

THE LGBTQ VOICE SINCE 1978

QWEEGAS

MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2015
THE PET ISSUE

SINGLE DAD
NEW TUNES
TRIPLE GEORGE
LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL

PLUS: RUPAUL'S CHRISTMAS QUEENS

DOWNTOWN DOGGY
DAYCARE

HYDRANT
CLUB

HOLIDAY PET
GIFT GUIDE





ON THE COVER

Cathy Brooks tells all about her journey from Silicon Valley PR to becoming owner of The Hydrant club, Downtown Vegas' newest and hottest hound hangout!

Photos: Bark Gallery- Rick Vierkandt

Hair: Blowout Dollhouse

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

WOOF
WOOOOOOOF!

I mean Hello Gay Las Vegas! Happy Fall Season! QVegas Magazine hopes you all had a safe and happy Halloween! Now that the costumes are all put away, we want to take you on a journey down the nice autumn colors and warm feelings of the start of the holiday season.

For many members of the LGBTQ community, pets are our children, an addition to our families, or even a best friend. We love our furry little friends.

In this furry and lovable issue we feature Cathy Brooks and learn about how this Dog Diva became a staple of the Downtown Vegas Community, and you'll find a holiday gift guide from The Dog House, a boutique shop in Town Square.

Holidays can be a tough time at home for LGBTQ teens. The Center is hosting the annual Youth Thanksgiving on November 12th offering a welcoming environment for LGBTQ youth to enjoy a traditional Thanksgiving feast!

Not in the mood to cook at home? We offer up a few Thanksgiving alternatives around town before you head out for your Black Friday shopping.

Michael Barbieri takes us downtown with this month's Eating Out at Triple George Grill, and Maurice Lisbona takes us to Live Is Beautiful.

Oh! There's a RuPaul's Christmas album coming out this month, too!



As a dog lover myself, I know how special that bond can be. Dallas and Delilah are my best friends.



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Garrett Pattiani
Russ White

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- Our dedicated boards, staff and Honorarium committee, chaired for the seventh time by the talented and brilliant **Jon Sparer**
- Our amazing entertainers — **DJ88, Dana Goldberg, Clint Holmes, Las Vegas Kaminari Taiko, Jim “Norma” McCoy and These Guys**
- The stunning venue — **Drai’s Beach Club • Nightclub**
- Our special guests who shared their personal stories — **Tristan Torres and Ashley Anna Parks**
- The numerous businesses and individuals who donated items to our silent auction and advertised in our program book
- The hundreds of Honorarium attendees who laughed, cried, and celebrated with us throughout the evening
- And everyone who generously donated toward our goal of raising \$250,000 to cover the salaries of our staff persons who directly offer life-affirming services to the communities we serve.



TRIPLE GEORGE GRILL



[by Michael Barbieri
myvegasobsession.com]

EATING OUT

The Urban Dictionary defines George as anything which is “Excellent, great, superb.” George also signifies one who is free in giving and sharing, living life to the fullest.

With this spirit of generosity in mind, the three original owners of the Triple George Grill, to whom the name refers, have created an excellent eatery, with great service, and superb food!

Having celebrated its 10th Anniversary recently, the Triple George Grill has become the Downtown home of Vegas power lunches, and fabulous nighttime dining experiences. This San Francisco style steak and seafood house, serves up classic dishes, along with sophisticated takes on appetizers and salads. Even comfort foods like Pot Roast, Chicken Pot Pie, and Meatloaf are on the menu to tempt hungry diners who’ve come to

experience the revitalized Downtown scene.

Located steps away from world famous Fremont Street, Triple George is part of the Downtown Grand Casino Hotel; the centerpiece of a newly developing entertainment district known as Downtown3rd. The space is elegant without being stuffy, feeling much like a grand old saloon - carved wood accents inlaid with stained glass, semi-private booths that make you feel you have the entire place to yourself, and a large bar which surely does a brisk business with the after-work crowd.

My friends Mike and Ron joined me for dinner, and we settled into one of those nice, deep booths, where Becky, our server, welcomed us and took our drink orders. For Mike and Ron, a vodka rocks and a crisp, icy vodka martini, respectively, while I chose one of their specialty cocktails, the Black Cherry Lemon Drop - black cherry vodka, lemon, Triple Sec, and sour mix. The deep cherry flavor was brightened by the

tartness of the lemon, and the sugared rim added a hint of sweetness. The real cherry garnish at the bottom was a tasty surprise, too!

Before our appetizers arrived, we were lucky enough to sample a special item not on the regular menu: the Chilled Seafood Platter - an iced selection of swimmingly fresh shrimp, oysters, clams, and mussels, topped off by a cold water lobster tail. Served with a biting mignonette, a traditional red sauce, and horseradish, this was a stunning start to the meal!

Our appetizers were equally fabulous: Baked Onion Soup for the boys - dark and rich, with a depth of flavor that gave the impression it had simmered all day. I chose the Beef TarTar - minced raw beef with egg, onion, seasonings, and roasted capers, which lent the dish an unexpectedly smoky quality, making it the finest tartare I've had! We also tried the Seared Ahi - thin strips of lightly seared Ahi tuna, atop crispy wonton triangles, each with a ribbon of horseradish cream and a dab of sriracha. Every bite was clean, crunchy, and well balanced. The George's Chopped Salad was practically a meal - iceberg lettuce, tomatoes, avocado, green onion, zucchini, yellow squash, diced salami and mozzarella, dressed with a subtle balsamic vinaigrette. When we remarked on the freshness of the ingredients, William, the Assistant Manager, told us the chef gets much of his produce from a local farmer's market, to ensure the freshest product for the customers.

The chicken and seafood entrees were tempting, but we all decided on beef: the Petit Filet Mignon for both Mike and Ron - seasoned perfectly, and served with a garlic herb butter, they were tender and pink on the inside, with a tasty, smoky char outside. I opted for the George Burger - a 3/4 pound hamburger patty, topped with bacon, fried onions, Cheddar and Swiss cheeses, portobello mushroom, and George Spread; their secret sauce. The juicy, beautifully grilled beef, combined with the cheeses, the salty bacon, sweet onions, earthy mushroom, and the subtle spice of the sauce, made for a deliciously complex burger, with layers of flavor working together harmoniously. Becky

promised it would be one of the best burgers I'd ever eaten, and she wasn't wrong!

The side dishes complemented the meal perfectly. The Truffle Fries - deftly fried so the natural potato taste wasn't masked by the musky truffle flavor, and the Creamed Spinach, prepared without butter, was very light, and though it was good and garlicky, the freshness of the spinach still shone through.

Finally, while Mike skipped dessert, Ron and I were more than happy to end the meal with something sweet. I had the Carrot Cake - moist, with a lovely texture, just the right touch of cinnamon, a yummy caramel drizzle, and cream cheese frosting that wasn't too thick or sugary. Ron chose the Key Lime Pie, which struck a perfect balance of tart and sweet - he said it was as good, if not better than his favorite, from the Florida Keys!

Dinner at the Triple George Grill was not just a meal, it was an experience. The menu is relatively straightforward - fresh, delicious ingredients, simply prepared and presented, yet with plenty of the "Wow" moments one would expect at any restaurant on the Vegas Strip. And while it felt as though the entire staff were solely at our beck and call, I could tell, from the way they were zipping around, they were lavishing the same attention on the other diners. It's no wonder they were just given the 2015 TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence Award. So, are you ready for your "George" experience? At the Triple George Grill, you'll certainly live your life to its fullest!



Happy Thanksgiving

Buddy V's Ristorante

Service begins on Thanksgiving day at 1 p.m.

\$29 per person and \$15.95 for kids under 10 (excludes tax and gratuity) – Parties of four or more will be served family style

Thanksgiving Day – Three-course menu

Appetizer:

Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

Spiced apples, pepitas, panna dolce

Entrée:

Slow roasted turkey breast, Italian “dark meat” turkey sausage, pancetta-herb stuffing, roasted vegetables, whipped potatoes, cranberry relish and classic gravy

Dessert:

Pumpkin Bundt Cake

Maple cream cheese center & roasted pumpkin pecan compote

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Don Vito's

Don Vito's will serve a three-course menu and a complimentary cocktail or glass of wine for \$35 per person including:

Appetizers: Osso Bucco Ravioli with chive Beurre Blanc; Asparagus Frites, breaded and baked with pumpkin cream; Butternut Squash Soup with panchetta crouton; or Traditional Caesar Salad.

Entrées: Herb Roasted Young Turkey with giblet gravy, apple and chestnut dressing, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, maple glazed yams, green beans and cranberry relish; Scallops Seared Over a Bed of Sautéed Spinach with orange saffron sauce; or Filet Medallions Diane with herb roasted mushrooms and peppers in a red wine demi sauce.

Desserts: Pumpkin Pie with whipped cream; Apple Cranberry Cobbler; or Strawberry Cannoli.

This specialty menu is available from 2 to 9 p.m. Tax and gratuity are not included. The regular dining menu will also be available.



db Brasserie

Service begins on Thanksgiving day at 4 p.m.

\$55 per person (excludes tax and gratuity); optional beverage pairing \$39 per person

Thanksgiving Feast – Three-course menu

To Start with...Choice of:

Daniel's Autumn Salad

Duck prosciutto, pomegranate, candied pecans and pear vinaigrette

or Butternut Squash Velouté

Chesnutt puff, pumpkin oil

The Reason you came for....

New Hampshire Organic Turkey

Herb basted and slow roasted breast, Cranberry Chestnut Stuffing, Caramelized Yams, Bacon Wrapped Haricot Vert, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Giblet Gravy

Some Sweets...Choice of:

Pecan Pie

Toffee, butterscotch ice cream, cinnamon Chantilly

or DB'S Pumpkin Soufflé

Pain d'épice crème Anglaise

The Venetian Las Vegas

Reservations: 702-430-1235

Westin Lake Las Vegas Resort & Spa

With views overlooking the beautiful Lake Las Vegas, the Westin Lake Las Vegas Resort & Spa will offer a variety of sumptuous dining options, designed to entice guests who want to leave their apron at home and enjoy a stress-free holiday celebration surrounded by friends and family.

The resort will host an exquisite Thanksgiving brunch buffet on Thursday, November 26. Featuring various stations including seafood, assorted meat carving studios, traditional sides and vegetables, a culinary cheese shop, hot and cold breakfast, salads, Marssa Sushi Bar and desserts, guests will get the chance to indulge in a combination of classic favorites and Asian fusion-inspired dishes.

The holiday brunch will also highlight classic favorites including herb-brinded Tom Turkey with giblet gravy or cranberry relish; buttery whipped mashed potatoes; maple syrup whipped Garnet Yams with toasted marshmallows; pumpkin pancakes with candied pecans and traditional pumpkin pie.

The Westin Lake Las Vegas' Thanksgiving Day brunch will be offered from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m and costs \$59 for adults, \$25 for children, and complimentary for children under five years of age. Taxes and gratuity are not included.

Reservations are required and can be made by calling 702-567-6000.



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WÜF started when Founder & CEO, Sean Kelly, had a family dog that ran after a squirrel and sadly, never returned after she was hit by a car. Realizing that this tragedy could happen to any family, he was determined to find a preventative solution. With a love of all things high-tech, and an active member in the start-up community, he spent a year digging deep and giving it his all to accomplish what he set out to do.

Sean has made his vision a reality and has the WÜF Smart Collar for Dogs to show for it.

The collar has a lot of the same stuff that is found in today's smartphones. Such technology includes: Bluetooth 4.0, GPS, GSM, accelerometer, a micro control unit, Wifi, flash memory, microphone, speaker and of course batteries.

The collar comes in multiple sizes and is adjustable to fit most dogs.

The collar is finely tuned with advanced algorithmic data that allows us to monitor and understand a wide range of different doggie moves.

WÜF is working on sitting, sleeping, walking, running, playing fetch, playing tug of war, riding in the car and more. The collar will also be able to know when dogs are eating, peeing, pooping, throwing up, jumping on the couch or tearing up the garbage when you are not home, but those will take some more refinement.



***Wearable technology is already a hit with humans,
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WUF is accepting pre-orders at getwuf.com and expects to ship in early 2016.



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“You’re moving where? To do what?”

[by Garrett Pattiani]

It didn't matter who they were or how long they'd known her. When Cathy Brooks said she was shuttering her consulting practice and shifting her primary residence to Las Vegas to become a dog trainer, the refrain from her Silicon Valley connections was consistent.



Photo Credit: Bark Gallery- Rick Vierkandt

Hair: Blowout Dollhouse Makeup: Shannon Gitlitz/Bobbie Brown, Nordstrom

People had a hard time wrapping their brains around someone pulling up tent stakes in one of the most desirable cities in the world in one of the hottest industries to do something that seemed so ... well ... nuts. And it was - to everyone, except Cathy.

“The truth is, the decision was the least crazy one I ever made in my life,” she noted with a wry smile.

So how does a Journalism School graduate with a couple decades’ worth of tech industry PR experience under her belt end up opening a high-end private dog club that offers full service daycare, boarding, training and private social events in Downtown Las Vegas?

Simple. Serendipity.

Serendipity [ser-uh n-dip-i-tee] noun

1. an aptitude for making desirable discoveries by accident.

Accidents. No one likes them. In fact, humans spend an inordinate amount of time planning our lives. We plan, because we want to avoid accidents. We plan because that’s what we’re supposed to do.

Here’s the problem. When we plan, by definition we slap on blinders keeping us focused on a specific goal. In so doing we remove the very things that can lead to the most remarkable experiences of all – the decisions we make, the things that happen, the experiences for which we could never plan.

“My entire life had been planned. I’d never really thought about it that way until I crafted my talk for a TEDx conference in Las Vegas in December of 2013,” Brooks said. “It was weeks before The Hydrant Club was to open and I found myself musing on the path I’d taken to get here. It was a path that, while on the surface seemed unexpected, somehow was perfectly mapped.”

Pausing for a moment, Brooks’ sharp gaze softens as she recalls just how far back her canine connection goes. “When I was a baby, I’d pull myself up to my elbows in the crib. Our family



dog, Pepper, would stand outside the crib, we’d lock eyes and stare. This would persist until I fell to sleep, at which point Pepper would curl up under the crib and nap until I stirred and the silent conversation would begin again,” Brooks pauses to laugh. “My mom used to say Pepper answered all my needs but two – feeding and diaper changes. I’m pretty sure if he had opposable thumbs he’d have been game for trying.”

A lovely story, but it was an experience many years later that forged Brooks’ resolve to understanding what made dogs tick. The experience was testifying in the murder trial of a San Francisco woman who was shredded to pieces in the hallway of her Pacific Heights apartment by two vicious dogs that lived down the hall.

It is a tale befitting a Dick Wolf crime series episode.

Going through the trial Brooks’ fury over





the senseless death of this woman gave rise to another type of anger. "This entire incident was horrific, and it didn't have to happen," Brooks said. "These dogs did precisely what they had been bred, raised and trained to do – by humans; and then they were placed in the hands of people who were, at best, negligent. Personally I believe it was worse. They knew the dogs were dangerous and they didn't care." She adds that the situation was compounded by the fact that, while neighbors were frightened of the dogs, it wasn't until this devastating attack that anyone fully comprehended the danger – and that this was due to a fundamental lack of understanding of canine behavior.

"If I knew then what I know now, I'd have reported these people to the authorities after my first encounter with them. If more people had done that, if more people understood, perhaps things would have been different."

This experience catalyzed Brooks, taking what to that point had been a hobbyist level engagement in dog training and pushing her

to learn more. Guided and taught by a private instructor, she polished her dog handling skills and began building the foundation of what would later become a new career.

"More and more I began to see that while there were myriad trainers who taught with seemingly innumerable techniques, little was being done in the area of urban education and etiquette for dogs and their humans," she said. "It wasn't just about sit, stay and heel. What I saw as necessary was more about stabilizing dogs' behavior so they could survive in our urban jungle."

Dogs and humans have lived in symbiosis for roughly 50,000 years. Over that time, the species has become the most manmade on the planet, with thousands of variations, forcibly evolved through selective breeding. Early dog breeds had very specific roles and work in rural and agrarian society. Over time, as society shifted towards dense urban population, companion dogs became de rigueur.

"We have made this species, shoving them into specific looks and behaviors, but under it, they



all are still canine. And then we pull them as far away from any natural habitat as possible and expect them to ‘behave’. Talk about unreasonable expectations,” Brooks stated. She goes on to explain that this fissure underlies the foundation of the dog human relationship; and as the role of dogs has moved from one of specific work and task to companion and family member, that rift sometimes gets pulled in tectonic fashion. We all know what happens when a fault line slips.

Fast forward to May of 2012. Brooks was now fully disillusioned with the tech world. While at a conference she happened upon Zappos CEO Tony Hsieh, with whom she’d been acquainted for several years. When she told him of her dissatisfaction and need for change he smiled and suggested she come to Las Vegas over the summer.

She told him he was crazy.

That’s when he told her to bring her dog.

Lest this seem odd, when the invitation was extended, they were standing outside the tony Terranea Resort at which the conference was taking place. Her dog Truman was by her side. He always was. Traveling to Seattle, Portland, Vancouver, Los Angeles, and Phoenix– Truman had attended more tech conferences and business

Photos: DTLV

meetings than most people.

In August 2012 Brooks rolled into Las Vegas with Truman and no idea what the next 10 days would hold. Over the course of the trip the idea began to form that amidst the development in Downtown Las Vegas lay the perfect opportunity to craft the sort of dog facility she’d been envisioning. There were plenty of places to delegate dogs’ care – ranging from individuals in their homes to large scale, high volume kennels. None were designed with the dog owners in mind. None were designed to enhance and expand the symbiosis of dogs and their people in an urban environment.

So that’s what she built.

And it doesn’t stop here.

“The Hydrant Club is the beginning of a movement – a movement that will expand first across Las Vegas (a series of related, new concept facilities are in development) and ultimately to more urban footprints across the country. It is a place for dogs, where their owners get to be more human,” Brooks said.

She then pauses again with the same softening of a typically intense gaze and quietly said, “I think Pepper would be pleased.”



Photos: Krystal Ramirez Photography

#HYDRANTHANGOUT



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Christmas Queens

What better way to ring in the holidays than with a stellar collection of holiday classics and original gems from the top names in the world of drag? “Christmas Queens” features music from #AAAGirls (Alaska Thunderfuck, Courtney Act, Willam), Ginger Minj, Sharon Needles, and reigning queen of “RuPaul’s Drag Race,” season 8, Violet Chachki. “Christmas Queens,” is available for pre-order on Friday, October 30, 2015 and will be released on Friday, November 13, 2015.

- 1) Christmas Queens - We Wish You A Merry Christmas
- 2) Alaska Thunderfuck - Everyday Is Christmas
- 3) Ginger Minj - Christma-Hannu-Kwanzaa-Ka
- 4) Miss Fame - Toyland
- 5) Sharon Needles - Jingle Bells
- 6) Katya - 12 Days of Christmas
- 7) Courtney Act - From Head To Mistletoe
- 8) Jiggly Caliente - Ratchet Christmas
- 9) Detox - This Is How We Jew It
- 10) Alaska Thunderfuck, Courtney Act & Willam - Christmas Sweater
- 11) Willam - A Very Cozby Christmas
- 12) Darienne Lake, Ivy Winters & Pandora Boxx - Christmas Is Coming
- 13) Violet Chachki - The Night Before Christmas
- 14) Phi Phi O'Hara - Naughty or Nice
- 15) Jinkx Monsoon - Red & Green
- 16) Manila Luzon - Slay Bells

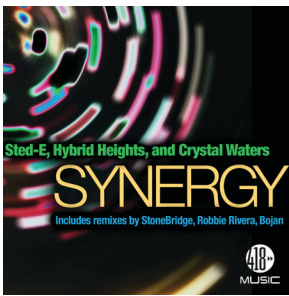
BEAT BOX

Tracks To be Thankful For This Season

[by Jimmy Newsum]

The LGBT community has a lot to be thankful for this year. Same-sex marriage is now a constitutional right.

Trans issues have come to the forefront of American mainstream. And darlings, sweeties, Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie is in production! Of course, there is still a lot of work to be done but now is the time to appreciate our progress. Here are the top records we're most thankful for this season.



"Synergy" *Crystal Waters*

Crystal Waters brings down the house with one of the best songs she's ever written. Expertly produced by Sted-E and Hybrid Heights, "Synergy" is classic Crystal – on par with "Gypsy Woman" and "100% Pure Love". To top it off, she enlists some of her DJ friends – prolific house music producer Robbie Rivera and Grammy nominated DJ/Producer StoneBridge – for some slamming remixes. DJ Bojan (formerly of WaWa) adds a spectacular nu house mix to the package.



"Tearing Down The Walls" *Luciana*

There's no denying that Luciana is a masterful songwriter. She has long been a pioneer in the electro music scene and we're thankful that her latest high-energy track plays like a delicious trip to a candy shop. Produced by Swedish DJ duo Cave Kings, the track serves as a wake-up call for all to free inhibitions, step out of boxes and go after dreams. "There are so many walls that get placed before us in life, real and imaginary," she says. "It's only when we step out of our comfort zone that we feel alive." The fittingly chaotic, singsong chorus reaches such high points that it's rather hypnotizing. It feels like she's actually tearing down concrete walls, which is quite the great effect on a listener. If God is a DJ, this will become the next big party anthem of the season.



"What Are We Waiting For" *Wil*

The pop crooner makes a triumphant move to the dance floor with his first EDM track produced by American Idols' Randy Jackson. Written by Wil, along with Steve Dresser and Jeff Blue, the empowering track is Sia meets Enrique Iglesias meets Adele; all set against a kinetic David Guetta beat. Jose Nunez provides some stellar remixes.

Photo: Denise Truscello



“Superstar” *Raphael*

The young out star is coming for that Song Of The Season crown with a single that combines clever lyrics and a unique flow of spoken-word rap with a mesmerizing electro pop and reggae groove. “Superstar”, the first track from his upcoming “The Dark of My Mind” album, tells the story of high school sweethearts. One leaves and becomes famous while the other stays home to wonder if the old flame will remember the love they once shared. The song is written as a stream of consciousness and Raphael doesn’t shy from using male pronouns when professing his love. It’s bold, sultry, and just catchy enough to make get this kid on the path towards becoming a superstar himself.



“Heavy Hitter” *Theda*

Did your summer crush leave you crushed? Theda is an exciting young powerhouse who puts her bleeding heart on the line, singing songs that take listeners on a journey through life, love and death. Each track on her new EP brilliantly captures the struggles and battles we have all faced after being kicked to the curb and dehumanized by the one person we thought we could rely on. The title track is especially moving. It has a rock/country vibe that is ripe for a club remix. There’s also the haunting “Liquid Poison” and the blues infused “Picking Up the Pieces.” It’s a brooding, dark album that is perfect ear candy for those cold, bitter nights when we just need to let out a cry.



“Gagged” *Violet Chachki*

The debut album from the reigning queen of Drag race is dynamic, sensual, deviant...the perfect compliment to the fetish bombshell we all know and love. In fact, Violet’s love of juju is heavily featured throughout the five-track EP. In “Bettie”, she plays the straight-laced housewife who’s a lady in the street but a freak in the sheets. In “Harlequin”, Violet plays the role of an intoxicating latex-wearing joker-deviant. The album draws inspiration from Violet’s real life experience working in dungeons. Her songs address gender roles and conformity, power play, exhibitionism, sex, confidence... It is an incredibly bold assertion of power and Violet deserves respect and admiration for going all-in.



“Ice Cream” *Manila Luzon featuring Andre Xcellence*

The fan favorite of Drag Race teams up with rapper Andre Xcellence on the season’s most delicious single. Produced by The Prodigal, “Ice Cream” is a high-energy, sex-driven, urban pop banger that turns a favorite children’s rhyme on its sticky ear. It’s reminiscent of Rihanna’s “Birthday Cake”, with slick beats, glossy vocals and plenty of playful double entendre and hilarious sexual innuendo.

FRANKLY, HE'S THANKFUL

A Divorced Gay Dad Appreciates The Small Stuff

[by Tom Tietjen]

“I used to be a bitchy gay guy, now I’m a bitchy gay dad,” admits Frank Lowe, a thirty-something recently divorced gay dad whose self-deprecating view of parenthood and single gay life is published monthly on GayswithKids.com.

He describes getting out of a 17-year monogamous homosexual relationship like waking up from a deep coma. “I am alive in an entirely different era than when I was last single in 1997. I have taken a big gay time machine to a new world – full of Scruff, Tinder, Hornet, and Jack’d, to name a few.”

There is nomenclature that didn’t exist before he partnered up. The last time he was single, twinks were called “chickens,” and older gays were called “trolls” or “chicken-hawks.” The term “daddy” only referred to a sugar daddy, and not in a desirable way.

Gratitude #1

At least he’s a “daddy” during a time when daddies are considered hot. That’s a trend he says

he’s going to ride. Literally.

The hardest part of being a gay divorced dad is sharing custody. Frank has a 50/50 agreement with his ex-husband. In his column, he describes the favorite moment of the week: when his 5-year-old son is with him again. “It’s the moment that I’m 100% less alone than I was a few minutes ago. It’s when I feel like a family,” he says.

His son’s name is Briggs, which originates from the word bridge, and ironically he has been exactly that for Frank and his ex.

Gratitude #2

The love Frank and his ex have for their son has usurped any negativity they feel towards each other.

In terms of Briggs' adjustment, the dads are continually monitoring and discussing it. Some days, the boy is all smiles and happiness. Other days, he has a heavy mind. Frank admits he often feels guilt, however, he and his ex-husband made a decision they believe will ultimately be the best for the entire family.

When it's Briggs' last night with Frank, the boy holds his daddy extra tight before he goes to sleep. Later that evening, Frank sneaks into his room a couple times to see Briggs sleeping in his bed. Dropping Briggs off at school the next day will be hell because Frank knows his life is on pause until Briggs' back in it.

"I become that weird parent who lingers and doesn't want to let go of his kid. I whisper into his ear something I've said to him since birth: "I love you more than anything else in the world."

To which Briggs' replies, "I love you too, Daddy."

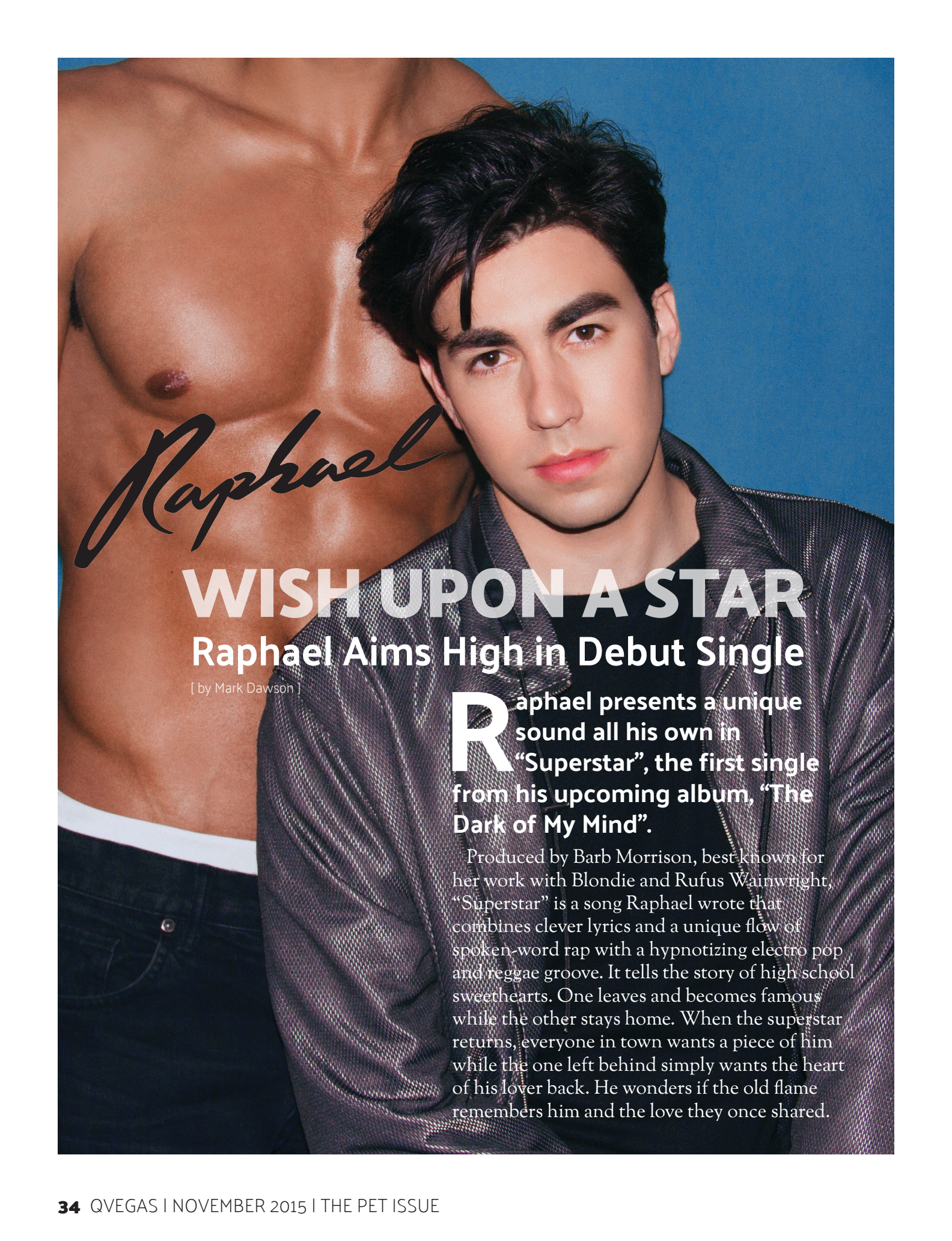
Those five words carry Frank to the next time he sees Briggs.

Gratitude #3

Frank is Briggs' father – his rock, and Briggs will always be his.



Read Frank Lowe's column at GayswithKids.com



Raphael

WISH UPON A STAR

Raphael Aims High in Debut Single

[by Mark Dawson]

Raphael presents a unique sound all his own in “Superstar”, the first single from his upcoming album, “The Dark of My Mind”.

Produced by Barb Morrison, best known for her work with Blondie and Rufus Wainwright, “Superstar” is a song Raphael wrote that combines clever lyrics and a unique flow of spoken-word rap with a hypnotizing electro pop and reggae groove. It tells the story of high school sweethearts. One leaves and becomes famous while the other stays home. When the superstar returns, everyone in town wants a piece of him while the one left behind simply wants the heart of his lover back. He wonders if the old flame remembers him and the love they once shared.

“While most of my tracks on ‘The Dark of My Mind’ live in deep, dark waters, ‘Superstar’ treads closer to shore,” explains Raphael. “It is playful, sexy, a little sad and yeah, a bit naughty.” Along with the single, Raphael is unleashing a party themed music video he shot in Miami with emerging young director Elia Athans.

“We all have superstars in our lives,” continues the out singer from his Manhattan apartment. “Guys or girls we idolize like they’re celebrities. They might be completely normal to everyone else but to you, they’re as appealing as any star on a magazine cover. You are their biggest fan.

“What makes a guy a superstar to me is a beautiful heart,” he says, before adding, with a laugh, “It wouldn’t hurt if he also has brown eyes.”

In his music, Raphael aims to bring back the love. According to the young singer, most songs today emphasize independence and an “I’m too cool” attitude towards romance. He misses the desperation and vulnerability in songs from the past where vocalists unapologetically gushed over someone and nothing else mattered.

“The Dark of My Mind” is a journey through modern love set to sexy, moody trip-hop and electro-pop sounds that are at times ethereal and dreamy and at other times flow over the listener with a wave of sexual urgency and romantic longing. “It’s about those things that you tuck in the back of your head and you don’t necessarily want to talk about or want people to see,” explains Raphael.

The album’s title is taken from a lyric in “Your Hair”, a song featured on the album. Other notable tracks on ‘The Dark of My Mind’ include “Boys Are Trouble” (a cautionary tale on the dangers of getting lost in sex and love) and “So Quiet”, where Raphael allows his vulnerable side to show. “We’ve all been in that space where we really like somebody and freeze when we find ourselves face-to-face with them.”

Raphael was born in New York and raised in Miami Beach, where he listened to ‘90s pop, Miami hip-hop, and Max Martin. “I love rap and there are certainly influences of it in my music.”

He describes his style of songwriting as a stream of consciousness. He writes when inspiration hits and the lyrics usually flow out all at once. He views his songs as a representation of himself as a person and artist.



It is why he doesn’t shy from using male pronouns in love songs. “I am grateful to have really supportive friends and family who have always encouraged me to be myself. I realize some are less fortunate which is why I hope my music offers them a space where they feel perfectly normal.”

Still, the album isn’t defined by Raphael’s sexuality. His goal isn’t to make statements with his music. As depicted in the “Superstar” video, Raphael simply aims to show a world where gays mix with straights and it is no big deal.

“I get pretty specific in ‘Superstar’, describing everything that drives me crazy about the guy I’m after and how in the end, I realize the sexy stuff doesn’t matter because if I can’t have his heart, I have nothing. The song reveals a lot about me and how I approach relationships.”

“And it’s only the beginning of all the many layers I peel away at in ‘The Dark of The Mind.’”

“Superstar” will be available on iTunes this month. Raphael’s debut album, “The Dark of The Mind”, releases in 2016. For more information, visit www.officialraphael.com.

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Giving Thanks... To A Groovin' Year!

[by Jimmy Newsum]

In this season of Thanksgiving, we polled some of our favorite musicians on what they are most thankful for this year.



Luciana *Queen of Electro*

What are you most thankful for?

My health. It's easy to forget that there are so many homeless people with no access to medical care. It's a huge problem that really needs addressing.

What personal achievement are you most proud of?

In addition to my singing, I've always wanted to be a DJ and now I am one! I just played a festival in Mexico in front of 20,000 people.

Who deserves a pat on the back this year?

The activists who tirelessly campaign for equality.

How will you celebrate Thanksgiving?

On tour in Australia. I will miss my man and my dogs but that's show business, right?

Visit <http://luciana.com>



Kristine W *Dancefloor Legend*

What are you most thankful for this year?

My mom. I recently took her to see her favorite singer, Johnny Mathis. We followed it with three days of parties, lunches and dinners! My Mom is my hero. Seeing her so happy was awesome.

What personal achievement are you most proud of?

My biggest achievement has been raising great kids with good hearts. I am so thankful I am here to watch them grow. I had a type of Leukemia that not many have survived so as I sing in my Christmas song, "Everyday's a Holiday".

Who deserves a pat on the back this year?

The military who sacrifice their lives for the freedom we take for granted.

How will you celebrate Thanksgiving?

With family and friends. We always raise the roof and a glass or two.

Visit <http://kristinew.com>



Joe Gauthreaux

Out DJ/Producer

What are you most thankful for this year?

My friends. Most are spread all over the map, but I can text them any minute something happens, good or bad.

What personal achievement are you most proud of?

My first single "Bye Felicia" went to top 5 on the Billboard Chart this year. Seeing my name on the chart among so many artists I respect is something I'll never forget.

Who deserves a pat on the back this year?

The trans community who have fought so hard and are finally being heard.

How will you celebrate Thanksgiving?

This year I'll be in Miami, playing at Space for White Party Week. Can't wait!

Visit <http://djjoeg.com>

Raphael

Out musician

What are you most thankful for this year?

The many people who believe in me. I'm thankful I have people to turn to when I need to laugh, cry, sing, talk or just be silly.

What personal achievement are you most proud of?

The completion of my first studio album. I am so thankful to have the power to express my heart through music.

Who deserves a pat on the back this year?

Hollywood. We're seeing more gay characters than ever before and many that are not focusing on the sexuality of the gay character, which is really refreshing.

How will you celebrate Thanksgiving?

I find comfort on the road so I'll most likely take a nice, long road trip.

Visit <http://thedarkofmymind.com>

HOLIDAY PET GIFT GUIDE

The holiday season has arrived, and with it comes the often daunting task of finding the perfect gift for the loved ones in your life.

Gift giving can be especially challenging when you want to find something unique or when you're shopping for the person who has everything. A gift for someone's dog is a fun option to explore and can fit into any budget. Most people will be thrilled to get something for their pet as seeing their dog's reaction can be even more satisfying than opening the gift itself. A wagging tail warms any dog owner's heart!

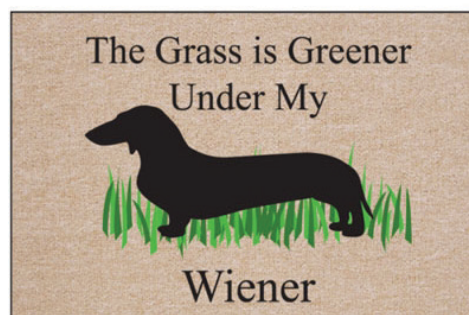
The Dog House is a local boutique that has an incredible selection of items just for dogs, and the guide below will help you pick out the perfect gift for any kind of dog lover. You may even want to pick up your own dog's holiday present, too!



For the high class hound: Susan Lanci collars, hair bows, beds, blankets, and carriers are made from luxurious, high quality fabrics and are as durable as they are beautiful. The Dog House has the largest selection in Las Vegas, so you're sure to find the perfect color and design for your favorite small dog owner.



For the caffeine addict: The "Starbarks" novelty plush toy is a humorous gift for the dog owner who always has a coffee in hand. The adorable "Frenchie Roast" is available in two styles and sizes, mini and grande, and has a fun squeaker inside.



For anyone: A gift card is a great choice when you want someone to be able to choose their own present or if you are unsure about what their dog would like. We can also help you create a basket with a variety of items appropriate for any dog breed, size, or gender. Free gift wrapping is offered on all purchases.



For the sports fan: NFL jerseys, collars, toys, bowls and hats are perfect for those who love to watch the game with their dog. These best sellers are sure to be a hit with any super fan who will love seeing their pup help cheer on their favorite team.



For the breed obsessed: Anyone who thinks their breed is the best will love a sign, magnet, pen, bag, keychain or ornament specific to their favorite kind of dog. Grouping several items together makes a cute presentation and is a personalized gift.

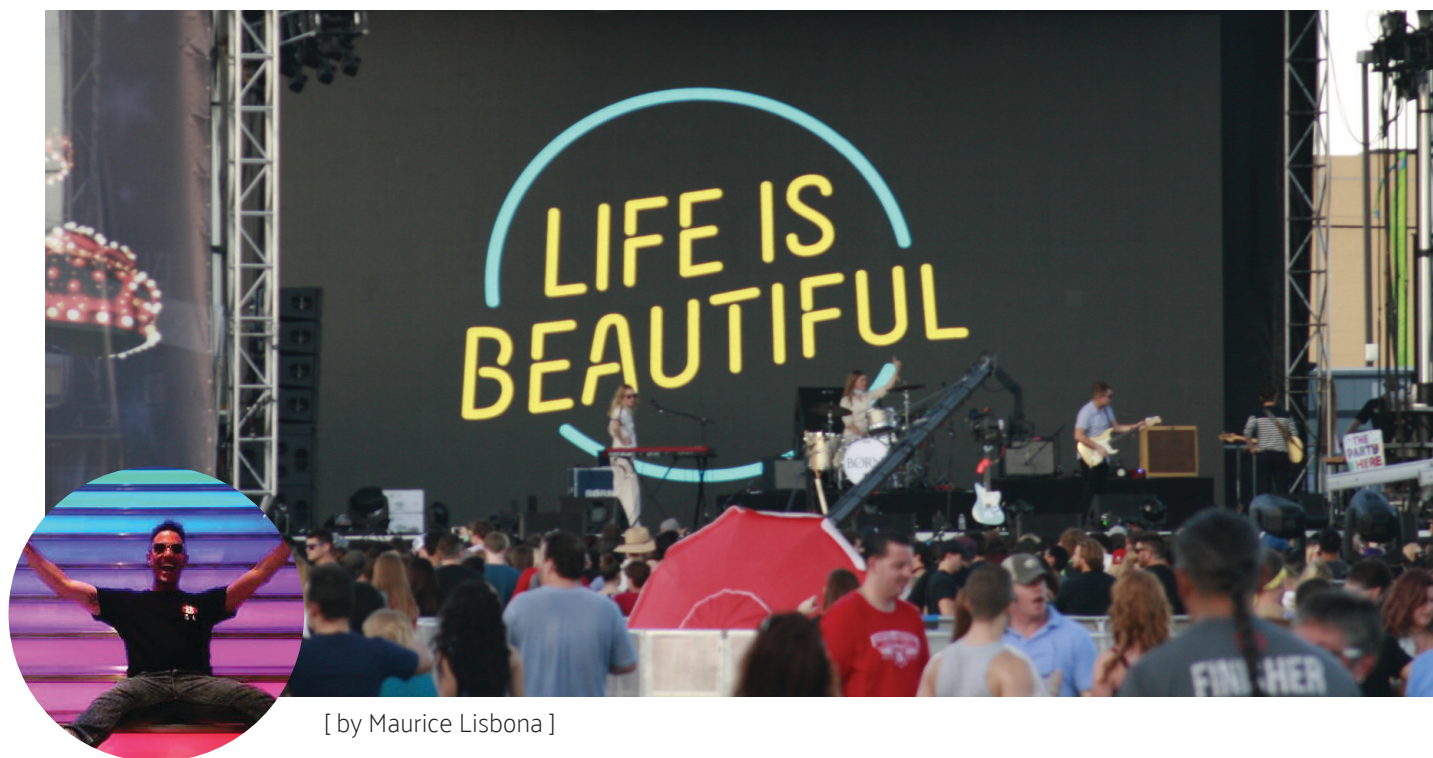


For the Techie dog lover: The iCPooch is a device that allows one to video chat with their dog from anywhere, and even dispenses treats while you're away! The concept was developed by a twelve year old girl who pitched her idea on Shark Tank. The iCPooch is also great for those who have dogs suffering from separation anxiety.



For the sweets lover: Our bakery case has a darling section of decorated treats that are as healthy as they are delicious. They are made with only human grade ingredients and the dyes are natural and food-based, so even the most discerning dog owner will feel comfortable feeding them. A box of these makes a wonderful host or hostess gift for holiday parties.

Find these gifts and more at The Dog House online at thedoghouseboutique.com or at Town Square Shopping Center.



[by Maurice Lisbona]

Going to life is beautiful for the first time was an overwhelming-full-of-surprises experience.

It all started by choosing how to get there. There were several options for me to choose from: ride my car and park in the area, where they were charging from \$20 to \$40 in all parking areas, take a taxi (about \$40 to \$50), take Über or Lift (about \$25 to \$30) or take a shuttle... I chose the shuttle that was departing from the Tropicana Hotel (\$45 for 3 days), and free parking at the hotel. Other shuttle departing points were available (UNLV, SLS hotel, World Market Center, the Linq and downtown Summerlin).

Although the shuttle bus stopped a bit far (on Main St.. at the City Hall), the walk to the event is nice and gives you the chance to walk all the extension of Fremont Street where the festival atmosphere already starts to show its wings: music playing, street artists and many festival attendees walking towards the festival.

Just by the event entrance Coca-Cola was giving away bottles of happiness to quench the thirst of our walk. And Über was giving away \$20

discount cards for new users.

The good thing about getting to the event early is to have a quick and easy search of your bags and no lines to go in.

The event does not allow pets unless for people with disability.

And so the struggle begun: where should I go? What should I see?

Well, this is going to a festival... Even more in a festival like this where besides music, there's a lot of art installations, lectures, culinary show offs etc.

The secret is: don't panic!

Get the event brochure that is being given out at the entrance and at the information points.... Download the event app on Google play or Apple App Store and start digging through the map and the attractions. Another good thing about getting to the event early is to have the chance to find your bearings and to see all (or most) of the ancillary happenings and art installations. You'd be surprised of how many artists that you don't know play just what you like to hear.

This is a festival, the perfect place and time to discover new artists.



Photo Credit: Erik Kabik for Life is Beautiful

So using the App I first created my schedule with the artists I wanted to see. The app lets you choose and set alarms for what you want to see, and puts it all into a timeline Vs. location, so you know where and when to go... It also shows you your “free times” so you can use it to go for a walk, meet new artists, new people, check the amazing art installations etc.

I started my walk towards the Ambassador stage, but before I got there, the Troubadour stage was already pumping its bass with electronic music. I had to stop and see what was going on.

Water was definitely not a problem. If you're thirsty just walk to one of the quench buggies and fill up your bottle.

Restrooms are spread all over, even when the festival was full, no lines! Congrats to the producers that put enough of them on the festival grounds.

After walking for a while, I got a bit hungry... But no worries, dozens of food stands and food trucks with the most varied options were available and for a reasonable price.

So I got to the ambassador stage... Staying in the sun was so hot that people were hiding from it on

the light pole shadow.

It was time to go check the Huntridge stage... Walking down the streets I ran into interesting people in outfits, street art and an amazing art space called the Art Motel.

A couple of hours later I finally made it to the Main Stage (The Downtown Stage), that, although crowded, was very easy to walk around, get drinks or use the restrooms.

After amazing concerts, performances and very interesting people, music the event was over and it was time to go home.

Even with a legion of people leaving the venue, walking was easy and organized; shuttles were waiting for us.... Everything was way better organized than expected. Congrats to the production team!

I finally made it home, took a shower and tried to get some rest because I had two more days ahead of me. I'm laying in bed singing tunes I didn't even know before today.

All I can say now is that this first time experience was superb!

Life is beautiful! And so are we!

Good night!

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Las Vegas Filmmaker Deborah Richards Wins Emmys

Writer-Director wins 4 Emmys and prepares for next film

[by Patrick Wirtz]



Longtime Las Vegas resident and filmmaker, Deborah Richards, won four Student Production Emmys in Palm Springs in August.

At the ceremonies, writer-director Richards publicly came out as a transgender person. “I want to be a filmmaking trailblazer and role model for others with the simple message that anyone can shine,” says Richards.

While her Emmy award-winning short, *Boy Meets Girl*, was a science fiction romance, her next film, *Send Hollywood My Love*, is a comedy that pokes fun at the Hollywood film industry. The new film takes an innovative approach to the film making process. None of the ensemble cast has been given a script.

“I’m giving everyone a different redacted treatment so that not one of the cast knows the whole story. We’re going to roll multiple cameras and watch the sparks fly,” says Richards. The film is slated for a 2016 international film festival run. *Anyone who would like to help with the production can find more information at www.SendHollywoodMyLove.com.*

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[by Locq Fortune]

TAROSCOPE NOVEMBER 2015

Your Monthly Taroscope

Your Monthly Taroscope by Locq Fortune:

Locq Fortune is a local Las Vegas Psychic and the author of the brand new book: Vibeology: <http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/Locq> ! He is available for private readings, parties or public events and is the only psychic in Las Vegas who is licensed to come to you. His private readings feature No Time Limits, he can also record your reading for you and email it to listen to again later! Check out his Fan Page to read reviews and for contact information: www.facebook.com/afortuneonwheels

Taroscope is a monthly reading for each Astrological sign based on the card pulled for it from my Tarot Deck. This Taroscope is for November 2015

Ares: The Five of Cups. You may find yourself having communication issues with a loved one this month, due to their either being distant when they're around or so distant that they're not around at all. Please know that it is not due to you or your actions, they are simply lost in their own affairs they are cope with. If this is you, don't dwell to long or a lover may stray to insure a Happy Thanksgivings day.

Taurus: The 7 of coins. Is this what you've been waiting for? If so then get to work cause no one can get the job done like The Bull on a mission. If

this is not however then it is time to start making apples into cider! There is indeed help on the way IF your busy working on the issue. Keeping focused on the bottom line this month will lead to a Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Holiday Season!

Gemini: The Star. You may well hear from that long missed person this month. Day Dreams come often, and Holiday travel plans go smoothly, something hoped for draws near. Don't let distractions prevent you from keeping in touch with loved ones, it's your pet pev so don't do it ;-). Out of the Darkness and into the Dawn now is a time to look up and remember to share those Happy Thanksgiving Vibes!

Cancer: 10 of coins. You may find yourself in a Holiday frame of mind a bit early this month due to visits from family or making a trip to see them. Things are looking positive and you may find yourself feeling like you've earned a break after this year's journey and it's time to spend time with friends, family and lovers. This Thanksgiving shall be one to remember in a very special way.

Leo: 6 of swords. You may find yourself planning a move or just removing yourself from a negative situation. We have to pick and choose our battles and this one may not be worth it. Keep

your focus on the holidays because they're right around the corner and few shine at a party like you. Be sure to make travel plans well in advance to avoid any mix ups and arrive on time for a Happy Thanksgiving.

Virgo: Page of Wands. You may not find things changing as quickly as you hoped but hang in there, you're just at the beginning of a new learning curve that you seem to be very well adapted to. You may have thought this was good ending but you're actually off to a Great Start! If you're concerned about your kid in school don't, things will clear up by Turkey Day for the beginning of a Happy Holiday Season!

Libra: The Path. This month should highlight what has been an amazing journey thus far for you this year. The way is now clear and you may move forward, the direction although clear however is still up to you. Listen to your intuitive nature as it rings strongly this month. Take some alone time for self-improvement to be sure to feel centered during the Holidays. Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Scorpio: The Knight of Swords. Happy Birthday My Dear Scorpio! Don't be in such a rush this month, you've got a lot of really good points but you might not want to jump to any conclusions. Remember logic may win they day, but it can also make distant the heart. Problems? No Problems you're resolving them all with clever ease this month, just try not to over multi-task and have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Sagittarius: The Empress. Let the good times

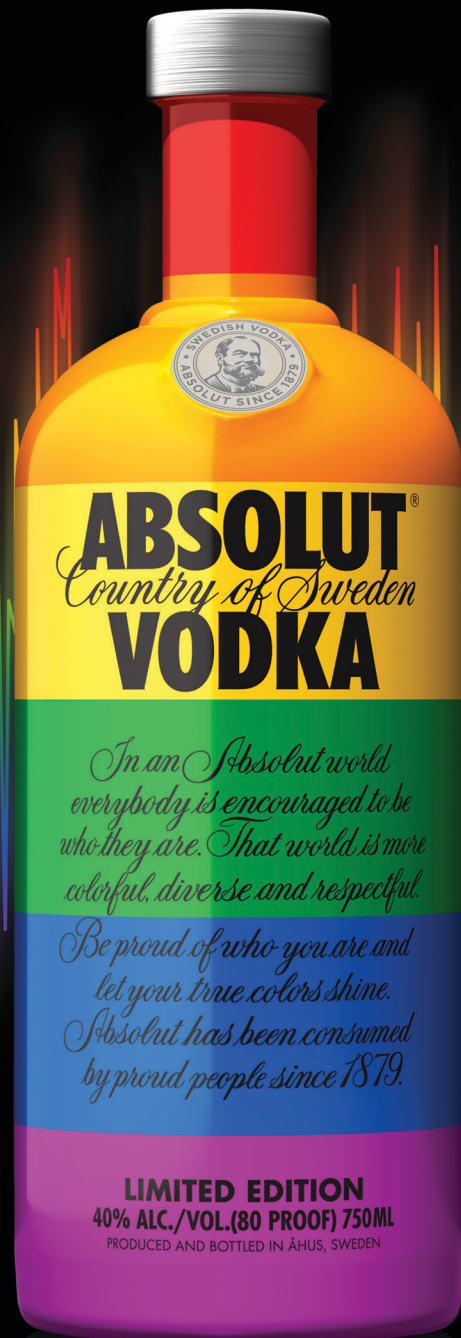
roll and you'll lead the charge. When this card and this sign team up, the only warning is not to over indulge. You have a wealth of things to do, just be sure that you have the help you need to do it and all goes grand, but would you have it any other way? Look for a return on investments before Thanksgiving.

Capricorn: The 7 of swords. When it comes to good fortune with things which are treasured Capricorns often strike gold, however keep your eye open this month for anyone trying to pull the wool over your eyes. If in College, the Services, or Training you may want to improve your study habits, this maybe your month to make a difference and stand out in your class in some way. Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Aquarius: The 2 of batons. In a month of new beginnings the luxury of choice is yours. You've come a long way this year and you're looking forward to what's to come. The same old way may not be what is called for here, now may be time to determine a different direction. Take time to consider your options. Just don't get so caught up with work that you forget the Holidays. Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Pieces: The 10 of cups. Looking forward to special times with friends and family holds major sway over you this month. In true Holiday spirit you are finding joy, in the joy of others. You may seek to volunteer with extra time to really help spread the cheer this year. You have things to celebrate and be Thankful for dealing primarily with your family so be sure to have a Happy Thanksgiving with them as well.

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