long trek (I personally had not slept on any of the flights) we were taken to lunch in the town, to a restaurant called Viracochia. It was exactly what I would have anticipated; the atmosphere was very local. With no sense of what time it actually was, I could only guess it was lunch hour. The restaurant was at capacity.

While my colleagues were all stepping outside their comfort zones, and trying the local cuisine of llama, I opted for some quinoa. My stomach was just not happy with all the wine I drank on the plane.

Sensing that we were all just wanting to shower and take a small power nap, our hosts graciously complied and took us to our first hotel on the journey, the Hotel Howard Johnson Plaza Jujuy.

After a much-needed rest we were all taken by van to the centre of Jujuy where, even at 8pm, it was bustling with activity. Built in 1598, finished in 1653, our first stop was the Catedral de San Salvador. Church services were in session, so we were not able to spend as much time as we may have liked looking around, but we had found that an 1843 earthquake had destroyed the original building which had consisted of two towers. It was rebuilt in 1907. Our next stop was just across the square to City Hall, called Casa de Gobierno, which they opened just for us. We were led up the stairs to a room that was no other word but ornate. It houses all the flags of the various provinces in Argentina, Jujuy province being one of them. It is also said that it homes the first flag of civil freedom.

The most stunning resort was our dinner destination – The Altos de la Vina. The night views overlooking the city were amazing. This city is massive, and now it was all lit up as if to say Bienvenido a Argentina.

Feeling a bit more daring now that I was rested, I decided to have the llama lasagne, which I have to say was pretty damn good. The room was round, beautifully decorated, allowing for perfect panoramic views of the city.

Day 2

The day began with the arrival of speaker Marta Fernandez, hailing from Madrid, Spain, with Les Working. Once we all piled into the van, we were off to the Quebrada de Humahuaca, declared an UNESCO world heritage site. There is nothing that I can say that should not be seen in person.

As we were taking the drive, the first thing I noticed was the colour of the mountains. These are not your regular Rockies. They come in all shades, as far as the eye can see. Pachamama – the red mountain, is iron, but to Argentinians it represents mother earth. Borax – the purple and pink mountains; yellow sulfur mountains; a variety of greens. When asked what the latter is, we were informed that the green is caused by the oxidizing that has taken place over time. It was fascinating to discover that we were right in the heart of what was once the Inca Empire.

Leading us to a small town called Pumamarca (Seven Colour Mountain), we stopped at Il Cavallino Helados y Café where, again, we were treated to a great view.
cappuccino felt really awesome. Even the tables had a story to tell, etched with carvings inscribed by people over the years, and the dishes looked as though they were made in the kiln just days before.

No party is complete without a Brazilian. Our next stop brought us to a hotel, not to check in, but to pick up the last member of our merry group: Helio Filho, editor and chief of Revista Junior Magazine. The countryside was scattered with cactus. Cardón, being the biggest of the cactus family, were quickly disappearing the higher we were ascending. The only plant visible now was tola which we were told, when used correctly, aids in the speeding up of childbirth.

As some of my colleagues were beginning to feel queasy from the climb and continual winding of the road, we reached part one of our destination. Not quite at the peak, but still 4170 metres above sea level - just wow! Plains, dips, valleys, crevices – everywhere a spectacular view. It’s not the Coliseum of Rome or the Parthenon of Greece, but it is Argentina. Aside from the tola plant and some wildlife in the distance (namely the vicuña, an endangered animal with fur softer than cashmere) you are at one with the vista. Our guide told us that it would take roughly 25 vicuña to make one poncho. Most of this type of clothing would come from its cousin, the alpaca.

Once again, we all piled into the van to head to part two of our destination: Salinas Grandes. On the road I had seen what looked like snow, although it wasn’t cold enough for snow, even in the middle of winter. I was advised that it is actually salt; not the sodium that we would use each day in consumption, but salt used for industry. Miles and miles of pure white - a salt desert - over 40 miles spanning the borders of four provinces. Very hard to the touch, and with an appearance much like cracked mud in the heat, the view was nothing short of holy. This was awesome, with no point of reference except the Sierra de Cordoba Mountains in the far distance. The salt was also very cold to the touch, and there was a small section dug out and filled with water, which provided a perfect mirror reflection. I felt bold enough to put my feet in, and damn it was really cool! I pulled them out to watch the salt crystalize on my calves and feet.

After oohs and ahs subsided we were treated with traditional Andean food. They had created a picnic of sorts right there on the salt flats. Various assortments of breads, meats and cheeses, delicious empanadas, drinks and deserts, were all spread out just for us. Now that we were fed, it seemed like such a waste not to work on my tan. This was the perfect location – lots of reflective backdrop to give me that deep dark colour I strive for. But, before I could get comfortable, they snatched us all up again and headed back to Pumamarca for the evening. At least this allowed me to drag a couple of my colleagues back into town to check out the multitude of street markets. With a 20:1 ratio on currency (Argentinian peso to Canadian dollar) I was about to require another suitcase.

All checked into hotel #2, la Comarca Hotel con Encanto was more like a campground than your average hotel. Situated right on the highway in the centre of town, we each had our own cabana. Mine had three beds and a cactus right outside the window. The only downside was having to drag my luggage to my room, but what a pretty walk it was: cacti throughout the courtyard; and small, man-made streams trickling near the various pathways.

There was just enough time for a couple of us to tour the wine cellar and have drinks with the rest of our group before dressing and heading to back to town for dinner. The beverage of choice? Salta beer. As we were walking into town that evening you could not help but realize how bright it was despite no lights; drawing our gaze to the skies. The stars were so massive and so bright – millions of them guiding our way. It’s easy to see why people sometimes opt for the countryside. I had never seen anything like it anywhere in the world.

Arriving at the Hotel Marquis de Tojo we were treated to a small tour of the hotel, which was spectacular. Painted frescos adorning the walls reminded me of my travels in Italy. The tour led us to a private dining area where they suggested we order anything on the menu. I couldn’t resist; I had to have the steak with risotto. Much of the dinner consisted of, “Have more wine”. Argentinians are quite proud of their vino, which helped on the walk home for us, as it was quite chilly. The temperature had dropped to about 5°C that evening.
Day 3

Early the next morning we were back on the road with Salta (literally meaning ‘jump’) being the final destination of the day, however we had a few stops to make first.

Maimara which, when translated, means ‘falling star’ is said to have had a meteor crash down on it. It also homes the most incredible burial site. On November 2nd, “The Day of Death”, the town makes a trek up this hill to leave offerings. From a distance the site resembles a scattering of dollhouses.

Tilcara, meaning ‘flower surrounded by stone’, was next. October through December all of the cacti flower. While stopped here we were taken to an ecological rural establishment called Caravana de Llamas. Their main objective is to rescue and tame llamas into cargo animals, promoting their work with local communities, within the program of community based rural tourism. To this end, they also provide walking tours and weekend retreats.

After our small educational tour and a light breakfast with the owners, we were all provided our own llama to do a walking tour of the town. Apparently I got the stud of the lot. He was certainly a camera whore; he always knew where the camera was, ready for a pose. So there we are, the group of us walking through the streets of Tilcara, each with a llama on the arm.

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Eating Out in Argentina

Local Dishes, Llama and Happy Dulces

The food of Argentina is an eclectic mix of old world charm and new world tastes.

Aside from the food we are accustomed to in North America consisting of beef, chicken, pork and fish, Argentina also offered up some of its local cuisine, a traditional fare of llama. In every step along this journey we always had the option of llama on the menu.

With the texture of beef, the llama lasagne provided a change of pace, a welcome change if you are wanting to experience different cultures.

Ceviche (a dish commonly composed of cold fish and shrimp cured in citrus juice – usually lime or lemon – and seasoned with chili) was another dish that the Argentinian people seem to have mastered. Surrounded by dabs of guacamole, this is a dish that I could have just eaten on its own and not simply as an appetizer.

Quinoa is as standard a fare as llama and is prepared in a multitude of ways, many times offered as a replacement for risotto.

One item not mentioned yet is desert. Dulce de leche, a caramel like confection made by slowly heating sweetened condensed milk, is one of Argentina’s specialties and delicacies. When combined with the zapallo fruit or the coyote fruit, concluding a meal with this dish sends you to a happy place.

Whether we were feasting on soups or salads, llama, quinoa or any other food native to the region, nothing compared to the empanada. Masterfully prepared in a variety of different ways, this is one food that I could eat every day for the rest of my life.

An empanada is a stuffed pastry dish, served baked or fried, cold or hot, and filled with any number of tasty fillings: meats, cheese, vegetables or even fruits. Originating from Spain, many countries throughout the world have made this yummy victual pocket their own. Dippings vary from province to province but popular ingredient options include boiled egg, onion, raisins, olives, and a seasoning of paprika. Sweet corn, spinach, ham and fish are also on the menu at many an empanada purveyor.

A fabulous place to try new foods or different spins on Spanish favourites, Argentina is a must see destination. Provecho!
It was quite the fun and adventurous opportunity to see the town at a llama’s pace. Children began to follow along, and then we arrived at a massive market square full of eclectic shops and kiosks selling everything a tourist may want. I handed the reigns of my llama over to a colleague, determined to help the local economy, and I shopped. They managed to drag me away, kicking and screaming, but not before I purchased the most amazing pair of shoes.

Leaving the ‘Archeological Capital of the Province’ behind we returned to Jujuy for our final stop; the Thermas de Reyes Hotel & Spa. The drive was fascinating. No longer were we in the desert, but now amid lush foliage and deep greens – like the Amazon jungle. A mist was blanketing the area as we arrived to what can only be described as a palace. Following a delicious late luncheon they invited my fellow speakers and I to take a thermal bath in the spa. You did not have to ask any of us twice; our own private rooms overlooking the gorge into the hillsides of Jujuy were utterly fantastic.

Bittersweet we were as we said goodbye to our Jujuy guides, Sofi and her team, and hello to our new guides from Salta Tourism. As we arrived in Salta, dusk was setting in; there was not much time to actually see the town. We were all exhausted from the day’s travels and thermal baths. Leaving our bags at the tourism office, we were soon headed down the street to the main square that, in my opinion, looked very much like I was in the middle of Venice and not in northwest Argentina. Walking down the bustling streets and among the orange trees, we saw a wonderfully pink, architecturally alluring, lit-up building. It was the Cathedral of Salta. We were not able to take photos inside, as mass was in session, but we were able to take a walk through the church and view some of the amazing relics it has housed over the ages.

As this was a press FAM (familiarization) trip, they had split us up into different hotels. Marta and I were at Ayres de Salta, but we would soon reconvene for dinner at 9:30pm. I took the opportunity of having Wi-Fi again to check a few dozen emails and touch base on Facebook.

We arrived to pena folkloric La Casona del Molino not knowing what to expect. A 20-foot guitar stood outside the entrance, pushing into the roof. We were seated in what could be described as a bingo hall setting, but with twinkling lights everywhere that changed colour. Our group appeared to have grown in size; now there were roughly 18 of us. After a really great meal, and a few Salta beer to wash it down, the host came out to set the tone for the evening. He started by asking what countries we were from, and then broke into song. We were treated to a traditional Argentinian evening complete with the tango and fantastic performances; it was really remarkable. To finish off this evening with our new friends, this incredible group of people came out and did an awe-inspiring production with flags and dancers and singers. Bienvenido a Salta!

Day 4

Marta and I were awaiting our pick-up early this morning; we were to join the others in two separate vans on a journey that would take us to Cafayate. Now no amount of searching on the Internet could prepare us for the sights we were about to see. I am not just talking about the tobacco fields, as immense as those were. Imagine the Grand Canyon on steroids times 10. To get to Cafayate we had to take highway 68 through the Las Conchas Canyon. The geological formations were truly something. The road itself was just as crazy as the drive to Salinas Grandes, but it seemed a distant memory upon the incredible sights we were seeing.

We could not take photos fast enough. We coerced our drivers to stop at a place called Garganta del Diablo, meaning the Devil’s Throat, a natural reserve that, with the passage of millions of years,
formed this awesome geological formation. So after we climbed rocks, and snapped even more photos, the hosts rounded us up to head 10 kilometres up road to Mirador Tres Cruces.

The panoramic views from this location are stellar. Nothing but geological formations as far as your eyes will allow you to see. It would also seem this is the place Argentinians are most proud of; they have carved out a path to a small plateau so you may get the best vantage point to see everything.

We were already running late but what is one more stop: Quebrada de la Conchas! There was no side road to pull onto, so we had the drivers stop on the shoulder of the highway. There is nothing in my travels around the world that can equate to such magnificent views. It is amazing to think that nature can create such beautiful sights.

Piling back into the van yet again we finally reached our destination, Piattelli Vineyards, ‘wine tasting at the base of the Andes’. How did I manage to become so fortunate – landing this all expenses paid trip to Argentina and now getting to sample wines not yet available in Canada?

The hospitality manager, Mariela Ilardo was there to greet us as we arrived. She gave us a brief overview of where we were and requested that we relax and enjoy ourselves while they tended to our needs. Torrontés 2013 Premium Reserve was first pour. Now I have not drunk white for a while but damn; a guy could get used to it again.

On our last day of the GNetwork360 Convention I was fortunate enough to join a handful of speakers from Pink Press Media, Grindr, the Tourism Ministry of Thailand as well as a world-class blogger from Duanewells.com on a small boat trip. We were invited by Andres Felipe Duran, one of the owners, to cruise to Isla El Descanso in Tigre to a property that he co-owns with his partner Claudio Stamato, prior to attending the closing night gala of the conference.

Not knowing really what to expect, but excited nonetheless, we bustled into the tour bus where we were whisked through the streets of Buenos Aires to the docks, situated about 40 minutes away. After a short boat ride we were docked on the island. Created 20 years ago with an idea, and a labour of love, by Claudio, what initially looked like a simple albeit lovely cabin on a hilltop, amounted to so much more. The caretaker of the property greeted us to the grounds which, when you include the wetlands that stretch over 30 acres, have no less than eight gardeners on staff.

Once we garbed ourselves in rubber boots and traditional gardening hats (featuring the logo for Isla El Descanso) at the Olympic-sized pool, we were off through what may best be described as a maze.

Some of the first things you notice when walking the gardens is the art and sculptures surrounding them. There is literally nothing like it in the world. As art aficionados, Andres and Claudio do not buy artwork for their gardens. They bring the artist to Isla El Descanso to create the art and sculpture specific to their perception of the island.

As it was winter, not all of the flora were in bloom, but for a year-round garden, there were more than an ample supply of flowers for us to absorb the essence. Isla El Descanso is an escape from reality; such beauty makes it difficult to describe in a limited word count.

Crossing over the bridge of the Angel of Love, we were told to make a wish. It is said that if you wish for love, you will find it. I’m not sure if love will find me, but should it, I will want to walk over that breathtaking bridge, covered in vines, foliage and flowers, with my special someone.
To give you an accurate reflection of the gardens, in bridges alone, there are 11. In addition to Angel you will find Thankfulness, Sверхній consciousness, Acceptance, Peace, Humbleness, Abundance, Prosperity, Friendship, Good Hope and Health, and the last, Family. There is a story behind each bridge, in fact a story under every leaf of the gardens.

My personal favourite piece, with a rust-colour appearance, was a massive sculpture with the letters hollowed out *tenuemos el poder de elegir*, which translated means: we have the power to choose. Such words resonate with me personally, and I would imagine a fair number of others. Such a powerful statement, and I thank Andres for inviting me.

Seeing as how Argentina was the 10th country in the world to promote same sex marriage, the gardens are a perfect location for a destination wedding. Not only is the plant life ideal, but they have built the most stunning gazebo one could take vows on.

A fascinating tidbit; no one actually stays on the property, with the exception of the Andres and Claudio. However there have been a couple of guests of notoriety that have come for a visit, perhaps for the beauty, and perhaps due to its remoteness. Will Smith has paid a visit, and Madonna has spent a bit of time on the island as well.

As we were doing a round robin around the table introducing ourselves – where we were from, what we do, and why we do it – the empanadas were making their way out. I need the recipe to these. They just kept coming and my colleagues and I could not get enough of them. We could almost forgo lunch and just eat empanadas all afternoon.

Polishing off our third or fourth bottle of wine, the Malbec 2013 Premium Reserve came out. I have always been a fan of Chilean wine, but this is the contender for the crown. They were clearly saving the best for last.

On our private tour of the vineyard I discovered all the wines they make at Piattelli: Capriccio, Cabernet, Torrontes, Malbec, Chardonnay and Rose of Malbec.

Piattelli Vineyards started in 2009, while the actual facility was not built until 2012. It is only at about 40 per cent capacity, but houses other vineyards’ wine to offset the overhead costs. Unfortunately we were unable to see the actual grapes on the vine, as the season was already complete and the 2014 wines were already in their respective vats, but Mariela showed us the process of creating the various wines, including the fermenting and corking process.

Our brains overloaded with wine processing knowledge we headed for the gift shop. First up, buying some of that incredible wine; second, a really cool wine map of the world. It was our last night of the tour and my colleagues purchased four, five, six bottles each; my luggage was already at capacity. I still had four days in Argentina to go, as well as Rio de Janeiro in a week (when you are friends with Terri Stevens you don’t go to Rio and not load her up with feather boas).

Buzzy from the wine tour, and thinking that we are now on our way to check into the hotel, Cele Nader and her team from Salta Tourism squashed the idea. We were on our way to a museum, the Museo de la Vid y el Vino; in English, The Vine and Wine Museum. Oh God.

The building, which was inaugurated this past March, had the most spectacular, detailed displays from the creation of wine to today – anything you could possibly want to know about Argentinian wine is here.

*Isla El Descanso*
http://www.islaeldescanso.com
On my second wind I got the brilliant idea for us to do a bit of walking in the town, and managed to convince my colleagues that we won’t be long; thus we entered the market square and its multitude of shops. While the others were meandering through the streets, I hit every kiosk and found the perfect shirt.

Team Salta still had one last surprise in store for us: the vineyards of Bodega el Esteco. Now as overwhelmed as we may have been over the jam-packed day of events and awesome sights, this was really something. They allowed us to walk right up to the vines and actually see the stems, the various water filtration systems; even the earth was fascinating. I thought it would be dirt, but it was sand. Some of the finest wines in the world are grown in sand - who knew? Finally, after this tour, the various wine tasting of Don David Malbec and Don David Torrontes, it was time to check into the hotel, which was located at this very vineyard. It all felt so Falcon Crest. If we were amazed with the winery, it paled in comparison to what we walked into.

Checking into the Patios de Cafayate Wine Hotel we were each handed a key that appeared to be saved from the 17th Century. I walked to my room and opened the door; a jaw-dropping moment to say the least. I was in the presidential suite. Thinking there must be some mistake I walked to Helio’s room only to discover he too was in a presidential suite.

This was just wow! The king sized bed, the walls, the draperies, the antique desk and furnishings, the ensuite bathroom, mirrors, sink – even the bidet. As much as we just wanted to absorb our surroundings it was time to get ready for dinner. We were to be on the road in one hour. So after taking the longest shower I made my way past the various rooms, which included a chapel, to the opulence of the lobby, all lit up for night time.

Down the highway to a dirt road, a true hideaway, we finally reached the Casa de la Bodega. Greeted by the owner (one of the tallest men I have ever seen) we expected to be led to the dining room, but they had one final surprise in store for us. We were led through the back, past the bottling plant, down the corridor to the basement to a large area that quite literally had thousands of bottles lining the walls. There, nestled between them, stood a beautifully decorated wooden table set for the group of us. Like A-listers we had our own private wait staff catering to our every want. Amazing food and drink, atmosphere, new friends – even the owner came by and at times served us himself. This was a perfect ending to a most incredible journey through northwest Argentina.

It was time to head back to our individual palaces for a sleeping splendour. Like all good things, a 7am alarm signalled its end. Time to get up and head back to Salta, saying goodbye to all the beauty of the road, the vineyards, Devil’s Tongue, and our wonderful hosts from Salta Tourism. Boarding the plane we all headed back to work, to Buenos Aires. It was time to attend the GNetwork360 Conference and Convention.

Links
JuJuy.com
http://www.jujuy.com/
Termas De Reyes
http://www.termasdereyes.com
Howard Johnson Plaza Jujuy
http://www.hjjujuy.com.ar
Gobierno de Jujuy
http://www.jujuy.gov.ar
Welcome Argentina - JuJuy
http://www.welcomeargentina.com/juju
Welcome Argentina - Salta
http://www.welcomeargentina.com/salta
La Comarca Hotel
http://www.lacomarcahotel.com.ar
Marques de Tojo
http://www.marquesdetotojo.com
Tilcara
http://www.tilcara.com.ar
Caravana de Llamas / Llama Trekking
http://www.caravandellamas.com.ar
Catedral de Salta - Salta
http://www.catedralesalta.org
Ayres de Salta Hotel
http://www.ayresdesalta.com.ar
Piattelli Vineyards
http://www.piattellivineyards.com
Museo de la Vid y el Vino
http://www.museodelvinobc.com
El Esteco
http://www.elesteco.com
Patios De Cafayte
http://www.patiodecafaayte.com
La Casa de la Bodega
http://www.lacasadelabodega.com.ar
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Advanced Tickets
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$15 for a day pass / $25 for a weekend pass

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The many Voice talent of
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GARRETT WANG

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www.gaycalgary.com
The ninth largest city in the country, and one of the nation’s most important centers of commerce and culture, Dallas (http://www.gaycalgary.com/u695) carries a reputation as a powerful business center, a highly influential retail and restaurant hub, and a gay community with high visibility in just about every sphere of city life. It’s also home to a vibrant downtown arts district that’s grown considerably in both size and stature in recent years, and it offers some of the hottest gay nightlife districts in the country.

In short, there’s plenty to see and do here – the challenge for weekend visitors is trying to pack everything into a relatively quick visit. Here’s one strategy for making it happen:

Friday evening

On your first night in town, ease into the city’s friendly, relaxed pace by spending some time in Oak Lawn, the core of Dallas’s gay scene. Here you’ll find several fun fashion shops and boutiques as well as inviting bars and restaurants on or near the neighborhood’s main drag, Cedar Springs Road. At the intersection with Throckmorton Street, nicknamed “the Crossroads,” you’re in the heart of one of the most vibrant gay nightlife districts in the world.

Among dining highlights, you can go casual with a jalapeno-cheddar burger at Hunky’s (hunkys.com), a fun local fast-food restaurant in the heart of the action. Or opt for a more leisurely meal at trendy Dish (dish-dallas.com), with its sleek dining room and first-rate contemporary, globally inspired fare and well-crafted cocktails. Another vibrant spot, with strong margaritas and tasty Mexican fare, is Cyclone Anaya’s (cycloneanaya.com), which turns out spicy carne asada and lobster enchiladas.

On your first evening in town, you might want to take it easy and stick to a couple of the more easygoing options in the neighborhood, such as Alexandre’s, which presents softly sophisticated jazz and cabaret shows; the Latin-inflected bar Havana; and Woody’s (dallaswoodys.com), a classic gay video bar that airs comedy clips on Friday nights.

Saturday

Kick the morning off with a big breakfast at the Original Market Diner (originalmarketdiner.com), which is something of a Dallas institution for filling, hearty omelets and breakfast burritos along with homemade cherry and chocolate–peanut butter pies – the people-watching at this '50s-era drive-in-style greasy spoon is highly entertaining.

Then head downtown to explore the Dallas Arts District (thedallasartsdistrict.org), which comprises 68 acres of often-striking performance halls and art museums – it’s the largest neighborhood of its kind in the country. On Saturday afternoons or evenings there’s typically always something interesting staged at the spectacular I.M. Pei-designed Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center, home to the Dallas Symphony Orchestra; the Dallas City Performance Hall, where the acclaimed GLBT Turtle Creek Chorale often performs, as do dance troupes, musicians, and theater groups; and the AT&T Performing Arts Center, which is home to the strikingly modern Winspear Opera House and presents everything from Broadway tours to exceptional opera.

On the visual arts side, check out the phenomenal Dallas Museum of Art, whose distinctive building, designed in 2007 by Edward Larrabee Barnes, houses more than 24,000 works spanning many centuries and cultures. The nearby Trammell & Margaret Crow Collection of Asian Art focuses on works from throughout China, Indian and Japan, and the neighboring Nasher Sculpture Center has impressive indoor galleries but is perhaps best regarded for its leafy, tree-shaded 2.5-acre sculpture garden, a wonderful place to stroll on a sunny afternoon.

The Nasher has a popular Wolfgang Puck Café, and the Dallas Museum of Art’s DMA Café is also an appealing lunch spot. But the coolest lunching in the Arts District these days is at the collection of food trucks assembled beside the lush green lawns of Klyde Warren Park, a 5.2-acre swath of greenery opened in 2012 atop the Woodall Rodgers Freeway – you’ll find everything from gourmet ice cream sandwiches at Coolhaus to Cajun-inspired oyster po’boys and gumbo at The Lab.

It’s a short drive or 20-minute walk to one other must-see downtown landmark, the West End Historic District. Here you’ll find Dealey Plaza, where President John F. Kennedy was assassinated on Nov. 22, 1963. At the northeast corner of the plaza, stop by the infamous Texas School Book Depository, now home to the poignant and fascinating Sixth Floor Museum, which preserves the space where Lee Harvey Oswald fired on the president.

Saturday evening

As the sun descends on the Big D, there’s a choice place to take in the views: the Jetsons-esque, 561-foot Reunion Tower, which was built in 1979 but last year added an awesome new Ge-O Deck observation platform, with a high-definition zoom cameras and impressive telescopes that you can use to zero in on local landmarks. You can eat dinner up
here, too, enjoying the same snazzy views from Five-Sixty by Wolfgang Puck (wolfgangpuck.com). Or, if you're catching a performance later, head back to the Arts District, where nearby downtown options of note include Stephan Pyles (stephanpylesrestaurant.com), the eminent, eponymous restaurant of the city's openly gay celeb chef and cookbook author (be sure the check out the ceviche bar). Tei-An Soba House (tei-an.com), which serves fine sushi and creative Japanese fare, and Jorge's Tex-Mex (tacosgarcia.com), are other great bets in the area.

Later in the evening, return to Oak Lawn's Crossroads neighborhood for a proper night on the town. Several fun establishments here cater to a colorful mix of revelers, including J.R.'s (jrsdallas.com), a festive video bar that draws the stand-and-model set; Sue Ellen's (sueellensdallas.com), a swanky women's dance club with live music; Station 4 (station4dallas.com), a cavernous dance club that's home to the campy Rose Room cabaret, a must for fans of drag shows; and the Mining Company (tmdallas.com), a somewhat cruise-y place known for its hunky dancers. Across the street, the Round-Up Saloon (roundupsaloon.com) caters to country-western fans and has some of the best line-dancing you'll ever see.

A short drive up the road, fans of strippers make a b-line to The Brick (brickdallas.com), while Kaliente (kaliente.cc) tends to draw a friendly Latino crowd. Keep going north to find a few more gay party spots – leather-and-Levi's dudes enjoy the Dallas Eagle (dallaseagle.com), which has a great on-site boutique selling leather and gear, while the quirky neighborhood joint the Tin Room (tinroomdallas.com) is a welcoming spot for admiring dancers and chatting with fellow patrons. If you're still looking to admire hot go-go boys, drive over to the small cluster of gay bars on North Fitzhugh Avenue, including the sassy and fun BJ's NXS (bjsnx.com) and the more intimate lounge Zipper.

**Sunday**

If you made it out last night to even half of the clubs mentioned in this article, pat yourself on the back and sleep in – then treat yourself to a nice big brunch. In Oak Lawn, aforementioned Dish restaurant is well-regarded for its campy drag brunch, while art deco-style Lucky's Café (luckydallas.com) earns kudos for Belgian waffles, huevos rancheros and other short-order specialties. Another good bet is gay-owned Komali, which serves delicious contemporary Mexican cuisine (the same chef here also operates neighboring Salum, which is well-regarded for seasonally driven American fare).

After yesterday's decidedly downtown focus, Sunday is a nice time to see the city's greener pastures. If you're seeking a more naturally scenic setting to tan your hide than the pool at your hotel, head to White Rock Lake, a 1,000-acre reservoir that's encircled by a 9.3-mile jogging and biking trail. A 20-minute drive east of Oak Lawn, the lake is also home to the stunning Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, which contains 66 acres of fragrant and colorful floral displays and an art- and antiques-filled Spanish-Colonial-style mansion.

Another fine way to experience the outdoors is by setting out along the lushly landscaped Katy Trail, a 3.5-mile multi-use trail that passes through Oak Lawn and Uptown along a disused rail track. A perfect stop along the way for refreshments is the Katy Trail Ice House (katyicehouse.com), which has picnic tables under a grove of trees (there's a huge beer selection plus delicious burgers and barbecue).

**Sunday evening**

One Dallas neighborhood that continues to develop cachet among everybody from hipsters to gay scenesters is Oak Cliff, a historic and formerly downcast residential neighborhood a few miles southwest of downtown that's home to a clutch of inviting boutiques, design shops, bars, and restaurants. Late on Sunday, hit the blocks around Bishop Avenue and Seventh Street, an area known as the Bishop Arts District, stopping by Emporium Pies (home of the decadent Cloud Nine three-layer caramel, butterscotch, and brown sugar pie), Dude Sweet Chocolate artisanal chocolatier, and Bishop Street Market gift and housewares shop.

Then settle in for dinner at one of the neighborhood's inviting restaurants, such as gay-owned Hattie's (hattles.com), a homey yet romantic spot specializing in Lowcountry-inspired Southern fare, or Boulevardier (dallasboulevardier.com), a delightful French wine bar and bistro. Wind down the evening with a drink or two in Oak Cliff's unabashedly cute neighborhood gay lounge, Barbara's Pavilion (barbaraspavillion.com), which is known for karaoke on Sunday nights.

**Where to stay in Dallas**

Dallas has seen an influx of trendy, upscale hotels over the past decade, with many of them going up downtown or in nearby hip neighborhoods. That said, the longtime favorite address of those wishing to be steps from Oak Lawn bar-hopping is the Warwick Melrose (warwickdallas.com), a grand 1924 hotel with smartly updated rooms and an inviting, old-world bar, The Library. Also within easy walking distance of the city's many gay bars, the intimate Daisy Polk Inn (www.daisypolkinn.com) is named for the opera star who once owned it and contains six romantic, antiques-filled rooms with hardwood floors and top-quality linens (an extensive full breakfast is included in the quite reasonable rates).

Just a short drive from Oak Lawn, the Hilton Anatole (hiltonanatolehotel.com) has spacious, stylish, art-filled rooms and oodles of amenities. Take advantage of the full-service spa, extensive fitness center and several restaurants, including one of the best venues for steak and seafood in the city, SER, which affords spectacular skyline views from its 27th-floor perch.

Downtown's Omni Dallas (omnihotels.com) is another larger property, this one LEED-certified and close to several key attractions – it's especially known for its heated infinity pool with dazzling views of the downtown skyline. Far more intimate is downtown's Hotel Joule (thejouledallas.com), which also has a gorgeous infinity pool angled high above the city, plus gorgeous, sleek rooms with a design by vaunted style-maker Adam Tihany.  

Andrew Collins produces the website GayTravel.About.com and writes about travel for a variety of LGBT and mainstream publications.
Who is Jennifer Hudson? It’s a question she knows you’ve asked – and one she’s ready to answer with *JHUD*, the *American Idol*-turned-*Dreamgirls* sensation’s third studio album.

During our candid interview, the Oscar-winning powerhouse went back to her roots – the gay clubs – and opened up about the drag queens who inspired her fierce new outlook (“I’m 32 years old – I don’t think I need your permission”). Hudson, who also answered to those lesbian rumors and chimed in on gay marriage, isn’t kidding when she says, “I’mma be me, I’mma do me.”

**GC:** When you’re doing Pride events like the ones you did earlier this summer, does that mean you gay it up?

**JH:** Yes, definitely! It’s just so fun, first of all. I really enjoy myself. It’s something I really wanted to do, and yeah, you can just give it. It’s that type of audience, so you shouldn’t hold back. And I try not to, you know?

**GC:** You’re able to let your hair down – or what hair you have left, anyway.

**JH:** (Laughs) Exactly! You said it best.

**GC:** You performed “And I Am Telling You I’m Not Going” from *Dreamgirls* for the gays in Chicago. What is it about that song that still gets such a reaction out of the LGBT community?

**JH:** The song has its own spirit. It has an effect on everyone, but definitely on the gay community. I think they relate to it in a different way – in a special way. A lot of gay men I’ve met, they’re like, “In my heart, I am Effie.” I relate to Effie, and I think that’s part of the connection. It’s a real situation that we all go through.

**GC:** What do you think your career would be like without the gay community?

**JH:** I don’t know if I would have one, to be honest. That’s why I recently did a couple of gay clubs, and I wanted to do more because that’s where I started. I was just literally looking at old pictures a few minutes ago, and I saw a picture of me performing in a gay club and a picture of being dressed. Drag queens used to dress me, and then I would go and perform. That’s where I started, so there’s definitely a connection there. I wanted to make sure that I reconnected.

**GC:** Having performed in gay clubs when you were a teenager, you connected with the LGBT community at a very young age. What do you attribute to that relationship?

**JH:** What I’ve always admired about the gay community is the independence and the confidence. Just that attitude. I’m so inspired by that, and I feel like, for me, that is my connection. I’ve never understood, gosh, what does the gay community see in me? You know what I mean? Because again, I grew up around a lot of that and that’s the world that embraced me first, so that I’ve never fully gathered.

**GC:** When it comes to strength, do you see your relationship with the gay community as a reciprocal exchange?
JHUD: You're also looking sexier than ever. Do you feel sexier than ever?

GC: What did you learn on how to work a crowd from hanging out with so many drag queens?

JHUD: Owning it. My kings and queens, they own stuff and give 100 percent. You're gonna be a queen? Be a queen. If you're gonna perform, perform. Whatever you're doing, make sure you're serving 100 percent.

GC: How did you reconcile performing for gay people with your Baptist beliefs?

JHUD: Well, I grew up around a lot of people who probably had issues with it, but I never did. People are people. Mind your business, that's how I've always felt. Whatever makes you happy. If you're happy, I'm happy, so it never really mattered to me. I never looked at it as a... you know what I mean?

GC: As a conflict?

JHUD: It was never a factor. It doesn't matter to me either way.

GC: When I saw you perform “Same Love” with Macklemore and Mary Lambert during the 2013 MTV VMAs, I remember thinking, “Is Jennifer trying to tell us something? Is she coming out as lesbian?”

JHUD: If someone ever questions or thinks that, I don't care what you think. It shouldn't matter. And I did get that! People were like, “Is Jennifer trying to tell us something?” Hey, I wasn't, but if you wanna think that, it's all right with me. When I got the call to do that performance, I was like, “Oh my god, I definitely wanna do this. A powerful statement is being made and I wanna be a part of that.”

GC: Does your support of the gay community extend to gay marriage?

JHUD: Yeah. Ain’t much else to say about that, because what’s the big deal?

GC: You've had your share of trials and tribulations. When was a time in your life that you found yourself leaning on a gay best friend?

JHUD: My whole life! Every day! My best friend (Walter Williams) is my assistant and we've been friends since sixth grade. He's the one I bought the house for this past Christmas, and he's my life partner. We go through everything together. We each other's backbone every day, and still to this day.

GC: You're showing off a sexy new sound on “Dangerous,” a single off _JHUD_. You're also looking sexier than ever. Do you feel sexier than ever?

JHUD: Mmm, no – I've always felt sexy! (Laughs) It's just the space I'm in right now, and this is what this album represents. I'm just in my moment and I attribute that to my 30s more than anything. I feel settled, and it's not an issue of what you think, what she thinks, who all says this – I don't give a damn! The truth is, I'm grown. Before it was like, “Oh, is this OK? Is this all right? What does such and such think?” I don't care! (Laughs) I'm more settled, more sure. I'm 32 years old – I don't think I need your permission. Keep it moving.

GC: Spoken like a true drag queen.

JHUD: And that's what I'm talkin' about! That's exactly what I love. It's a gift to have that type of attitude. As a black woman, we get that same thing: rejection. People "yay" and "nay" you and things like that, and I'm still walking through life, honey. I'mma be me, I'mma do me, and I'm not concerned about how you feel about it.

GC: Some of this album takes me back to '70s gay club music. How much did the gay community influence _JHUD_?

JHUD: That's a part of me, so it wasn't necessarily a target in making the album – it's just me being me, and that's what I love about this album. I've sat back, I've listened and I've learned – now, can I have a voice? Can I express myself? All of that is a part of me that is coming out through the music, so yes, you will hear songs that are old-school influenced, disco influenced, gay-anthem influenced.

Throughout my career I've noticed people don't have a sense of who I am as a person. They know me from being on _Idol_ or being a spokesperson or emcee, or from film – but who is the girl? What's her story? Through this album, I want people to get a sense of me and what that is. You're picking up on that. “Oh, I feel a gay influence.” Yes, you do, honey, because that's where I come from.

GC: As someone whose voice really takes me back to the golden era of female vocalists, how do you imagine your career would be different had you been on the radio when a real voice – a real diva voice – meant more than it does now?

JHUD: I feel like I'm stuck in the wrong time. I grew up on the Whitneys, the Pattis, the Arethas – the big voices. Today's divas are just a completely different thing. Though they're great as well, I still feel like I'm stuck between eras. I love The Pointer Sisters, and I also love Destiny's Child. That's why this album is so eclectic. I'm not a person who believes in limits. Nobody can tell me what my potential is other than myself. So for people to say, “You only get to do this” – no, you don't get to tell me that.

GC: Speaking of Whitney Houston, before it was announced that Yaya DaCosta nabbed the role of Whitney for Lifetime's upcoming biopic, there were rumors of you possibly playing the singer.

JHUD: Oh, no, no, no. Not Lifetime, no. I mean, I heard my name being tossed around for Whitney, which would obviously be an honor, but as far as that one in particular, that was never the case.

GC: Could you see yourself playing Whitney at some point?

JHUD: If it was done in the right way, for sure. I'm a fan, and I, like everyone else, want to see her remembered in the way she should be remembered. Whitney – I mean, come on, she made the hugest impact on our industry. Everybody loved Whitney. I want her to get her just, to be done the right way. She gave her whole life to this industry, so give her that.

GC: What would be a suitable way to tribute Whitney?

JHUD: I wanna see one tribute. I felt the same way with Michael (Jackson). There are all these amazing legends who gave their entire lives to their career, and it wasn't light stuff – I mean, they changed the game. They changed the industry and how we look at music _and_ performing. So much more should be done for them in their memory and to honor their work.
Ron Jeremy
For the Joy of It
By V.N. Winnick

A veteran of literally hundreds of films, Ron Jeremy has gone on record saying that he will only retire from porn when he works his dick to the point that it literally falls off his body, and not before. His legendary endowments – work ethic, and the other one – have made him the undisputed king of not only straight porn, but porn as a whole. Jeremy has set the gold standard of longevity in a business that is infamous for burning out its talent, and next month Albertans get the opportunity to see him live in Lethbridge.

Short, round and hirsute (an awesome way to say hairy), Jeremy’s look is more what one would expect of the stereotypical, polyester-suited porn movie producer of bygone days, and not so much the on-camera talent. Combine that with the fact that his career began in an era when pop culture would have us believe that porn was an unmitigated sleaze-fest, and one is left to make certain assumptions about his character. Let me tell you, reader, those assumptions are way off. Ron Jeremy is an enthusiastic, kind-hearted, teddy bear of a man, driven by a consuming love for films and the art of making them.

When I asked him if he had ever made movies just for the paycheque, something Lance Henriksen – another pulp horror veteran – has referred to as an “alimony picture”, he answered demurely. Jeremy began effusively praising his colleague, rattling off the names of the cast and crew of a 1985 Henriksen picture called Savage Dawn, verbatim. Right then I had my answer: Ron Jeremy is not a man who takes a job for the money.

He was no less forthcoming when I asked about his current projects. In a soft-spoken staccato he told me he was in a “movie [that] just came out called Jersey Shore Massacre, produced by Jwoww [Jenni Farley], and I have a record coming out, produced by Waylon Jennings. I’m really excited about it.”

Perhaps I was getting a bit of a jet-lagged Ron Jeremy, as he had just flown in from Germany the previous evening, back from a tour to promote Ron de Jeremy rum. That’s right: the Hedgehog’s face is emblazoned on bottles of individually-numbered, $65 bottles of seven-year-old Panama dark rum, 94 proof, he was quick to tell me.

“My rum is all over the world,” he boasted. “There are a lot of cities that don’t have it in Canada yet, but Edmonton does.” Jeremy proceeded to rattle off, in his clipped cadence, just how many other countries across the world are carrying Ron de Jeremy right now. He seemed pleased.

“My name has been on other things before – like rolling papers, skateboards, hot sauce, beef jerky ... – this is my first alcohol, and it’s working out real nicely.” I was a little incredulous. As much fun as skateboards, hot sauce, beef jerky ... – this is my first alcohol, and it’s the world are carrying to rattle off, in his clipped cadence, just how many other countries across the world that don't have it in Canada yet, but Edmonton does. Jeremy proceeded to rattle off, in his clipped cadence, just how many other countries across the world are carrying Ron de Jeremy right now. He seemed pleased.

“I have been in a lot myself. Andre the Butcher was a big hit; I played Andre. One-Eyed Monster was a great film – played on Showtime – about a penis that severs and kills people. It’s really fucked up... [These films] are fun: all the different monsters, all the creatures and the special effects. It’s a genre that won’t go away.”

I found myself cringing slightly at the thought of interacting with people who knew me primarily for my dick’s work (imagining a terrifying brunch will all of my exes) so I had to ask: is it awkward interacting with your fans? How do they approach you?

“Oh, it’s just, drop your pants and we’ll have sex,” he replied. “You look at them and say, well, it’s all just friendly. It is what you would expect of anyone. Like, I’m sure Kid Rock has the same thing, on a larger scale maybe. Sometimes they can get a little romantic, where they give you a hug and a kiss, or they put a boob right in your face – nothing wrong with that. Other times it’s really formal, and they just give you a handshake, or just give you the thumbs-up.”

I ran toward the end of my questions, but Jeremy appeared as though he would be willing to talk pulp cinema for hours. He is a huge Troma Films fan, and seems to really enjoy the splatter-horror genre as a whole. “I have been in a lot myself. Andre the Butcher was a big hit; I played Andre. One-Eyed Monster was a great film – played on Showtime – about a penis that severs and kills people. It’s really fucked up... [These films] are fun: all the different monsters, all the creatures and the special effects. It’s a genre that won’t go away.”

As we wrapped up, I asked if he had any mountains left to climb. If I could have predicted his answer, I might have phrased the question differently.

“Yeah, I never did Jenna Jameson!”

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The Ron Jeremy Experience
http://www.gaycalgary.com/a4322

The Ron Jeremy Experience
Lethbridge – November 1st
At the Sandman Hotel (421 Mayor Magrath Dr. S., Lethbridge, AB)

http://www.gaycalgary.com/a702

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Colton Ford is a rarity. In and out of the adult film circuit in a brief ten months, one can own his complete filmography and store it on just a few inches of shelf space. Though he is quick to point out the brevity of his career in porn, he is entirely comfortable in letting it serve as a beacon, drawing new fans to his enduring work in music. Coming to Edmonton’s Evolution Lounge in October, Ford will be showing off the talent – and likely the physique – that has kept him in the entertainment game for the last 30 years. We had a chance to talk with the actor/musician recently about his work, some surprising additions to his fan base, and his impressive endurance.

GC: Many people tend to focus on your work in adult film, but that was a fairly fixed point in time. Where did your start in music begin? Did you have any formal training?

CF: I was singing since I was a child – it was just something that came natural to me. Once I started going to school I was toggling between swimming and acting, and gymnastics and diving. I studied with a vocal coach for quite some time. When I got out of high school I started college, but my heart was in singing and performing. I got a gig at a dinner theatre and, out of that, I started doing commercial jingles. I was in a jazz quartet, and I got my first record deal in 1988. It has been in me since I came into this world. I acted as well and did a lot of theatre. It’s all kind of an extension of the creative expression that I choose.

GC: Could you tell us about your song-writing process?

CF: I’m really organic with it. For the most part, I’ll get a track, which is basically just instrumental, and I’ll start coming up with the melody and, as I’m developing the melody, lyrics start popping through. There have also been songs where I have had the lyrics pre-written, and I got the track and started writing the melody around the lyrics, so obviously it takes on a different melodic rhythm. It’s kind of like putting together a puzzle. I love that process of making it all fit, and work, and make sense.

GC: Your stint in porn was pretty brief – as they go – but it seems to be a pretty prominent part of your career. Do you feel it has afforded you an audience that you might not have otherwise had?

CF: I think one could argue both. It was a specific time in my life, and kind of an extension of the adventure that I was having at that point in my life. I really looked at it as such, at that time. There is still a lot of energy around pornography, and nudity and sex, and all that good stuff, so I think it naturally solicits a reaction – good, bad, or somewhere in the middle. It’s cliche but it’s true – it never leaves you. I went into it – I was 39 when I did it – with my eyes both open, understanding the dynamics. I certainly feel like it has afforded me an audience that I might not have had, had I not done it. And certainly there are a gazillion 30, 40, 50-year-old sinners that are talented and wonderful that we will never hear from so I think, in certain ways, it has kind of thrust me out at the forefront. GC: Would you say that working in porn caused you any problems?

CF: I know there are some people who haven’t wanted to work with me because of this, but this last album, I had… all these major players didn’t have an issue with it. So I feel that the stigma isn’t as sharp as it was, but it is still there. There are still judgements, and those are driven by all kinds of things. Some people fantasize about it, but never give themselves permission to have the experiences, and maybe resent those that do. I really just want to speak to those people that are open-minded and not constricted by judgement like that.

GC: Your physique is obviously something you take great care of, and don’t mind showing off. How long have you been sculpting your body this way?

CF: I have always been active – I was a gymnast for a good six years, when I was short, until I shot up and I got into springboard diving. In the ’80s I tried aerobics and I ran, and then I got into weight lifting and I became a certified trainer. [Staying fit] is something that I enjoy. My motivation is different now at 52 than it was even five years ago, and it’s something that I didn’t have an issue with using. The irony is that it’s a double-standard. It’s okay for the girls to be naked and objectified and swing naked from a wrecking ball, but god forbid one of us guys does it, especially a gay one.

GC: Obviously when you are training to that level, there is always a danger of it becoming an obsession. How do you stay grounded, and train in a healthy way?

CF: I’m shifting – I have a new EP that is going to be coming out that’s more acoustic soul, which is what my roots are. I kind of feel like that’s going to transition the imagery a little bit too. Obviously I want to [age gracefully]… albeit, stay healthy and as physically fit as possible, so I’m not heading into something that I don’t want to do and my body doesn’t want to do. It is really embracing each stage of life, and not being too caught up in doing what you can, to keep pieces of those processes at bay. I want to enjoy being in my 50s and accept some of the changes that are inevitable.

GC: Your career’s gone through so many phases – do you find that you have to re-build your base of support with each transition, or do your fans tend to stick with you?

CF: My fan base has stayed with me and, as I have progressed, I have added to that base. That was the plan, obviously – to grow from my initial fan base – and that is what happened. I have great and loyal fans, and there has been a thread of my base influence of soul throughout all my work. It’s not like I’m going from country to acid rock – it has all been infused with some R&B and jazz… I have female fans now. I don’t know that I necessarily started with them, although there is a contingent of straight girls that are into gay porn, I found out. I had no clue. Straight women are like, Hey, straight porn is all about the women. The men are incidental! If I wanna go see hot guys fuck, I go and watch gay porn!”
Activate Your Body
Jania celebrates Halloween in Calgary with the Perry Twins

By Krista Sylvester

Jania is an up-and-coming artist who has been compared to Mariah Carey and Janet Jackson, among others, and now she will be hitting the city with none other than the Perry Twins for Halloween. Self-professed workaholic, Jania has the voice of a diva, but the dance moves of an even bigger diva, and she knows how to use both. Jania often lends her talents to The Perry Twins; their latest hit “Activate My Body” can be heard in clubs across the country. The German-born artist was born into a musical family, so it’s no surprise she is loaded with talent and ready to take on the world. But first, she makes a stop in Calgary to dazzle at the Superheroes, Villains and Pride Halloween Party, brought in by the Magical Musical DJs and Event Promoters with the Perry Twins at the Metropolitan Conference Centre on October 31st. We had a chance to talk to the star all about her exploding career.

GC: Tell us a bit about yourself, and how you got started.

J: I was born in Nuremberg, Germany. My mother is a singer and my father is a musician. They met in a band. I have two sisters – I’m the middle child – and all three of us sing. I was heavily influenced by my mother to sing professionally, so my goal as a small child was to meet Michael Jackson. My mother told me I had to practice, and really do my best on auditions, and then I would meet him. My mother is a very optimistic person and we were taught that we could have whatever we desired as long as we worked hard. She was right. I ended up booking my first audition in Los Angeles, singing on a Michael Jackson project! I worked with him often, both singing and dancing, and that led to me working with Quincy Jones, Bon Jovi and all sorts of other awesome artists. That’s pretty much how I got started.

GC: You’re already regarded as an established up and coming artist, but where do you want to take it next?

J: I would love to make more music that is fun and relatable to everyone worldwide. I want to be an exciting performer to the audience every time I step on stage.

GC: Some artists hate to be compared to other artists, but who have you been compared to for your style, and who do you look up to?

J: Vocally I have been compared to Mariah Carey and Chante Moore, and I’ve also gotten Janet Jackson a lot when I’m dancing. They are all amazingly talented artists so I’m not mad about it. Michael Jackson, Prince, Tina Turner, Diana Ross, La Lupe, Rochelle Ferrell, Mint Condition, Tonex, Janet Jackson, Paula Abdul, Madonna – I’m inspired by artists who really take their art to another level by creating something that has not been done before.

GC: Your hit with the Perry Twins “Activate My Body” is very popular and well received, especially in gay clubs; did you expect that?

J: No, I didn’t. I remember every week the song just kept rising up the charts. I was in a gym and heard the song for the first time around strangers and I was like, I know that voice... I know this song... IT’S ME! My friend ran around to everyone on the treadmills, bikes and Stairmasters screaming That’s my girl on the radio! We had a mini dance party with strangers in the gym. It was great!

GC: What do you love about working with the Perry Twins?

J: We always seem to laugh a lot. Working with them is easy. They are very talented and we all respect each other. There are no egos – it’s just about the music.

GC: What has been the biggest challenge of your music journey so far?

J: People like to look around at what’s ‘hot’ or popular and try to make you fit into that image. That has always been my challenge. You have to really be true to who you are and what you want to say as an artist.

GC: What is the craziest/silliest costume you have ever dressed up as for Halloween?

J: I remember I used to really love Halloween, but when I was around 10 or 11 years old, I stopped celebrating Halloween. But when I was five or six years old, I think I was heavily influenced by my mom’s big wigs, a long sparkly shirt with a stunning belt (that was my show dress), her heels (that flopped all over the place ‘cause my feet were too small), a lot of jewelry, and even more make-up. I was dazzling!

GC: What’s next for Jania?

J: More music! I’m working with a few producers now that are awesome, and I’ll have something for everyone in the beginning of 2015. I have been starring in a musical called “Baby, We Belong Together” for the past year that’s in production in Los Angeles. I’m also in the process of writing my first musical/play. I’m a workaholic.

Activating Your Body

http://www.jania.net

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/user/singndancegirl/videos

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GayCalgary Magazine #132, October 2014

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Most twin brothers are as close as best friends, but that doesn’t mean they don’t argue here and there. While they sometimes squabble over Derek’s annoyance with Doug’s tardiness in real life, once you get the Perry Twins in the DJ booth they effortlessly blow away the crowds with their united love of the music they’re spinning, and the energy of the crowd. The two work in tandem to bring the audiences out with their signature sound, and it’s obvious these two were meant to perform as a duo. The Perry Twins will be joined by Jania – their “Activate My Body” counterpart – in Calgary for the special Halloween gala Superheroes, Villains & Pride at the Metropolitan Conference Centre. The twins are looking forward to their return to the Calgary dance floor, and they will be dressed to impress, so don your favourite costume and join them for a night of music. Here’s what they had to say about coming back.

**GC:** It’s Halloween! Will you be wearing any special costumes for the Superheroes, Villains and Pride event?

**Doug:** Halloween has always been one of our favourite holidays. Growing up, we really got into it, and our family would turn our home into a haunted house for the trick-or-treaters every year. This year’s Superheroes, Villains and Pride is a super fun theme, so we’ll be wearing special costumes that fit into that theme.

**Derek:** We can’t wait to see everyone’s costumes at the party! Our costumes fit into the theme but we had to alter them a little bit. We originally wanted to fly into the venue, like real superheroes, but the flying apparatus to make that happen wouldn’t fit in our luggage.

**GC:** Obviously you have established quite a following in the gay scene, as DJs; what has been your favourite part of your rise to fame?

**Derek:** We have had a passion for music since we were little kids, so it’s awesome creating music and playing music that people enjoy and want to dance to.

**Doug:** Yeah, the best part is definitely the people we get to play music for. It’s so much fun seeing everyone on the dance floor having a great time.

**GC:** When did you guys realize you wanted to DJ?

**Doug:** Derek and I would pretend to DJ when we were about three or four years old, and we were always playing music throughout our childhood. We loved playing music for people – whether it was just for ourselves or at a party.
Derek: We got serious about it in college and realized then that it was something we could pursue professionally. We started doing radio mix shows, and working in clubs, and then things really took off when we moved to LA about ten years ago.

GC: You guys are really close, as brothers and friends, but do you ever have any arguments and, if so, what about?

Doug: We’ll fight about anything and everything. We are very close but, like any siblings who are around each other a lot and work together, we have tons of fights about stupid things.

Derek: We are lucky to have each other, but being around each other and traveling together so much both lead to many fights. We most often fight about how late Doug always is for everything. For the Halloween party, please tell him he needs to be there an hour earlier than you actually want us there so that he shows up on time!

GC: You’re both out – when did you learn you were gay, and when did you decide to come out?

Doug: I don’t remember exactly when I knew for sure, but always kind of new something was up. When I was very young I had a crush on Han Solo from Star Wars. I didn’t know what it meant at the time, but I was definitely in love with him. I officially came out in college even though I figured everyone already knew anyway.

GC: What do you guys do for fun when you’re not together?

Doug: I’m more into going out dancing than Derek is. I usually like going to clubs more than he does. He, of course, likes it but I’m just more of a party animal. He’s married and would prefer to be home at a reasonable hour and not dancing the night away.

Derek: We both love rollercoasters and go to theme parks together all the time. We also go to see pretty much every movie that gets released in theaters, so we do see each other almost every day even when we’re not spinning or working in the studio on music.

GC: What are your favourite styles of music to perform?

Doug: All kinds of dance music. We’re fans of all styles of music and our parents – who are musicians – always had different kinds of music playing in the house, so we were influenced by many genres of music, but anything with lots of energy that gets people going on the dance floor is my favourite.

Derek: Yeah, our favourite styles are anything that gives people energy on the dance floor and that people can sing along with. Our parents’ bands were always dancey and feel-good and that has carried over into the music we play and create.

GC: Do you feel you have been able to take your music out of the gay community – and do you feel accepted?

Derek: We do feel accepted. Whenever we DJ for mixed crowds or straight crowds our music goes over just as well, if not better than, for a predominantly gay crowd. Music is music. It’s truly universal.

Doug: We actually recently released an original song called #AllEqualOnTheDanceFloor with Cameron E Neilson that sums it all up. The music is all that matters on the dance floor.

GC: Tell us something about you twins that our readers might not know?

Derek: Canada has been one of our favourite places to DJ for a long time and we are so excited to be performing in Calgary with one of our favourite singers, Jania. Our first original single that we ever released, “Activate My Body”, features Jania on vocals, and we have a brand new song with her called “Impulse”. We’ll be debuting “Impulse” at the Superheroes, Villains and Pride party along with other spooktacular Halloween surprises!

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By Chris Azzopardi

When you think of Nick Jonas – and let’s face it, you’ve been thinking a lot about him lately – a few things come to mind: the straight-edged Jonas Brothers. Former flames Miley Cyrus and Selena Gomez. His abs.

Per his handlers, two of those topics were off-limits during my chat with Nick, but so what. Ever since he posted a salacious Instagram pic of his fit, V-cut torso in 2013, it’s been ab this, ab that. The 22-year-old BFF to the gay community is also releasing a self-titled, post-Jonas Brothers album, which he chatted about during our interview. You know, in addition to his abs.

GC: You said recently that part of the reason you’re so adamant about reaching out to the gay community is because you don’t feel like the Jonas Brothers did enough of it before. So, is this gay media blitz your way of making up for lost time?

NJ: (Laughs) Maybe! I think my brothers and I did what we could, but at that time, in our career and during that moment in our lives, it was pretty crazy. We had so much going on that we were, I think, just trying to stay on top of everything. I’ve had a little time prior to the promotion of this album to establish exactly what I want to say, who I wanna talk to and the steps I wanna take.

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GC: Did the lack of gay media have anything to do with your handlers? Were people telling you not to do gay press to maintain your conservative Disney image?

NJ: To be honest, I don’t think it was that. I think if we had wanted to make an effort there it wouldn’t have been an issue. It was important and it is important to me, and it’s also important to me as I transition into acting.

I’m on a show called Kingdom where my character goes on a pretty interesting journey. I can’t give anything away – no spoilers – but it’s been fun as an actor to be willing to go to that place. I love playing this role that I play, and I’m excited for the audience to go on this journey with me.

GC: Considering you’ve revealed there’s a nude scene, we are also excited to go on this journey with you. What’s it like shooting a nude scene?

NJ: It’s pretty bizarre. The way you have to go into it… it’s not real. As actors, it’s our job to tell these stories, and with a show like Kingdom, you go the extra mile and push the boundaries and keep it very real. So, in that moment, it’s just about telling the story the best way you can while trying to be honest. As far as any of the physicality goes – or nudity or sex scenes – it’s just about knowing that it isn’t real.

GC: Wait, your sex scene is not real?

NJ: (Laughs) It’s not.

GC: Why is it so important for you to reach out to the gays for your solo debut?

NJ: When I was setting up this record and meeting with the team about it, I told them that I really wanted to make an effort to embrace that part of my audience. I’ve known for a long time that it is a great part of the audience, and I just never felt like we made all the effort we could to embrace them. It’s been really fun and really incredible.

GC: When did you know the gay community was embracing you?

NJ: I think it was a combination of things. I did theater prior to recording music, and so at a very young age I made a lot of really close gay friends. When I started recording music, and my brothers and I started recording and touring, we saw pretty quickly – this was back

Getting to the Core Of Nick Jonas

Abs, album and that gay striptease ‘they made me do’
in 2005/2006 – that this was a big part of our audience. As the years went on, and as I went back into theater, I made the (gay community) a priority. It’s about embracing all sides.

GC: You’re currently on tour, and considering how much attention you’ve given the gay community lately, how gay are the audiences that come out to see you?

NJ: It’s been pretty awesome to look out and see a difference in the crowd. It’s not drastic by any means; it was kind of there prior, but there’s definitely more of them embracing this next chapter in my life and my music. All that, I can feel. Looking out, there is probably a handful more gay fans out there, which is incredible.

GC: So, like, if you had to rate the gayness of a Nick Jonas show, where would it fall on the Kinsey Scale, 1 being straight and 6 being totally gay?

NJ: (Laughs) I don’t know if I can answer that just yet. I think I need to let it continue to evolve. It’s in the early stages here. Let’s see where we get in the next couple of months and then we’ll make that call.

GC: You have a point. Considering you just performed in San Francisco, the number would be skewed.

NJ: (Laughs) Exactly!

GC: Because your abs are now famous as well, do you feel obligated to show them at every show?

NJ: (Laughs) Umm, no. I haven’t showed them at any of my shows. That was more so when I was in New York celebrating the release of the new music and I went to a couple of gay clubs and... (Laughs) They kind of made me do it, so I had to! But as far as my shows go, I keep it fully clothed.

GC: I saw the video online, Nick. I didn’t see anyone taking your shirt off for you.

NJ: It was a few drinks in at that point. All bets were off.

GC: When you show up at a gay club like the ones in New York, do guys hit on you? Do they flirt? And how do you approach a situation like that?

NJ: Yeah, it’s interesting. Whether it comes from people who are aware of me and my personal life, or the person who was on the microphone saying it, there’s a general awareness that I am straight but totally embracing of the gay community. I love my gay fans, so it was just a lot of love, and there wasn’t a whole lot of hitting on me and flirting. A little bit, which was actually kind of fun. (Laughs) It was a pretty new environment for me, so I was just trying to take it all in and have a good time.

GC: What do you make of naysayers who say you’re just using your body to bait the gay community?

NJ: Everyone’s entitled to their own opinion. I think it’s unfortunate that some people have to find a negative in every situation. Clearly my heart is in the right place, and more than anything, if they just looked at my life and my gay friends and the authentic nature of where my heart is, they’d just see that they’re kind of ignorant.

The nature of where we are today is, we’re in a time where we need to make strides and step forward as a society and embrace all people from all different walks of life. When you’re trying to make a bold statement like that, some people aren’t gonna fall in line with that. And that’s OK. You gotta stay on your own path.

GC: You’ve recently opened up about your religious journey and how you’ve taken off your “purity ring.” Did the gay people in your life have anything to do with reexamining your religion? Have you always been this accepting of homosexuality?

NJ: That’s a good question. I always have been. I think that’s a testament to growing up in the theater and from an early age being surrounded by (gay people), and my parents – although my dad was a pastor – were very open-minded and said the same thing that I say, “We have to love people from all walks of life, and that’s the key.” It was nice to come from that.

Definitely my opinion and my feelings on faith and religion, specifically, have evolved over time just having seen some of the judgments that other people show toward the lesbian and gay community. It really burdens my heart, and it saddens me in a huge way because I feel like it’s not our place to judge at all. Some of the most loving, caring relationships that I’ve ever seen are between my gay friends, and some of my straight friends’ relationships are the worst examples of what love is.

GC: With your parents being as open-minded as they are, were there gay people in your life even before you pursued theater?

NJ: There were. My parents were always good about having an open mind toward everyone. Like I said, although church and religion were a cornerstone for us in a lot of ways, they (my parents) were open, and especially after we left the church and had to develop our own faith is when my views and opinions started to take shape.

GC: Would you still consider yourself Christian?

NJ: I say now that I have a relationship with God and that it’s my own relationship with God. It’s one of those things that I try to keep most personal because I think that’s the healthiest way I’ve learned to deal with it. I keep it as that, and I know that I love God and he loves me.
Evolution First Anniversary, Edmonton
http://gaycalgary.com/pa855

Hurricane Bianca at Evolution, Edmonton
http://gaycalgary.com/pa859
Photography

Bear Necessities with DJ Del Stamp at Evolution, Edmonton
http://gaycalgary.com/pa847

ISCWR Investitures 2014, Edmonton
http://gaycalgary.com/pa848

HOMO-CIDAL presents Clueless at Evolution, Edmonton
http://gaycalgary.com/pa856, photos by Farley FooFoo
Paint the Town Red, Edmonton
http://gaycalgary.com/pa857, photos by Mars Tonic

Western Canada Fashion Week (wcfw.ca), Edmonton
http://gaycalgary.com/pa858, photos by Farley FooFoo
Photography

HIV Community Link Aids Walk, Calgary
http://gaycalgary.com/pa852

ARGRA at the Calgary International Film Festival
http://gaycalgary.com/pa853
Medicine Hat Pride
http://gaycalgary.com/po849
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**News Releases**

**Adam Lambert And Lady Gaga Will Rock You**
Lady Gaga joins Adam Lambert and Queen on the Australian leg of her tour... Whilst on the Australian leg of her...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1554

**dotHIV creates the first domain ending with a social purpose**
dotHIV, the new initiative that combines digital innovation and the concept and spirit of the Red Ribbon begins today...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1555

**NEWS: Chelsea And Ellen Naked Shower Fight**
CHELSEA’S NAKED SHOWER FIGHT WITH ELLEN DEGENERES CHELSEA HANDLER is an American comedian, actress, best-selling author, television...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1556

**Britney Supports Her Gay Fans**
Y’all - We loves Britney. Britney> has known adversity and struggle, so when a gay fan wrote her a letter to tell her that...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1557

**NSFW - Movie Review: I’m A Pornstar**
I’M A PORNSSTAR Review Filmmaker Charlie David’s light-hearted rambling review of the burgeoning gay...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1558

**Nutrition: Go Nuts For Nuts**
Many people avoid or limit their consumption of nuts because they believe them to be ‘fattening’ and/or ‘unhealthy’...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1559

**Donating To The Calgary Zoo Is For The Birds... and the animals!**
Farnum Construction Management takes the lead to ensure ZOOGALA 2014 really takes off. Farnum Construction...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1560

**NSFW - Stereotypes the Steam Room Stories way...**
Stereotyping is something we’re all guilty of doing and it’s the topic of discussion in the latest episode of Steam Room....
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1561

**Gay European Tourism Association launches first ever Nude Hotel Guide for Europe**
Gaywelcome.com, the consumer website of the Gay European Tourism Association (GETA), has launched the first ever...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1562

**Breaking News: Gay Icon Joan Rivers Dies Aged 81**
Joan River’s family has announced that the comedian has passed away at the age of 81. Joan Rivers has passed away...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1563

**NSFW - Video: Getting Naked Challenge With The New Andrew Christian Twins**
Find out which sexy twin will be getting naked first. MODELS: Twins Raymond & Richard To watch more AC TV click...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1564

**Lifting US Ban On MSM Blood Donations Would Increase Total Annual Blood Supply by 2%-4%**
Current FDA blood ban on men who have sex with men prohibits such men from ever donating blood If the current FDA...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1565

**Alberta Ballet Opens 2014-2015 Season With Company Premiere Of Don Quixote**
Alberta Ballet is delighted to present the company premiere of Don Quixote as the first production of the 2014-2015 Season...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1566
NSFW - New titles from the Bruno Gmünder Group in October 2014

New in October 2014 from Bruno Gmünder Visit their website today! ...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1567

Surfs Up – Naked Calendar Alert (NSFW)

We loves a naked calendar... And sometimes we don’t even care if the people in it are famous or not... Surely...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1568

New Book Reveals the Hidden History of Male Prostitution

Leading contributors from around the world examine the field both historically and cross-culturally from fields...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1569

anti-LGBT Family Research Council: 10 Things You Might Not Know

As the rabidly anti-LGBT Family Research Council begins DC its Values Voter Summit, HRC calls out 10 reasons...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1570

Edmonton Comic & Entertainment Expo (Edmonton Expo) attracts record attendance of 47,000

A growing ‘geek’ movement, additional third day (Friday), expanded exhibition space, and starry line-up result in...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1571

Steam Whistle Brewing calls on Calgary to unleash its inner Wunderbar at its Oktoberfest party

This Saturday at WURST, Canadian craft brewer Steam Whistle Brewing is bringing an authentic Oktoberfest party to...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1573

California Governor Ban Use of ‘Transgender Panic’ and ‘Gay Panic’ Defenses In Criminal Trials

Becomes First in the United States to Prohibit Use of Gay and Transgender Panic Defenses Through Legislation On...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1574

Sequel to Del Shores’ Smash Cult Hit Sordid Lives Announced

Sequel to Del Shores’ Smash Cult Hit Sordid Lives Announced A Very Sordid Wedding Coming in 2015 Bonnie...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1575

NSFW - New Andrew Christian Video! RAIN

VIDEO: RAIN MUSIC: “In The Rain” By Getty Images WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY JEFF WHITE MODELS: Designer...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1576

Tips for Alberta Homeowners to Prepare the Home for Cooler Temperatures

There are technically a couple weeks left of summer, but Albertans are experiencing an early start to winter...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1577

Loden Launches “Woof Wednesdays” & New Pooch Package In Support Of BCSPCA

Gourmet doggy snacks available Wednesdays at the Loden, Tableau, & Homer St. Cafe, while the Loden’s...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1579


List of Calendars for 2015 from Bruno Gmünder Group. Click on the images to see more details of the Calendar. You...
http://www.gaycalgary.com/n1580
Dr. Kristopher Wells, known to many in the community as Kris Wells, is a born and raised Edmontonian. Like many, he started out as a closeted student and, after graduating from the Faculty of Education in 1994, went on to teach high-school. He would visit the Roost (a popular LGBT hangout at the time) and became aware that one of the students he taught would sometimes be at club. Both closeted, neither of them had the courage to discuss this with the other.

In 1999, Kris found out this student had committed suicide, and was alarmed at how he perceived the school to sweep the incident under the rug. So he questioned what kind of teacher he was if he couldn’t help a student in need, especially when he had been in a similar place growing up.

He branched out and found the newly formed Youth Understanding Youth group, and in 2000 went back to do his Master’s degree with the strategic goal of creating positive change for LGBT youth in schools. One innovative project that Kris and his supervisor at the U of A started in 2004 was Camp fYrefly - a youth leadership camp that simultaneously put their research into practice, while allowing them to further study the experiences of teachers and students. This is just one of many social change projects that Kris has been involved in over the past 14 years.

Currently 43 years old, Kris has obtained his Ph.D. but continues working in a permanent position at the University of Alberta as the Director of Programs and Services at the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services. He jokingly tells his students that he is in “grade 26”. 

http://gaycalgary.com/pa860
FIND OUT!

LGBT Community Directory

GayCalgary Magazine is the go-to source for information about Alberta LGBT businesses and community groups—the most extensive and accurate resource of its kind! This print supplement contains a subset of active community groups and venues, with premium business listings of paid advertisers.

Spot something inaccurate or outdated? Want your business or organization listed? We welcome you to contact us!

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Browse our complete directory of over 750 gay-friendly listings!
### Directory & Events

#### Calgary Events

**Mondays**
- **Buddy Night**
  - 6pm-6am
  - @ Goliaths
- **ASK Meet and Greet**
  - 7-9:30pm
  - @ Bosscats (2204 Edmonton Tr. NE)
- **Inside Out Youth Group**
  - 7-9pm
  - See Calgary Outlink

**Tuesdays**
- **Calgary Networking Club**
  - 5-7pm
  - See Calgary Outlink
- **Beers for Queers**
  - 6pm
  - By YYC Badboys at @ The Pint
- **Student Night**
  - 6pm-6am
  - @ Goliaths
- **Between Men**
  - 7-9pm
  - See Calgary Outlink
  - 2nd, 4th
- **Karaoke**
  - 8pm-12:30am
  - At @ Toes Lounge
- **Fetish Slop**
  - Evening
  - At @ Backlot
- **Alcoholics Anonymous**
  - 9pm
  - @ Hillhurst United Church (Gym Entrance)
  - 1227 Kensington Close NW

**Wednesdays**
- **Communion Service**
  - 12:10pm
  - See @ Knox United Church
- **Student Night**
  - 6pm-6am
  - @ Goliaths
- **Mosaic Youth Group**
  - 7-9pm
  - @ Old Y Centre (223 12th Ave SW)

**Thursdays**
- **LGBTQ Seniors**
  - 2pm
  - @ Kathy Centre, Sunshine Room
  - 3rd
- **Uniform Night**
  - 6pm-6am
  - @ Goliaths
- **LGBTQ Meetup Group**
  - 7:30-9pm
  - @ Calgary Outlink
  - 1st
- **Alcoholics Anonymous**
  - 8pm
  - @ Hillhurst United Church (Gym Entrance)
  - 1227 Kensington Close NW
- **Karaokes**
  - 7pm
  - At @ Backlot
- **Illusions**
  - 7-10pm
  - See @ Calgary Outlink

**Fridays**
- **ISCCA BBQs**
  - Dinner
  - By @ ISCLA and @ Backlot
  - 2nd
- **Worship Services**
  - 11am
  - See @ Knox United Church

**Saturdays**
- **Coffee**
  - 10am
  - By @ Prime Times Calgary
  - @ Madonna Co-op (1130 – 11th Ave SW)
- **Alcoholics Anonymous**
  - 8pm
  - @ Hillhurst United Church (Gym Entrance)
  - 1227 Kensington Close NW

**Sundays**
- **Worship Time**
  - 10am
  - @ Bear Park United Church
- **Worship**
  - 10:30am
  - See @ Scarthos United Church
- **Sunday Services**
  - 10:45am
  - @ Hillhurst United Church
- **Worship Services**
  - 11am
  - See @ Knox United Church

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[www.gaycalgary.com](http://www.gaycalgary.com)
support, education and resources to parents, families and individuals who have questions or concerns about sexual orientation or gender identity.

Positive Space Committee
4825 Mount Royal Gate SW
403-440-6383
http://www.mtroyal.ca/positivespace
Works to raise awareness and challenge the patterns of silence that continue to marginalize LGBTTQ individuals.

Pride Calgary Planning Committee
403-397-6814
www.pridecalgary.ca

Primetimers Calgary
primetimerscalgary@gmail.com
http://www.primetimerscalgary.com
Designed to foster social interaction for its members through a variety of social, educational and recreational activities. Open to all gay and bisexual men of any age, respects whatever degree of anonymity that each member desires.

Queers on Campus
279F Student Union Club Spaces, U of C
403-220-6394
http://www.queers.ucalgary.ca
Formerly GLASS - Gay/Lesbian Association of Students and Staff.

Coffee Night
2nd Cup, Kensington
403-263-0370

Safety Under the Rainbow
www.suir.ca
A collaborative effort dedicated to building capacity and acting as a voice for the LGBTQ community, service providers, organizations and the community at large to address violence. For same-sex domestic violence information, resources and a link to our survey please see our website.

Scarboro United Church
134 Scarboro Avenue SW
403-244-1161
www.scarboro.ucalgary.ab.ca
An affirming congregation—the full inclusion of LGBT orientation or gender identity.

Sharp Foundation
403-272-2912
sharpfoundation@nucleus.com
http://www.thesharpfoundation.com

Unity Bowling
Let’s Bowl (2916 - 5th Ave NE)
sundayscountry@live.com

Wild Rose United Church
1131-1st Street SW

Restaurants & Pubs

Flames Central
Sea Calgary - Bars & Clubs (Mixed)

The Pint
Sea Calgary - Bars & Clubs (Mixed)

Retail Stores

Adult Depot (CLOSED)
# 140, 5th Ave SW
403-258-1577

Adult Source
# 102 3335 32nd Ave NE
403-769-6177
# 1536 13th Ave SW
403-299-4203
4310 17th SE
403-273-2710
www.adultsourcecalgary.ca

Best Health
206A 2525 Woodview Dr SW
403-281-5582
besthealthcalgary@hotmail.com
http://www.besthealthcalgary.com

La Fleur
403-287-1701
Flirt & Flower Shop.

Services & Products

The Naked Leaf
# 4 - 1126 Kensington Rd NW
403-283-3555
http://thenakedleaf.ca
Organic teas and tea ware.

Priape Calgary (CLOSED)
1222 - 17 Ave SW
403-215-1800
http://www.priape.ca

Pushing Patals
1209 6th Ave NW
403-263-3070
http://www.pushingpatals.com

6th and 7th - Sales Centre
633 10th Ave SW
403-239-5511
http://www.6thand7thsales.com
Mon.-W. 12-6pm, R: 2-7pm, S-N: 12-5pm

Barry Hollowell
403-819-5219
http://www.barryhollowell.ca

Calgary Civil Marriage Centre
403-246-4134 (Rick Hillard)
MarriageCommissioners@shaw.ca
Marriage Commissioner for Alberta (plus Justice of the Peace - JP), Marriage Officiant, Commissioner for Oaths.

Christopher T. Tahn (Thornborough Smeltz)
11600 Elbow Dr SW
403-806-7147
mike@thornsmeltz.ca
http://www.thornsmeltz.com

Courtney Aarbo (Barristers & Solicitors)
3d Floor, 1131 Kensington Road NW
403-571-5120
http://www.courtneyaarbo.ca
GLBT legal services.

Craig Connell (Maxwell Realtors)
403-253-6678
http://www.maxwellrealty.com/craigconnell

Cruiseline
Calgary: 403-777-9494
Edmonton: 780-413-7122
Other Cities: 1-877-137-9996
http://www.cruiseline.ca
Telephone classifieds and chat – 18+ ONLY.

DevaDore Salon & Boutique
810 Edmonton Trail NE
403-290-1973
Cat’s, Colours, Highlights.

Ellen Embury
403-750-1128
ellenem@yahoo.com
Follow, American Academy of Reproductive Technology Attorneys.

Hardline
Calgary: 403-770-0776
Edmonton: 780-665-6666
Other Cities: 1-877-628-9696
http://www.hardlineca.com
Telephone classifieds and chat – 18+ ONLY.

Holiday Retirement
12 creeview Terrace SE
403-879-1967
http://www.creeviewretirement.com

Hot Water Pools & Spas
2154 Sunnymede Blvd
403-912-2045
http://www.hotwaterpoolsandspas.ca

Interactive Male
6305 12 St SW
403-355-3555
http://www.interactivemale.com

Lorne Doucette (CIR Realtors)
403-461-9195
http://www.lorndoucette.ca

MFN Communications
403-543-4970
1-877-543-4970
http://www.mfncommunications.com
Web site hosting and development. Computer hardware and software.

NRG Support Services
Suite 27, Building B1, 2451 Dogleg Ave SW
403-471-0204
ang@shaw.ca
http://www.nrgsupportservices.com

SafeWorks
Free and confidential HIV/AIDS and STI testing.

• Calgary Drop-in Centre
Room 201, 420 - 9th Ave SE
403-410-1180
Mon-Fri: 1-5pm

• Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre
1213 - 4th St SW
403-955-6014
Sat-Thru: 4:15pm-7:45pm, Fri: Closed

Wheel Pro’s
403-850-3755
Sat-Tue: 8am-12pm, Fri: 4pm-2am

• Safeworks Van

• Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre

• Calgary Drop-in Centre

• Calgary Civil Marriage Centre

• NRG Support Services

• Wheel Pro’s

Theatre & Fine Arts

ATP, Alberta Theatre Projects
403-294-7402
http://www.ATPlive.com

Fairytales
Sea Calgary - Community Groups

One Yellow Rabbit
Big Secret Theatre - EPCOR CENTRE
403-299-8888
www.oyr.org

Pumphouse Theatre
2410 Pumphouse Avenue SW
403-243-6442
http://www.pumphousetheatres.ca

Stagewest
727 - 42 Avenue SE
403-243-6442
http://www.stagewestcalgary.com

Theatre Junction
Theatre Junction GRAND, 608 1st St. SW
403-294-7402
Sat-Thu: 8pm-12am, Fri: 4pm-12am

Theatre Junction GRAND, 608 1st St. SW
http://www.theatrejunction.com
Third Street Theatre
#3 306 20th Ave SW
403-703-4750
http://www.thirdstreet.ca

Veritgo Mystery Theatre
161, 115 - 9 Ave SE
403-231-3708
http://www.veritgo.com

Webster Galleries Inc.
812 11 Ave SW
403-263-6500
http://www.webstergalleries.com

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Directory & Events

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EDMONTON

Bars & Clubs (Gay)

Buddy’s Nite Club
11725 Jasper Ave
780-488-6636

Evolution Wonder Lounge
10220 - 103 St
780-424-0077
http://www.evowonderlounge.com

FLASH (CLOSED)
10018 105 St
780-938-2941
flashnightclub@hotmail.com

UpStrokes Ultrasound (CLOSED)
4th Floor, Jasper Ave and 107th Street

Woody’s
11725 Jasper Ave
780-488-6557

Bars & Clubs (Mixed)

Hooliganz Pub (CLOSED)
10708 124 St NW

The Starlite Room
10000 102 St
contact@starlitteroom.ca
http://www.starlitteroom.ca

Yellowhood Brewing Co.
10229 105 St
info@yellowhoodbrewery.ca
http://www.yellowhoodbrewery.com

Bathhouses/Saunas

Steamworks
11745 Jasper Ave
780-451-5554
http://www.steamworksedmonton.com

Community Groups

AllView Foundation
# 44, 48 Breezehed Blvd, Sherwood Park, AB
403-916-9968
info@allviewfoundation.ca
http://www.allviewfoundation.ca
For gender variant and sexual minorities.

Book Worm’s Book Club
Howard Mickle Chapel of Churches
10177 - 108 Street
bookworm@bookwormedmton.com

Buck Naked Boys Club
780-471-6993
http://www.bucknakedboys.ca
Nudist club for men—being social while everyone is naked, and it does not include sexual activity. Participants do not need to be gay, only male.

Camp Ptfly
7-104 Dept. of Educational Policy Studies
Faculty of Education, University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta Canada T6G 2G4
http://www.campptfly.com

Edmonton Expo
http://www.edmontonexpo.ca

Edmonton Pride Festival Society (EPFS)
http://www.edmontonpride.ca

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**Directory & Events**

**Edmonton Events**

**Mondays**
- Boot Camp
  - See Team Edmonton
- TTIO
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- HIV Support Group
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton

**Tuesdays**
- QH Youth Drop-in
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- Martial Arts
  - See Team Edmonton
- Swim Practice
  - See Team Edmonton

**Wednesdays**
- GLBTQ Bowling
  - See GLBTQ Sage Bowling Club
- QH Youth Drop-in
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton

**Youth Sports/Recreation**
- 4 pm
  - See Team Edmonton
- 3-7 pm
  - See Team Edmonton
- 5-30-8-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 6-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 6-7-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 3-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- TTIQ
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- Knotty Knitters
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- QH Craft Night
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- Cycling
  - See Team Edmonton
- Yoga
  - See Team Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 3-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 7-30-8-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 1:30-3:30 pm
  - See GLBTQ Sage Bowling Club
- 3-8 pm
  - See Team Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 2nd
  - See Unitarian Church
- 2nd
  - See Living Positive Society of Alberta
- 3rd
  - See Imperial Sovereign Court of the Wild Rose
- 2nd
  - See Living Positive Society of Alberta

**Youth Groups**
- 4pm
  - See Living Positive Society of Alberta
- 2-3:30pm
  - See Living Positive Society of Alberta
- 5-30-8-30 pm
  - See Living Positive Society of Alberta
- 8-30 pm
  - See Team Edmonton
- 6-8 pm
  - See Team Edmonton
- 3-7 pm
  - See Team Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 7-30-9-30 pm
  - See Team Edmonton
- 2-6:30 pm
  - See Team Edmonton

**Tuesdays**
- Men’s Games Nights
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- Women’s Social Circle
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- Book Club
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- Martial Arts
  - See Team Edmonton
- Intermediate Volleyball
  - See Team Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 3-8 pm
  - See Team Edmonton
- 6-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 6-9 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 6-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 8-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 6-9 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 3-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 6-7-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 3-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 3-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 7-30-8-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 3-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 4-9 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 3-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 7-30-9-30 pm
  - See Team Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 6-7-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 7-30-9-30 pm
  - See Team Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 3-8 pm
  - See Team Edmonton
- 7-10-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 7-10-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 2nd
  - See Living Positive Society of Alberta

**Youth Groups**
- 4-9 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 4-9 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 2nd
  - See Living Positive Society of Alberta

**Youth Groups**
- 2nd
  - See Living Positive Society of Alberta
- 2nd
  - See Living Positive Society of Alberta
- 2nd
  - See Living Positive Society of Alberta

**Youth Groups**
- 6-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 6-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 3-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 8-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 8-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 8-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 8-30 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton

**Youth Groups**
- 6-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
- 6-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
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**Youth Groups**
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- 6-8 pm
  - See Pride Centre of Edmonton
Edmonton Contd.

- Badminton (Women’s)
  - Oliver School, 10227 - 118 Street
  - 780-465-3620
  - badminton@teamedmonton.ca
- Women’s Drop-in Recreational Badminton. $40.00 season or $5.00 per drop-in.

- Ballroom Dancing
  - Foot Notes Dance Studio, 9708-45 Avenue
- Drop-ins welcome. All genders and levels of runners and walkers are invited to join this free activity.

- Cross Country Skiing
  - 105 St. and 104 Ave
  - 780-482-1587

- Curling with Pride
  - Granite Curling Club, 8260 107 Street NW
  - curling@teamedmonton.ca

- Cycling
  - Edmonton Prideriders
  - Dawson Park, picnic shelter
  - cycling@teamedmonton.ca

- Dragon Boat (Flaming Dragons)
  - dragonboat@teamedmonton.ca

- Golf
  - golf@teamedmonton.ca

- Gymnastics, Drop-in
  - Onima Gymnastics Club, 8755 - 50 Avenue
  - gymnastics@teamedmonton.ca

- Hockey
  - hockey@teamedmonton.ca

- Martial Arts
  - 15450 - 105 Ave (daycare entrance)
  - 780-328-6414

- Running (Arctic Frontrunners)
  - Kinvar Sports Centre
  - running@teamedmonton.ca

- Outdoor Pursuits
  - outdoorpursuits@teamedmonton.ca

- Slo Pitch
  - Parkland Field, 111 st and 68 ave
  - slo-pitch@teamedmonton.ca

- Snowballs V
  - January 27-29, 2012
  - snowballs@teamedmonton.ca

- Soccer
  - soccer@teamedmonton.ca

- Spin
  - MacEwan Centre for Sport and Wellness
  - 109 St. and 104 Ave

- Swimming (Making Waves)
  - NAIT Pool (11762 - 106 Street)
  - swimming@teamedmonton.ca

- Volleyball, Intermediate
  - Atakwakwis Academy (101 Airport Road)
  - volleyball@teamedmonton.ca

- Volleyball, Recreational
  - Waver Terrace School (9088 - 105 Ave)
  - volleyball@teamedmonton.ca

- Women’s Lacrosse
  - Shawin, 780-461-0017
  - www.womenslacrosse@teamedmonton.ca

- Women’s Social Group
  - 780-248-1971
  - www.yegsoc.ca

- Youth Understanding Youngth
  - 780-502-1794
  - wmomspace@gmail.com
  - http://www.wmomspace.ca

- Sports and Recreation
  - Brendan, 780-688-3234
  - brendan@yegsoccerwmedmonton.org

- Restaurants & Pubs
  - Woody’s - See Edmonton Bars & Clubs (Gay)

- Retail Stores
  - Passion Vault
  - 15239 - 111 Ave

- Cruiseline
  - 780-413-7122 hscl code 3500
  - Telephone 351-93 and chat - 18 +. ONLY.

- Boys in Pink
  - 103 Spyce Ave
  - boysinpink@teamedmonton.ca

- Movies
  - Rocky 86 - 6 Ave S
  - 780-492-1964

- LGBT Coffee Night
  - 5918 100 St.
  - 780-492-1964

- ESL (English as a Second Language)
  - Foot Notes Dance Studio, 9708-45 Avenue

- Fridays Women’s Drop-In Recreational Badminton. $40.00 season or $5.00 per drop in.

- Monthly Dances
  - Hendic (2100 - 2 Ave S)

- Monthly Potluck Dinners
  - McKeel United Church, 2229 - 15 Ave S
  - GALA will provide the turkey...you bring the rest.

- Support Line
  - 403-308-2893
  - Monday or Wednesday, 7am-11pm

- Friday Mixers
  - The Mix (green water tower)
  - 103 Mayer Magrath Dr S
  - Every Friday at 10pm

- Gay & Lesbian Integrity Assoc. (GALA)
  - University of Lethbridge
  - gala@uleth.ca

- Movie Night
  - Room G310, University of Lethbridge

- Gay Youth Alliance Group
  - Beth, 403-381-5260
  - bneil@chr.ab.ca

- Lethbridge Expo
  - www.letbridgeexpo.com

- Lethbridge HIV Connection
  - 1206 - 6 Ave S
  - 403-524-2400
  - lethbridge@pflagcanada.ca

- Pride Lethbridge
  - lethbridgeprideinfo@gmail.com

- JASPER

- Accommodations
  - Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge
  - Old Lodge Road
  - 1-866-540-4454

- Community Groups
  - Jasper Pride Festival
  - PO Box 98, 409 Patricia St., T0E 1E0
  - contact@jasperpride.ca
  - http://www.jasperpride.ca

- Restaurants & Pubs
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- Products & Services
  - Cruise Line
  - 780-413-7122 hscl code 3500
  - Telephone 351-93 and chat - 18 +. ONLY.
### Event

**The Fetish Slosh at the Backlot!**

Come on down to the Backlot the 2nd Tuesday of every month for a no-cover Fetish party. Upcoming dates are November 13, December 11th, etc. You can dress in Leather, Latex, cuffs, collars, or just your skivvies. Have the conversation you like without offending a vanilla in sight. The Backlot supports and promotes the alternative lifestyles of Calgary so feel free to express your KINK!

### Sale

**ANNUAL SALE**

Collector’s II...the second generation, Antiques and Accessories. 1005a 1st street SW. 403-278-6446. Hours: Tuesday-Friday 11am to 5:45pm. Saturday 10am to 5pm. Sun 12pm to 4pm. Celebrating our 1st Anniversary.

### Products/Services

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hilford@shaw.ca • 403-246-4134

### Consulting

**Want to attract the LGBT local or traveler to your business?**

It’s not about special treatment. You can’t assume the LGBT person, or the straight person will follow the pack anymore. The LGBT market is becoming more and more aware of what organizations support them, and which ones don’t, ultimately sending them away from businesses and communities that do not recognize them or their lifestyle. Does your staff need LGBT sensitivity training? Want to attract the market but unsure how to proceed? Local, Domestic, International, We can assist. Check us out at http://blueflameventures.ca, Email us at info@blueflameventures.ca, Call us at 604-369-1472. Based in Alberta.

### Employment

**Looking to retain a live in butler to take care of household chores and prepare meals, and travel along on weekends. Compensation is negotiable. Send resume to Emmersonbrando@yahoo.com**

### Models/Escorts

**Alberta Escort Listings**


### Help Wanted

**GayCalgary Magazine** is looking for salespeople, graphic designers, and writers in Calgary or Edmonton. For more info, contact:

magazine@gaycalgary.com

403-543-6960

### Classifieds Ads Online!

Ads starting at $10/mo. for the first 20 words. Submit yours at http://www.gaycalgary.com/classifieds
ALBERTA

Community Groups
Alberta Trans Support/Activities Group
http://www.albertatrans.org
A nexus for transgendered persons, regardless of where they may be on the continuum.

Theatre & Fine Arts
Alberta Ballet
http://www.albertaballet.com
Frequent productions in Calgary and Edmonton.

CANADA

Community Groups
Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition
P.O. Box 3043, Saskatoon, SK, S7K 3S9
(306) 955-5135
http://www.rainbowhealth.ca
Egale Canada
8 Wellington St E, Third Floor
Toronto, Ontario, M5E 1C5
1-888-204-7777
www.egale.ca
Egale Canada is the national advocacy and lobby organization for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, trans-identified people and our families.

Products & Services
Squirt
http://www.squirt.org
Website for dating and hook-ups. 18+ ONLY!

Theatre & Fine Arts
Broadway Across Canada
http://www.broadwayacrosscanada.ca
OUTtv
http://www.outtv.ca
GLBT Television Station.

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publisher@gaycalgary.com

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Apr 2014

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