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If we are complacent it will FALL**



In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene: how LGBTQ+ folks are helping



Interview:
Cyndi Lauper's
farewell tour

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Seasonal
entertainment
for the holidays

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The focus of QNotes is to serve the LGBTQ and straight ally communities of the Charlotte region, North Carolina and beyond, by featuring arts, entertainment, news and views content in print and online that directly enlightens, informs and engages the readers about LGBTQ life and social justice issues.

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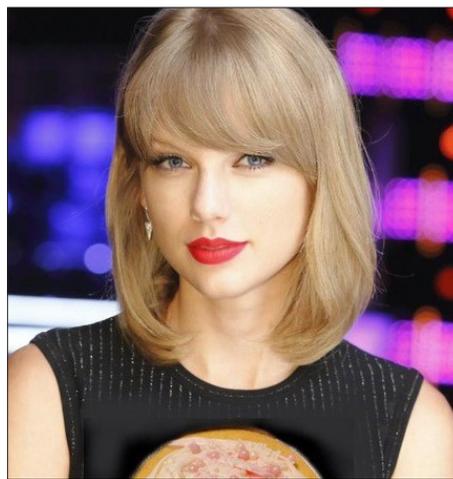
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Sweet treats for the holidays: Taylor Swift's Chai Sugar Cookies

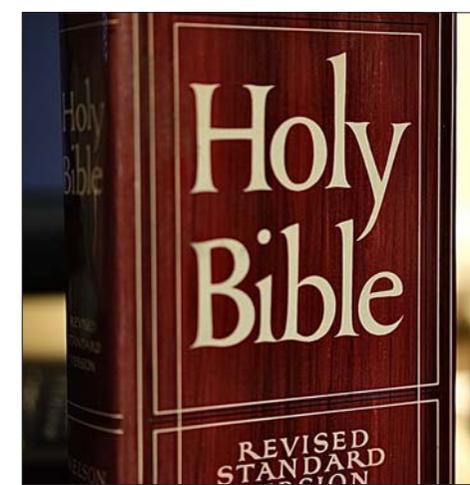
Popular singer and songwriter Taylor Swift has long been an ally to the LGBTQ+ community. She's made donations to GLAAD, the Tennessee Equality Project and she's always made certain her concerts were safe spaces for LGBTQ+ individuals, as well as encouraging fans to support the LGBTQ+ community. She's also a big fan of baking and we've got her recipe for Chai Sugar cookies.

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For National LGBTQ+ History Month: 'But the Bible says!'

Did an incorrect translation of Greek Biblical texts by early 20th century Christian scholars set off a firestorm of hatred towards our community with just two words? Malakoi, meaning moral weakness and a lack of self-control, coupled with arsenokoitai, defined as exploiting others through power for sex, was redefined as "homosexual," when the proper assessment should have been "sexual abusers."

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Federal judge partially dismisses faulty NC voter registration form lawsuit

Plaintiffs want 225,000 voters disqualified, judge dismisses federal claim turns rest over to NC courts

by Sarah Michels/Carolina Public Press

On his way to the federal courthouse in Wilmington Thursday morning, Democratic National Committee attorney Seth Waxman drove past a long line of New Hanover County residents taking advantage of the first day of early voting. Waxman would later argue for the dismissal of a lawsuit attempting to make 225,000 registered North Carolina voters — some who may have been waiting in that line to vote — take extra steps to verify that they are eligible to vote.

On the evening of Oct. 17, U.S. District Court Judge Richard E. Myers II — an appointee of former President Donald Trump — dismissed one of the lawsuit's claims, while declining to rule on the other and instead returning it to a lower state court.

The lawsuit is one of five cases filed this year in which the North Carolina Republican Party and the Republican National Committee are suing the North Carolina State Board of Elections.

None of the cases have reached a permanent resolution.

In Thursday's ruling, Myers found that the NCGOP and RNC did not have standing to sue in their first claim, involving the State Board's alleged violation of the federal Help America Vote Act.

However, Judge Myers agreed with the Republican parties that the second claim, involving the State Board's alleged violation of the North Carolina Constitution's right to vote, should be decided by a state court, not a federal court.

Lawsuit Over Registration Form

In October 2023, North Carolina citizen Carol Snow uncovered an issue with North Carolina's voter registration form, created by the State Board of Elections.

At the time, red text at the top of the voter registration form indicated that information fields highlighted in red were required.

The form asked, "Are you a citizen of the United States of America?" and "Will you be at least 18 years of age on or before election day?" in red text, while leaving other information fields, like race, ethnicity and gender, in black and white.

State and federal law requires state boards of elections to create voter registration forms that collect either a registrant's driver's license number or the last four digits of their social security number, if they have either, or check a box if they don't.

However, that information field was also left in black and white, potentially causing confusion for registrants who may have thought it was optional because it wasn't highlighted in red.

Once Snow brought the issue to the State Board, they created a new, clearer voter registration form. But in December 2023, they declined to honor Snow's other request: contact and verify the identity of the estimated 225,000 voters registered using the unclear form.

Snow continued to push for relief, but the State Board said that impacted voters' identities would be verified through alternative means, as they went to vote.

People who register to vote, but check the box to say they do not have a North Carolina driver's license or a Social Security number, are assigned a unique voter ID number to recognize them in the voter system.

They are eligible to vote, as long as they present one document from an accepted list of documents with their current name and address, under the federal Help America Vote Act. Those documents include a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document.

Additionally, with North Carolina's newly enforced voter ID law, every voter has to show a valid photo ID to vote, or fill out a photo ID exception form under special circumstances like a natural disaster.

While the State Board decided that was enough, the North Carolina Republican Party and the RNC disagreed.

This August, they sued in state court.

They asked the court to order the State Board to either purge the voter rolls of the 225,000 impacted voter registrants, or if the law did not allow that, to require those voters to cast provisional ballots during the 2024 general election.

It was possible, they argued, that some of the 225,000 who filled out the old voter registration form may not have met the voting eligibility requirements, but were falsely registered anyway.

Regardless of whether that was the case, they argued that the State Board's refusal to contact and verify the registrants' identities and voter eligibility could make people doubt the integrity of the election.

"If [the State Board does] not remove ineligible voters from the state's voter rolls, then the legitimate votes of qualified voters will be diluted and disenfranchised in upcoming elections," RNC and NCGOP's original complaint argued.

Judge Myers used bucket imagery to explain the case.

About 225,000 people registered to vote using a faulty voter registration form. They belong in three buckets. One bucket includes some percentage of the 225,000 people who supplied their driver's license or social security number even though it wasn't highlighted.

There are two buckets for those who didn't fill out the section. One for those who meet all the voter eligibility requirements, and another with "some percentage unknown" who are not eligible to vote, but were registered anyways. The third bucket is what the Republican plaintiffs are concerned about, Myers said.

State Board general counsel Sarah Boyce thinks the third bucket is empty.

She said they "fundamentally disagree" that not providing a driver's license



The NC Republican Party and the RNC are suing the NC State Board of Elections in five separate legal actions.

or social security number necessarily makes someone ineligible, and that what happened with the form left room for any ineligible person to vote.

"They will never be permitted to vote without showing HAVA documentation," Boyce said.

Waxman also objected to the idea of provisional voting as a requirement for voters registered under the old form.

Voters are given provisional ballots when there are questions about their eligibility to vote in an election or if they cannot present a valid photo ID. After voters cast provisional ballots, election officials research their eligibility to determine whether their ballot should be counted or not.

In some cases, provisional voters are asked to come back to the county board of elections with their valid photo identification or HAVA documentation in the days between the election and the post-election canvass where official results are tallied.

"Provisional voting is absolutely prohibited to be required ... to someone who is eligible to vote and provides the requisite identification," Waxman said.

One Case, Two Claims

Judge Myers divided the case into two claims.

First, the North Carolina Republican Party and the Republican National Committee alleged that the State Board violated NC GS 163-82.11, which deals with voter roll maintenance.

The statute says that "[t]he State Board of Elections shall update the statewide computerized voter registration list and database to meet the requirements of section 303(a) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002..."

That section of the Help America Vote Act includes the requirement to collect driver's licenses or social security digits from those who have them.

However, the State Board argued that they cannot remove voters registered under the old form without breaking another federal law, the National Voter Registration Act of 1993.

That law bans elections officials from removing ineligible voters from the voter rolls 90 days before an election, so as to avoid accidentally disenfranchising eligible voters.

In that timeframe, it only allows officials to remove voters from the rolls if the voter asks to be removed, is convicted of a felony, dies or changes their address.

Judge Myers said a failure to comply with HAVA during the voter registration process is not included as legal grounds for removal. During the hearing, he also said that while removing 225,000 voters from the rolls is "administratively impractical," that doesn't mean there's no right to remove them before the next federal election in 2026.

Myers did not rule on the merits of the plaintiffs' claims, though.

Instead, he said because the North Carolina legislature did not include a private right of action — the right for an individual or organization to sue over an alleged violation of a statute — in the state law at hand, the NCGOP and RNC did not have standing to sue.

In the second claim, the NCGOP and RNC allege that the State Board's inaction violated the North Carolina Constitution's fundamental right to vote.

Judge Myers said state courts should interpret state constitutions, not the federal court, so he returned that part of the case to Wake County Superior Court.

The State Board and the Democratic National Committee have until Oct. 22 to appeal that order to remand the case.

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Qnotes Democracy: Laura Budd vs. Joshua Niday

Two candidates battle it out for South Charlotte's House Dist. 103



by Taylor Heeden Larkins
Qnotes Staff Writer

Residents in the southern tip of Mecklenburg County are deciding on an important race, which could determine whether Republicans will continue to have a supermajority in the General Assembly. House District 103 is up for election this year, and Democratic incumbent Laura Budd hopes to keep her seat as she faces opponent Joshua Niday, who has run for office three times previously, and unsuccessfully.

These two candidates share different visions for North Carolina's future. Budd's policy plans revolve around reinvesting into the public school system and bringing state funds back to her district for infrastructure projects. Niday's idea for North Carolina is a battle over identity politics and culture wars at the forefront and erasing mentions of LGBTQ+ history from classrooms across the state.

Mecklenburg voters know what's at stake this election and it's important to know exactly what each candidate brings to the table so we can decide who will best

as an advocate for local priorities, emphasizing the need for better education funding, improved infrastructure and enhanced public safety measures. As a representative, she has focused on policies to return state tax dollars to her district, ensuring that local needs are met through effective legislation.

She is a staunch supporter of reproductive rights, speaking out against restrictive policies threatening to limit access to reproductive healthcare in the state. This position aligns with her broader commitment to protecting the rights of her constituents, especially women and marginalized communities. She also stands firmly against predatory towing practices, working to protect residents from exploitative fees and practices in the Charlotte area.

In fact, she's currently proposing bill in the N.C. House with bipartisan support that would require towing businesses to acquire a permit to operate. In addition, a system for consumers to lodge complaints against companies through a new Towing and Recovery Commission would be established and would allow the new commission to set maximum fees for towing and booting.

"This bill provides a regulatory



Incumbent Laura Budd is running against Joshua Niday, a three-time unsuccessful candidate for the N.C. General Assembly
CREDIT: Social Media Composite

prioritized investments in public schools, understanding that strong educational systems are vital to economic growth and community well-being.

As Budd campaigns for re-election, she is leveraging her track record of successful advocacy and her ability to listen to her constituents. Her grassroots efforts focus on increasing voter turnout and ensuring that the voices of South Charlotte residents are heard in Raleigh.

Who Is Joshua Niday?

Niday has had three previously failed attempts to run for office and has created a pronounced reputation for himself with the comments he has made about the current vice president and women in general.

Entering the race for the fourth time in his political career, despite previous losses – including a significant 64-point defeat in 2018 and a narrower 16-point defeat in 2022 – Niday remains committed to his conservative platform.

Niday is a staunch supporter of school choice, a position popular among conservatives, which proposes that parents be able to use state funding to send their children to private or charter schools. Critics, however, argue this policy would divert resources away from already underfunded public schools, potentially exacerbating inequality in education.

On social issues, Niday's platform is far from right of center. Niday is aligned with the growing movement to ban books in schools, particularly those that address

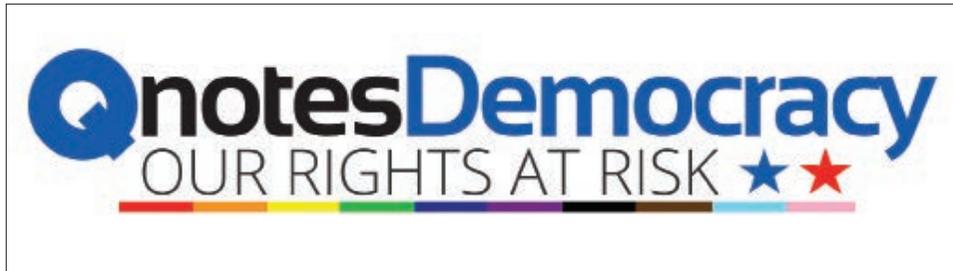
themes of gender identity and race. He opposes discussions of LGBTQ+ history, as well as gender and racial identity, in classrooms, claiming that such topics lead to the "indoctrination" of students. His resistance to Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a core part of his education agenda, as well as supporting the "Parents' Bill of Rights."

Niday's campaign has garnered attention for its alignment with former President Donald Trump's far-right rhetoric. His social media presence reflects this, often praising Trump and attacking Democratic leaders, including Vice President Kamala Harris. His Facebook page has been flagged multiple times for sharing claims proven false. Despite this, he maintains a loyal following built on his support for Trump's policies and his opposition to progressive Democratic leadership.

On the issue of reproductive rights, Niday supports banning abortion after the detection of a fetal heartbeat and advocates for increasing funding to crisis pregnancy centers, which often provide anti-abortion counseling. His position contrasts sharply with that of Budd, who has been endorsed by organizations like Planned Parenthood and Pro-Choice North Carolina.

While his campaign website offers few specifics on policy, Niday has made it clear that his vision for North Carolina centers on a return to "conservative, traditional values."

From all indications, Niday faces an uphill battle against Budd. ::



serve their interests.

Who Is Laura Budd?

Laura Budd is the Democratic candidate for North Carolina House District 103, which covers parts of South Charlotte, Ballantyne and Pineville. She's a practicing attorney who attended Wake Forest University and has a Juris Doctor law degree (that allows her to practice law in the US and most countries around the globe). Budd has established herself

framework where none existed before," Budd told WBTV. "It is supported by the towing and trucking industries and will go a significant way in protecting North Carolinians from predatory towing practices as well as companies conducting business in our state."

Throughout her career, Budd has earned a reputation as a consensus-builder, working across the aisle on issues that affect both her district and the state of North Carolina as a whole. She has

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Hispanic Federation Hosts "Get Out The Vote"

In an effort to help raise awareness about the election in Charlotte's Latin community, the Hispanic Federation will host an event dubbed the "Get Out The Vote Celebration" in the Queen City on Oct. 26. The community is invited to join together in a mass early vote, with a community party to follow for those attending.

The Hispanic Federation (HF) is a non-profit Latino membership organization that operates all over the United States. Founded in New York City in 1990, during that same year, HF took to the radio, establishing a weekly public affairs show that sought to promote public campaigns and get vital information out for the Spanish-speaking populace, which would lead to programs that have educated millions of Latinos on important issues in the years since.

Over the years HF has worked hard to help prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS from throughout the Latino community, as well as securing millions for Latino HIV service providers via the LUCES coalition. Today HF is one of the premier Latino grant-making programs in the nation, which evolved through campaigns to help communities impacted by natural disasters, tragedies like 9/11 and the COVID pandemic here at home and in Latin America. Since 1996 the organization has helped organize participation with voting in both local and national elections.

The Hispanic Federation's "Get Out The Vote" March will gather at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 26 at Tabbris Innovation Center, located at the corner of South Blvd. and Bland St. After meeting at the initial

location, all parties will begin a kick off march to the Bank of America voting site at 11:30 a.m., followed by a drag performance by Lolita Chanel at 11:45 a.m. At noon the march to the Bank of America voting site takes place, so those participating can cast their vote for the upcoming election, which takes place at 12:20. Following the march and vote, the group will return to Tabbris by 1:20 p.m. for a social event and celebratory party that will last until 3 p.m. Lolita Chanel, Oso Chanel and RC Cola will be on hand to perform for the event.

HF's "Get Out The Vote Celebration" is being hosted in partnership with Charlotte Pride, the Freedom Center for Social Justice, the Carolina Migrant Network Charlotte Gaymers Network, and the Pauli Murray LGBTQ+ Bar Association.

Early voting continues at multiple sites in Mecklenburg County through Nov. 2. Check out this link for sites near you. ::

—Jonathan Golian



Mark Robinson strikes back at accusations in new lawsuit

In response to the bombshell in depth report about Mark Robinson's alleged past activities on the "Nude Africa" porn site, published on Sep. 19 by CNN, the candidate has now officially filed a lawsuit against the network.

Filed in North Carolina, the suit claims the network intentionally worked to defame Robinson through the piece, with the motivation to "derail his political career" and a "reckless disregard for the truth." Robinson is seeking \$50 million in damages.

In the report, screenshots and quotes were linked to Robinson through account information, along with the screen name

"minisldr" that the Lt. Governor had allegedly been known to use for social media. Among the scandalous posts were the user identifying as a "black Nazi," expressing a love for transgender porn and confessing to spying on girls showering in a public gym locker room as a 14-year-old through overhead vents.

Also listed in the lawsuit is Louis "Love" Money, the lead singer of North Carolina-based band Trailer Park Orchestra. In a music video released on YouTube on Aug. 11, Louis and his band depict the Lt. Governor visiting the porn shop that Money worked at during the 1990's, where the singer alleges through the lyrics that "I made

you a bootleg/I did all the time/ most of the time you paid me/I guess it uhhhh/slipped your mind," referencing a final occasion with Robinson on a \$25 tab left unpaid for work done by Money.

The opening statement in the lawsuit reads; "CNN and Louis Love Money are responsible for a new low in digital lynching. In a malicious hit job so well timed as to be uncanny, they have published disgusting lies about Lieutenant Governor Mark Robinson in what appears to be a coordinated attack aimed at derailing his campaign for governor, and has already inflicted immeasurable harm to his family, his reputation and his good name. This



lawsuit, while utterly insufficient to right this wrong, shall serve as a small measure of accountability." ::

—Jonathan Golian

Lenny Zenith's new single 'One of Us Should Go' highlights the waning of a relationship

Ahead of releasing his first album since 2020, Lenny Zenith Releases the single, "One of Us Should Go."

While the lyrics don't necessarily give an entire story, the flashes going in and out of captured scenes give much of the mood to the track.

"Whiskey Bottle/kitchen table/sun comes into view/fickle sleep out on the couch in deference to you"

By avoiding the presence of an actual catalyst for the imagery presented, Zenith allows the tension-sown lyrics to resonate with listeners. What we get is just the depiction of that itchy moment before breaking the ice and calling it quits with someone close, a moment no one wants to engage with, and the opening to live in those moments within the song, as if we

were there.

The instrumentals along the background do much to match up with the lyricism presented. Zenith's work on the keys, in matching up with the drums, heightens the intensity with each lead up to the chorus, gaining that extra bit of emotion from both the artist and the listeners. Jeff Hermanson (trumpet), James Pertusi (bass & backing vocals), and Andrew Solin (guitar) make up the rest of the cast contributing to the single.

"This song combines various stages of a strained relationship, likely on the brink of collapse," explains Zenith in reference to the direction of the track. "I have occasionally had a whiskey bottle on the kitchen table in the morning, and sleepless nights on the couch," Zenith recalls, reflecting on some of



the opening lyrics. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tsoKFvTF3Fg>

In connecting this track with the rest of the upcoming album, "He/Hymn," Zenith talks much on how the full body of work stands as an evolution of his songwriting and as an artist. "While I tried to retain my melodic sensibilities, He/Hymn delves into deeper, more mature themes, offering a

reflective exploration of human connection, loss and the search for authenticity. I've kind of traded the catchier power-pop hooks for a richer, more complex, sonic experience and more introspective lyrics."

Lenny Zenith's third album, He/Hymn, comes out Oct. 29 for streaming as well as purchase on Bandcamp and Spotify. ::

—Jonathan Golian

Planned Parenthood offers a variety of healthcare services

From cancer screenings to wellness checks, Planned Parenthood provides proactive care



by Jonathan Golian
Qnotes Staff Writer

In a historic move that shocked many across the United States on June 22, 2022, weighing in for the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, undoing fifty years of precedent in the legalization of abortion.

Planned Parenthood, one of the nation's most well-known advocates of abortion rights, became one of the immediate recipients of the fallout from that decision. Not only did the aftermath of *Roe v. Wade* affect how the organization could function but based on the next few years of legislation in the United States, the ruling also put in peril where it could operate.

Indiana became the first state to enact tighter restrictions by making it illegal outside of preserving the life of the mother; or in cases of rape or incest up to ten weeks of pregnancy. More recently, Planned Parenthood has been forced to close three clinics that served the greater New York area due to financial and political issues. In North Carolina on July

1, 2023, abortion became illegal after 12 weeks. Clearly, Planned Parenthood and its clients have suffered tremendously over the last few years.

Given the stakes at play, it is important to know why Planned Parenthood is so vital. Abortion care is something that has been provided in some clinics – but not all – even before the bans were enacted. That's just one of many services Planned Parenthood offers in its nearly 600 health centers across the country.

As an institution, Planned Parenthood is the nation's leading provider of high-quality, affordable sexual and reproductive health care for all people, as quoted from their website bio. While abortion care is included, the organization also provides sex education, gender-affirming hormone therapy, annual wellness exams for women, HIV services, contraception care and cancer screenings, among other services.

It is hard to understate how important one of those services, gender-affirming hormone therapy, is and that Planned Parenthood is one of the more common providers. According to a map on the Human Rights Campaign website, twenty-six states so far have banned or are in the process of banning the practice for

those under 18. Efforts to ban care for adults have taken place in Florida and Ohio, though none have been passed into law. In North Carolina and South Carolina, bans for gender affirming care currently restrict minors to access for surgery and puberty blockers.

One of the lesser known services provided may be the organization's screenings for cervical and breast cancer, along with the overall wellness exams clients take annually at the centers. The statistics for developing both are substantial; the American Cancer Society states on their website that the average risk of a woman getting breast cancer sometime during her life is 13 percent while the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) lists around 11,500 new cases of cervical cancer diagnosed every year, with about 4,000 individuals dying.

These examples are only a few reasons why having Planned Parenthood around is important to so many Americans. The fight to keep their facilities open and the service lists unaltered have been long, dating back in North Carolina to as long ago as 2012, when Republicans voted to defund Planned Parenthood. South Carolina has not been successful in their attempts to



Although defunded by the state, Planned Parenthood continues to operate in Charlotte and other locations in North Carolina.

defund Planned Parenthood.

To get in touch with Planned Parenthood's Health Center in Charlotte, prospective patients can call the branch at 704-536-7233. The address is 700 South Torrence Street, Charlotte, NC 28204.

Planned Parenthood's Charlotte Health Center is open Monday to Friday. Check their website, <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center/north-carolina/charlotte/28204/charlotte-health-center-2703-90860>, for opening hours, as each day is different.:

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Asheville and Charlotte provide help after Hurricane Helene hits the LGBTQ+ community

Impact of storm leaves many homeless, without access to power and daily necessities



by Jonathan Golian
Qnotes Staff Writer

It has been almost three weeks since Hurricane Helene hit North Carolina. In the most unexpected of circumstances, what is typically thought to be a weather hazard in coastal regions near the Atlantic Ocean instead took a path through the Piedmont and Appalachia. While significant damage was sustained in states like Tennessee, Georgia and Virginia, North Carolina's western region is where felt most of the storm's fury.

With the significant rainfall that saturated the ground before the initial storm combined with the cresting of dams in several North Carolina counties and winds up to 106 mph, landslides occurred, long-standing trees fell and flooding waters engulfed multiple towns and traveling thoroughfares. These devastating causes and effects led to fatalities as whole stretches of towns were washed away. Millions lost their power, homes and livelihoods.

The LGBTQ+ community, thriving in Asheville and other towns in the North Carolina mountain regions, was not spared the effects of the storm.

One such haven in the region, The Odd in West Asheville, was able to survive much of the damage that occurred in other portions of the city. As reported from the establishment's Instagram page on Oct. 2, a few days after the storm, the



Some of the items collected by Good Company for western NC residents impacted by Hurricane Helene. CREDIT: Courtesy Scott Lindsley

venue changed temporarily from a space that offers such entertainment as music, drag and burlesque to a hub where those in need could gather essentials.

"We opened our doors and gave out all the food we had in house for the first two days," The Odd said in the post. "We may open our doors since we just regained power and offer our space to everyone and anyone in need as a place to come, charge your items and reconnect with friends. We will continue holding space for you all and do the best we can. We do not know what the future holds, but seeing

the community come together and be with each other has given us the energy we need to keep going."

In the days since the storm the venue has become a place where one might find a bit of levity in an otherwise dire situation. Those who know how to get there are able to pick up supplies such as blankets, jackets and food as fall temperatures start to dip all around the region. As of Oct. 11, patrons were invited to come by and check out live music from The Deviled Eggs band. While recovery efforts are constant and change by the day, The Odd is doing its best to be a place of hope and help, as well as an oasis to those needing to blow off a bit of steam, even in the worst of times.

While The Odd is up and running, even at partial capacity, it may be a while before some of the talent that called it home can return to a semi-normal status in the region.

Two of The Odd's frequent members, as well as locals in the community, Kasper Caron and Mo Corthell, are unfortunate examples of those who lost much due to the storm. Caron, better known as the drag king Rob Scene was, prior to the storm, a consistent performer all over North Carolina. Whether traveling to Charlotte, Winston-Salem or the greater Triad area, Caron, along with Corthell and close collaborator Ixeah Caddick toured as the alternative drag presentation Decoupage, acclaimed for their creative stagecraft.

Caddick still continues to reside in the area and participate in community care at locations such as Ebb & Flow, a massage therapy center nearby that has been offering meals and distributing materials to those in need.

Caron and Corthell's lives were so disrupted they made the decision to leave Asheville.

"[We] were in our apartment during the storm," Corthell told *QNotes*. "The morning after the storm I decided to go out and see the aftermath, and literally

the entire area around our complex was either underwater, covered in fallen trees and debris, or washed away. We were very lucky that our complex only had fallen trees and no flood damage.

"We evacuated three days after the hurricane," Corthell recalled. "We came up to Pennsylvania on Sept. 30, and we've been up here since."

While the pair are set to return in order to pack up and try to make things work, much of how they previously made ends meet is still in disarray.

Elsewhere in the region, Charlotte resident Scott Lindsley, owner of Janus Real Estate and the non-profit Good Company, has been hauling goods from Charlotte to the western North Carolina region on a consistent basis.

Good Company is described as a way "to work on community events, including [providing] food and music from Charlotte's diverse communities" (as stated on the 501-C3's newly established Facebook Page). The hurricane has been more than enough reason for Lindsley to shift the same support he and his staff give to the Queen City over to North Carolina's Mountain communities.

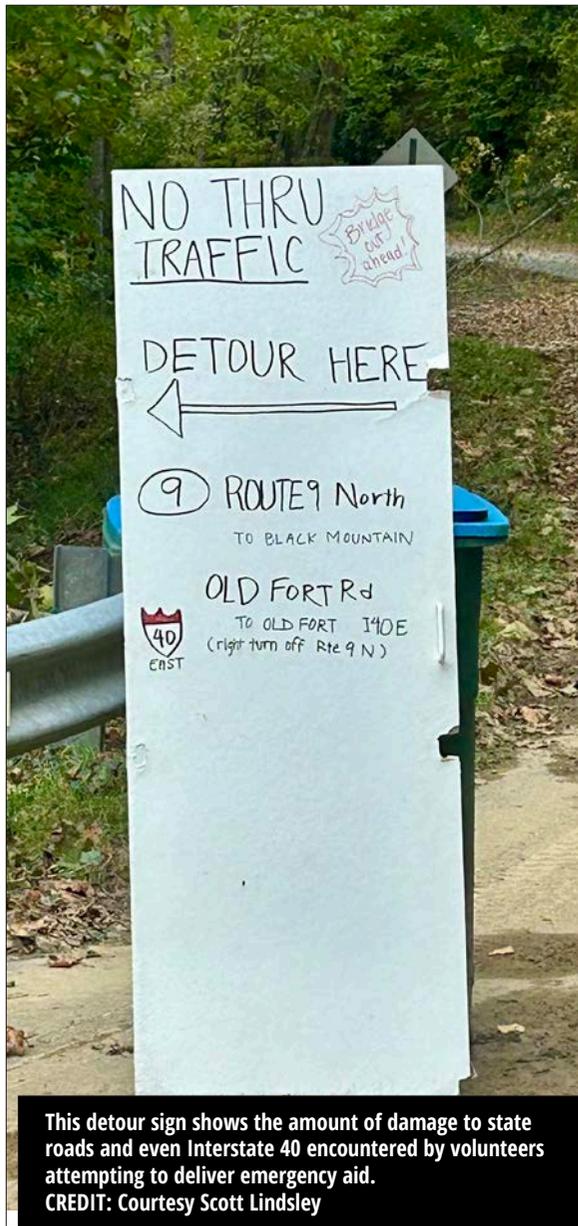
"[With what] our business [does], we have access to buy stuff wholesale. So, we started taking food and water up there a couple days afterwards," Lindsley explained. "Then, near our community, we found [a] restaurant that we go to frequently was serving free food, and a shelter that was also providing a food pantry. So we supplied those folks, along with others, for about the first 10 days, until regular supplies started getting to them from FEMA and other bigger resources."

Lindsley said that he and his partner Joey Hewell were also affected by the hurricane.

In what can be seen as a very close shave, Lindsley and Hewell were already on the road out of Asheville by the time the real damage started to take place. Knowing it was projected to be a big



Staff and friends of the bar and performance space The Odd have come together to provide help for area residents in need. CREDIT: Facebook



This detour sign shows the amount of damage to state roads and even Interstate 40 encountered by volunteers attempting to deliver emergency aid. CREDIT: Courtesy Scott Lindsley

native of Asheville, and Brandon arrived on the scene after meeting his future husband at the restaurant he worked for at the time, Rosetta's Kitchen.

Flash forward to Sept. 26, when the torrential rains from Hurricane Helene crested the French Broad River and resulted in massive flooding. Chronicled in a Reel video on DayTrip's social media, Brandon Davis is seen walking around in water up to his ankles, exploring what had already transpired. The next updates, from Sept. 28 and 29, slowly showed the bar and its buildings being engulfed, with the latter photo taken from above, capturing the back roofs floating away from where Day Trip sits on Amboy.

While the situation is grim, at least this horror story has a good ending. The couple had been working through the damage when a friend, Meredith Sims, created a GoFundMe account for Day Trip. As of the most recent count on the website, the goal had been met, with a grand current total of \$198,922 raised in order for the couple to begin repairs and reopen in the near future.

Brian and Davie shared their thanks in a post dated Oct. 6 on the GoFundMe account and confirmed they would be there for the community everyone that had lost so much because of Hurricane Helene.

"As for support for the community, what we need is for people to keep spreading

the word of the areas decimated by Hurricane Helene. It is not getting the coverage it needs," Brandon said.

"[The] search and rescue is still ongoing. Cadaver dogs are still sniffing out the unimaginable. People have instantly lost so much. Please do not stop sharing, reposting and spreading the word on this event. We need more people to know. The loss is massive and truly a nightmare. Any help you can offer victims of this storm is still so needed. Ask fire departments and churches in North Carolina, Tennessee, South Carolina and Georgia what you can do to help. We need not only people on the ground, but more media coverage of these communities."

From where the community was after the hurricane touched down and left a path of destruction, to where groups and establishments such as Good Company, The Odd, Ebb & Flow and Day Trip have stepped up, the changes have been slow, yet consistent.

For the foreseeable future, this is the state of how western North Carolina will recover, thanks to those who live there and others from outside the area who have come to the region to help and support the community. While it is difficult to predict when things will completely return to a semi-normal state, with people like Lindsley, Hewell and Caddick at the forefront, there is hope. ::

storm, the two made the decision to return to their Charlotte home. After the hurricane had passed, the two checked on their property and community in Asheville to find a good bit had changed.

"Our actual home, fortunately, wasn't damaged, but the well and septic system on the property were washed out and not functional. Electricity was down throughout the community we live in, accessed by a mile-long gravel road that had basically disappeared," Lindsley explained. "The stream that it ran beside changed course and became the road, and we lost part of [the] porch on our home, and had trees on a couple of buildings, but the primary damage we had was the driveway and road into the community."

"You can four-wheel drive into it now. It was not passable at all, and you had to hike in immediately afterwards. Some folks in our community, as well as a couple of volunteer groups with big equipment came in and worked on the road. We were fortunate that we left and it was a good thing we were in Charlotte rather than there."

Brandon and Davie Davis, owners of the bar DayTrip have been using their space to gather supplies for those in need. The couple are also in mourning. Just a month after opening, flood waters swept through the establishment, severely damaging the structure and the interior.

On Aug. 23, the Davises opened DayTrip at 219 Amboy Road. Both owners are veteran bartenders in the area. Davie is a

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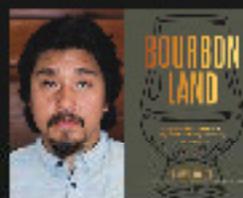
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PAUL BEATTY

EMIKO JEAN



"JAW-DROPPING"
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Log Cabin Prez says Harris and Walz are wrong for America

Radical, far-right fringe group says Harris-Walz ticket is operating for a 'small but powerful cabal of the LGBT left'



by Jonathan Golian
Qnotes Staff Writer

In early September Log Cabin Republican President Charles Moran wrote an opinion piece for Newsweek about Democratic candidates Kamala Harris and Tim Walz. In an apparent effort to dissuade voter support, Moran said the two were attempting to "reinvent themselves as moderate, pro-family, 'not weird' Democrats who simply stand for LGBT equality."

In case you're unfamiliar with the organization or you need a reminder, the Log Cabin Republicans (LCR) are an LGBTQ conservative group that came out of California in the late 1970s and early '80s. The group was inspired by President Ronald Reagan's opposition of the Briggs initiative, a proposed movement by then Republican State Senator John Briggs to prevent gay and lesbian-identifying individuals from teaching in public schools. Since then, the LCR would go on to work behind the scenes in Washington to promote Republican initiatives for administrations from Reagan to former President Trump.

In the Newsweek op-ed, Moran suggests the Harris-Walz ticket is operating for the benefit of a "small but powerful cabal of the LGBT left, which wants to erase the concept of biological sex from society, expose young children to overtly sexualized and ideological content, and strip parents of their rights to make critical decisions about their children."

Moran voices his concerns about multiple topics he claims are alarming to the majority of the LGBTQ+ community, as well as their straight counterparts.

For example, Tim Walz's signing into law in Minnesota the protections for access to gender affirming care. Moran argues that the precedent for minors seeking gender-affirming care could mean anything from "hormone therapy and puberty blockers to irreversible surgeries," calling the law an endorsement by the government to enact "dangerous and unproven treatments for children."

In a FAQ published on the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) site, transitioning for children is explained as being entirely social, whether that means changes to pronouns, names, clothing or even hairstyles. All of these things are expressly surface level, with no medical treatments being involved before puberty. Even after puberty, the types of treatments that may be available would only ever be considered through strict consultation between the youth, their families and the health care providers.

"Gender affirming health care is safe, scientifically proven, and lifesaving," Minnesota Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan said in defense of the bill, which was signed into law last year on March 8, 2023. "When our friends and neighbors tell us that this care will help them feel safer, happier and more themselves, it is our job to listen and believe them. Our number one job is to keep children safe. This executive order does just that. We are saying to our trans loved ones, friends, neighbors and fellow Minnesotans: You belong here. You are safe here, and we want you in our community as your authentic selves."

Moran also lists qualms with Kamala's support, along with the current administration, in allowing for a core change to the language of Title IX, which prohibits discrimination based on sex



Log Cabin President Charles Moran claims Kamala Harris and Tim Walz are pandering to the LGBTQ+ community.
CREDIT: Screen Capture

within any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The argument by Moran states that by adding in "gender identity and sexual orientation" to the phrasing of the law, the change would "codify allowing biological men to compete in women's sports and would force educational institutions to comply, resulting in dire consequences and lost opportunities for female athletes."

As of now, the April 2024 language changes are being battled for, from the lower circuit courts up to the Supreme Court. If enacted, they would have a positive

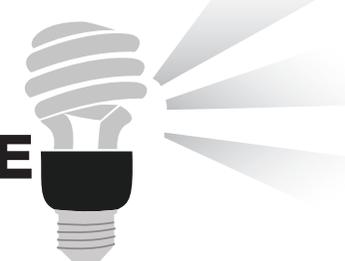
impact on transgender rights, furthering the addition of dignity, respect and self-determination to the life experiences of transgender individuals in America.

According to Moran and the LCR, extending any protections to the LGBTQ+ community is as wrong a choice as the Harris-Walz ticket.

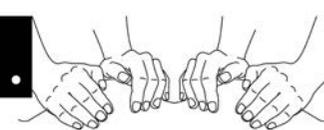
While Newsweek explicitly states the views expressed in the commentary are the writer's own, it does raise the question, why would such an established publication provide a platform for a minority fringe section of the LGBTQ+ community? ::

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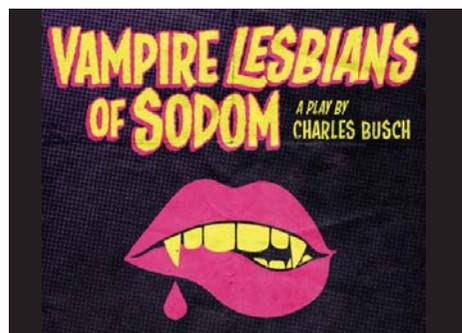
Twelve events guaranteed to bring you & yours good cheer

by Jonathan Golian/ QNotes Staff Writer

Greetings, Merry-makers! Happy Fall 2024! As we enter into the last season of the year, citizens around the Queen City of Charlotte can expect frights, festivities, and good cheer to round out a very eventful year, from here in October to December 31!

Below is a collection of happenings that, starting with this article, **QNotes** will be chronicling up to the final weeks of 2024. Whether themed for Halloween, Thanksgiving or Christmas, be it with music, theater or ecstatic social flair, each event is sure to bring a bounty of great memories and good tidings! Without further ado, here begins some of the best LGBTQ+ events to attend this season.

Oct. 31 to Nov. 16 – VisArt Video Presents Vampire Lesbians of Sodom



After the sold-out performances in 2023, PaperHouse Theatre is bringing back a cult classic play for the 2024 season! Charles Busch's Vampire Lesbians of Sodom tells the story of two fatally attractive vampiresses and their rivalry stretching over thousands of years, from ancient Sodom and 1920's Hollywood, to the modern day of Sin City itself in Las Vegas. If you miss the ghoulishly delight of the Halloween performance, the scares within the horror-comedy stretch halfway through November on participating weekends.

8 p.m. (All Dates) | \$25 to \$28 | VisArt Video | 3104 Eastway Drive, Charlotte, N.C., 28205

Nov. 7 & 8 – The Jinx & DeLa Holiday Show



A little sugar, a little spice; DeLa and Jinx are coming to Charlotte this season to make everything nice! Get ready for an original holiday stage extravaganza put on by two of the biggest names in drag showbiz. With inspired comedy, high-rise spectacle, and songs both new & traditional, Jinx & DeLa's Holiday Show isn't an occasion to miss!

8 p.m. (Both Dates) | \$49 to \$199 | Booth Playhouse at Blumenthal Arts Center

| 130 N Tryon St, Charlotte, N.C., 28202
<https://shorturl.at/GrBzn>

Nov. 15 & 16 – Women's Chorus of Charlotte Presents "Spirit Voices"



'Tis the season for this year's presentation by the Women's Chorus of Charlotte! This year's theme is "Spirit Voices," a transcendent journey through sound, celebrating the beauty and volumes within the human spirit. The concert will feature works like Dan Forest's Ubi Caritas, Jim Papoulis' Sih'r Kalaq (Creative Magic), and Adam & Matt Podd's stunning setting of How Can I Keep from Singing, offering an exploration of spirituality through a lens of diverse traditions and expressions.

7:30 p.m. (Nov. 15), 3 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. (Nov. 16) | \$12 to \$37 | Galilee Center | 3601 Central Avenue, Charlotte, N.C., 28205

<https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?show=234097>

Nov. 19 - Olive Klug w/ Creekbed Carter Hogan



For the Portland-born, Nashville-based singer/songwriter Olive Klug, life has had its ups and downs. Refusing to be put into a box, Olive is gleefully and unapologetically themselves in how they weave their thoughts into their folk-

punk musical leanings. From the gleeful rebellion of "Coming of Age" to the upbeat optimism of "Casting Spells," Olive has a message for everyone, the most important being to always stay true to you.

9 p.m. | \$13 (Advance) | Snug Harbor | 1228 Gordon St., Charlotte, N.C., 28205
<https://ci.ovationtix.com/36423/product/1213706?performanceId=11524778>

Dec. 5 & 7 – Cody Fry Christmas: A Holiday Pops Special



In an event presented by the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, join Cody Fry as he brings the sounds of Christmas to the Queen City. From timeless carols to spirited renditions of holiday favorites, Cody presents each with dazzling arrangements, cheerful melodies and a few surprises in this delightful yule celebration open to audiences of all ages.

7:30 p.m. | \$15 and Up | Knight Theater at Levine Center for the Arts | 550 South Tryon St, Charlotte, N.C., 28202
<https://www.blumenthalarts.org/events/detail/charlotte-symphony-holiday-pops-2>

Dec. 6 & 7 – Gay Men's Chorus of Charlotte Presents "Joy"



As the season rolls back in, so shall the Gay Men's Chorus of Charlotte's annual tribute to the holiday season! Featuring stunning arrangements of beloved holiday favorites, alongside plenty of antics and humor to spare, this year's highlights include Dan Forrest's Joy to the World, Elaine Hagenberg's original O Come, Emmanuel and Anna Gasteyer's love letter to Sugar and Booze.

7:30 p.m. (Dec. 6), 3 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 7) | \$12 to \$37 | Galilee Center |

3601 Central Avenue, Charlotte, N.C., 28205

<https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?show=234098>

Dec. 6 & 7 - Robyn & Charlotte present: YULE, Y'ALL!



For the eighth year running, Robyn O'Ladies & Charlotte Douglas descend upon the Queen City for their annual original holiday drag variety show in the heart of NoDa. Serving up a festive evening promising to be filled to the brim with comedy, original songs and Christmas affair, the duo hope you'll come for a cup (or three) of cheer and see why "Yule, Y'all!" is one of Charlotte's most beloved holiday traditions."

8 p.m. | \$25 to \$35 | The Neighborhood Theatre | 511 E 36th St, Charlotte, N.C., 28205
<https://shorturl.at/9lPye>

Dec. 13 & 14 – One Voice Chorus Annual Holiday Concert: Pride & Joy



As the holidays come marching in, so do the men and women of the LGBTQ+ chorus unit One Voice. This year, the group will be inviting audiences to the First United Methodist Church in Uptown, celebrating queer Pride & Joy with odes to the season via a range of holiday tracks. The One Voice Chorus will be performing through three different time slots over Friday and Saturday, giving everyone the ability to get in on the cheer!

7:30 to 9:30 p.m. (Friday, Dec. 13), 2 to 4 p.m., 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. (Saturday, Dec. 14) | \$25 to \$35 | First United Methodist Church | 501 N Tryon Street, Charlotte, N.C.
<https://onevoicechorus.com/events/>

Dec. 14 & 15 – The 70th Annual Singing Christmas Tree



In a Charlotte tradition spanning 70 years as of 2024, Carolina Voices returns this holiday season for the next iteration. Presented by the MainStage Choir, covered within a 32' specially-designed tree, the choir aims to perform timeless Christmas hits, from the traditional classics and the inspirational, to the more modern pop-infused tracks, there will be something for everyone to be kissed with under the musical mistletoe this December.

3 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. (Dec. 14), 4 p.m. (Dec. 15) | \$19.55 to \$49.00 | Dale F. Halton Theater | 1206 Elizabeth Ave, Charlotte, N.C. <https://www.etix.com>

Dec. 14 – Trans-Siberian Orchestra: “The Lost Christmas Eve” 2024



In annual tradition, the Trans-Siberian Orchestra returns to Charlotte just before Santa’s sleigh gets loaded up for their timeless telling of “The Lost Christmas Eve.” Promising an all-new version of a well-loved story, audiences new and old will get a taste of grandiose theatrics, cherished classic hymns and a rock concert only TSR can produce each year around the world.

3 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. | \$59.99 to \$109.99 | The Spectrum Center | 333 E Trade St, Charlotte, N.C., 28202 <https://bit.ly/4dYiA4q>

**Dec. 14
Charlotte Pride Band Ensemble
Tuba Christmas**



Charlotte Pride Band hosts its first performance of “TubaChristmas,” featuring an ensemble of all Tuba and Euphonium. A unique experience for all holiday music lovers, the presentation was conceived in 1974 by Harvey Phillips as a tribute to his teacher and mentor William J. Bell, who was born on Christmas Day in 1902. If you’d like to attend the show, it takes place at North Lake Mall (off W.T. Harris near I-485) (Dec. 14) at 2 p.m.

For more details visit <https://www.charlotteprideband.org/>

**Dec. 15
Charlotte Pride Band
“Home for the Holidays”**



This presentation by the entire performing poster includes a beloved Puerto Rican Carol, celebratory Hanukkah music, and traditional secular holiday and spiritual Christmas classics sure to make you feel at home for the holidays. One Voice Chorus makes an appearance for a sing along and Mahari Freeman performs “O Holy Night.” (Dec. 15), 4 p.m. Park Road Baptist, 3900 Park Road.

For more details visit <https://www.charlotteprideband.org/>

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Taylor Swift's Chai Sugar Cookies

Tasty Holiday Treats

By QNotes Staff

Popular singer and songwriter Taylor Swift has long been an ally to the LGBTQ+ community. She has made substantial donations to GLAAD and the Tennessee Equality Project and she's always made certain that her concerts were safe spaces for individuals in the LGBTQ+ community, as well as encouraging fans to support the LGBTQ+ community.

And her support of our community doesn't stop there. Last year she released the following statement: "Right now and in recent years, there have been so many harmful pieces of legislation that have put people in the LGBTQ community at risk. It's painful for everyone. Every ally, every loved one, every person in these communities."

She's even talked about us quite a bit in her music, in such songs as "Welcome to New York" and "You Need to Calm Down."

In "Welcome to New York," her ode to the Big Apple, she sings about the city's acceptance of various sexual orientations and gender diversity: "And you can want who you want/boys and boys and girls and girls."

She takes up our mantle again in the song "You Need to Calm Down."

"You are somebody that we don't know/ But you're coming at my friends like a missile/Why are you mad?/When you could

be GLAAD? (You could be GLAAD)/Sunshine on the street at the parade/But you would rather be in the dark ages/Making that sign, must've taken all night/you just need to take several seats and then try to restore the peace/and control your urges to scream about all the people you hate/Cause shade never made anybody less gay..."

In a nutshell, you've got it: Swift loves us as much as we love her.

There are many sides to the artist. In addition to music and activism, she's also fond of baking. One of her favorite items to make are **chai sugar cookies**.

From the woman who promises to have our back and has proudly endorsed Kamala Harris as the next president of the United States, here's a recipe you might want to consider making for or taking to your next holiday gathering.

Taylor Swift's Chai Sugar Cookies

- ½ cup unsalted butter at room temperature
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup white sugar (increase the amount for topping)
- ½ cup powdered sugar (increase the amount for icing)
- 1 large egg
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 cups flour
- ½ tsp baking soda



A great treat for the holidays: Taylor Swift's Chai Sugar Cookies. CREDIT: Screen Capture composite

- ¼ tsp salt
 - 1 chai tea bag (increase the amount for icing)
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a cookie sheet and set aside.
- While oven is warming, beat butter in a large bowl. After it gets fluffy, pour in the vegetable oil.
- Add sugar, powdered sugar, egg and vanilla.
- Add flour, baking soda, salt and chai tea to the bowl and mix.
- Chill the dough for an hour (give or take a few minutes).
- Pour a small amount of white sugar onto a plate, for rolling cookie dough in. Roll the dough and shape into 12 balls

with your hands, covering each one in the white sugar before placing them on your cookie sheet.

Bake for 10 minutes.

While the cookies bake, make your chai icing by mixing together a ½ cup of powdered sugar and half of a chai tea bag. Add a capful of milk with the powdered sugar and then the chai tea bag, stirring together until reaching the icing consistency you prefer.

When the cookies are done and completely cool, cover the tops with chai icing.

Lightly sprinkle red and green granulated sugar for seasonal decoration (optional).

Eat and enjoy! ::

'American Teenager: How Trans Kids are Surviving Hate and Finding Joy in a Turbulent Era'

Out In Print



by Terri Schlichenmeyer
Qnotes Staff Writer

"American Teenager: How Trans Kids are Surviving Hate and Finding Joy in a Turbulent Era"
by Nico Lang
c.2024, Abrams Press
\$30.00
288 pages



In Great-Grandma's day, they hooked. They were high-topped and dainty, too, to

show off a tiny, cheeky-but-demure ankle beneath long skirts. These days, though, they Velcro, tie, strap or you just slip your toes into whatever you put on your feet. You gotta wear your shoes but, as in the new book **"American Teenager"** by Nico Lang, you wish someone would walk a mile in them first.

Seven-hundred-plus. That's how many anti-gay, anti-trans bills were presented to state legislatures around the country last year, many aimed at minors. As if being a teenager isn't hard enough. With this in mind, Lang shadowed seven trans kids, to find out how they and their families cope with our current political landscape.

Fifteen-year-old South Dakotan Wyatt is in the 10th grade. He knows that the lawmakers in his

state "will just keep turning up the boil" on trans bills, and it makes him physically sick. When Lang asked Wyatt to describe himself, Wyatt couldn't do it, as if, says Lang, he was "still in transit, not yet arrived."

Near Birmingham, Rhydian is a good student at the Magic City Acceptance Academy, the only school in the South that specifically welcomes LGBTQIA+ students, and he enjoys the deep love and support of his parents and grandmother. But he's frustrated: Rhydian's been waiting for months for top surgery, which has been put on hold for reasons that are political.

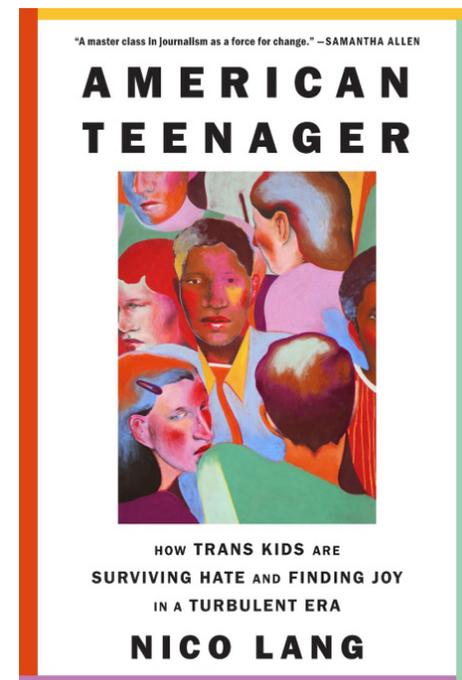
Mykah identifies as gender-fluid, Black,

and bi-racial, and they desperately dream of a future performing career. In Houston, Ruby's beloved church held a re-naming ceremony for her when she turned eighteen. Seventeen-year-old trans boy Clint is Muslim and has managed to avoid scrutiny from his Chicago mosque.

Jack, along with her mother and nonbinary sibling, Augie, were homeless before their mother finally managed to find housing; in the meantime, Jack lost her health care. And in Los Angeles, Kylie has health care, support, friends and an activist mother.

She has advantages that most trans kids can only wish for – and she knows it. Acne. Peer pressure. Social media. Being a teen has always been difficult, even without anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation. In this fine work of journalism, author Nico Lang shows how a handful of kids in one group are coping with governmental policies and life in general. Hint: You can expect the unexpected.

"American Teenager" shows the highs and lows of being a teen with the added stress of politics included – and here, the individuality inside the ordinary is striking and wonderful. Lang is careful to show how these are just typical kids – good-hearted, smart, funny, sarcastic – and it rings throughout each profile how much the discrimination they endure affects their lives and relationships. That's a clarion call, absolutely, but readers who can see



between the lines will also enjoy this book's humor, it's compassion, and the sheer joy of meeting decent, thoughtful teens.

Parents will like this book for its candor, and that goes doubly for adults who love a trans kid. Start "American Teenager" and before long, you'll be hooked. ::

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Fun farewell: an interview with Cyndi Lauper

Legendary composer and singer performs in Atlanta Nov. 10



by Gregg Shapiro
Qnotes Contributing Writer

When I did the tally, I realized that, including this one, I've had the pleasure of interviewing Cyndi Lauper nine times since 1997. Of course, that doesn't match the number of times I've been fortunate to see her perform live – that would be 12, beginning in 1984. And now, as I prepare to see her for a 13th time, it's with a touch of sadness as Lauper is embarking on her farewell tour.

One of the best friends the LGBTQ+ community has ever had, Lauper's multi-artist True Colors Tours, which ran from 2007-2010 and raised funds for the Matthew Shepard Foundation, PFLAG, and HRC, and the subsequent founding of True Colors United in 2008, which continues to help homeless LGBTQ+ youth, are just a couple of examples her activism. Additionally, Lauper is a lifetime musical trendsetter. For instance, she recorded a duet with the late Tony Bennett, more than 10 years before Lady Gaga did, as well as releasing dance-oriented and country music albums, 14 and 8 years, respectively, before Beyoncé. When it comes to her legendary personal style, social media fashion critic Nicky Campbell recently declared Lauper an icon in his review of the 2024 VMA fashions. Now, as we prepare to say farewell to Lauper on the concert tour circuit, she was generous enough to make time for an interview before hitting the road.

Gregg Shapiro: While preparing for this interview I pulled out my 12 ticket stubs from your concerts I've attended since 1984, beginning with two that year in Boston. Do you remember what that first, headlining tour as a solo artist felt like for you?

Cyndi Lauper: I just wanted to make sure I had places to go. I wanted the sound to be really great. I don't know if I accomplished that, but I did have those big speakers that I used to run up on. That's me! I loved that. Because I saw all those wonderful English groups, the ska bands...

GS: You mean Madness and The English Beat and The Specials?

CL: The Specials! I thought they were extraordinary. The singer (Neville Staple), I don't know where his family was from, I guess he could have been Jamaican English. He was so fierce, singing so great, and he climbed up on top of the speaker and put up his fist and he's singing his guts out. I'm thinking, "It's Mighty Mouse!" When I was a kid that was kind of my favorite show, I don't know why [laughs]. But it always influenced me, and I remember in '84, '85 I was still free. When '86 came then I became a prisoner of the system.

GS: Being on a major record label, and all that.

CL: I wasn't allowed to touch anybody.



Lauper says she will try to perform something from every album she's released during her career, which kicked into high gear beginning in 1983.
CREDIT: Curtisy the Karpel Group

I wasn't allowed to go out to them (in the audience) or have them come to me. It was totally different, and I totally hated it.

GS: Did you ever imagine that 40 years later you would be embarking on a farewell tour?

CL: Well, at some point, sure. I think that for me this is the perfect time. Because it's a kind of bucket list of what I always wanted to do. In the beginning, it was roughneck style. Whatever I could jimmy-rig, I did. When I got to a certain point, like we were doing the (live) "Money Changes Everything" video. I had fantasies of a cherry-picker. Because of our budget, everyone said "Well, you can't get a cherry-picker but we'll give you a garbage pail and a pulley system. I thought to myself, "Oh no, like Oscar the Grouch?" I had a friend who was a great interviewer, and she used to interview everybody from a garbage pail. So, of course, that's what my people gave me to go up in the crowd. I thought it was a pulley system. The pulley system was actually 10 men with rope holding it. When I started to shake (while singing), I started to slip out of their hands. They brought me right in. That could have been the reason that the lawyer made me sign my will before I left.

GS: Are you planning to sing songs from each of your albums?

CL: I'm really trying. I didn't get anything from the blues album (2010's "Memphis Blues") in there because there's too many songs. I usually get to the point where (I say), "Hey, guys, if the visuals look good for this, can we switch the songs?" What I did was I wanted to do visuals (on the tour). I wanted to do performance art. That means you have to be on a click. Like when I went out on the (Rod) Stewart

tour and we used the lyric video of "Sally's Pigeons." You can't do that and not be on a click, because the guy running visual has to be on the click. If nobody's together, it's like, "Hey, what the hell now the words are there...no they're not."

GS: It's like a badly dubbed movie.

CL: Yeah. But this time I got this wonderful visual director, Brian Burke, who worked for years with the creative director of Cirque Du Soleil, and not having people flying through the air. In the beginning of all that, that was my fantasy! I wanted to fly through the air, and all I got was a cherry-picker -- not a cherry-picker-but a garbage pail. It wasn't going to happen for me. Now, I'm 71! I'm not gonna go flying through the air. It's a mixture of collabs with artists and art. Art and music. The whole thing is an artist collective, any time you go out on tour. It's not just you. You're with other dance artists if you're a dancer, or you're with musicians. Or you're with lighting designers, that's art, too. We did these collabs and I'm excited to present a show like this because it's something I always wanted to do. Fingers crossed that it all works out. I'm even going to do costume changes this time, which you know I never do because it's so bothersome. But I can do it in a way now that I'm comfortable with. I just want to be able to do this as a gift to all the people that followed me through all my crazy twists and turns. I did all those twists and turns because I kept hitting brick walls. You keep hitting the gatekeeper, you gotta find your way around that gatekeeper.

GS: Earlier this year, "Let the Canary Sing," Alison Ellwood's documentary about you received a theatrical release. After having your memoir published

in 2012, did it feel to you like the documentary was the next logical step, a continuation of sorts?

CL: Well, not for me. I didn't want to have a documentary. It was the pandemic, and everyone was saying, "Everybody's doing documentaries now, Cyn! Come on, what are you doing?" I was like, "I'm not dead!" Then I started watching documentaries on the streaming services and I saw "Laurel Canyon." I felt it was an extraordinarily captivating documentary for me because it was the history of music. All of the people and players in that story were very much influential for me as a growing artist, especially in the '70s. I looked and saw who directed it...

GS: Alison Ellwood!

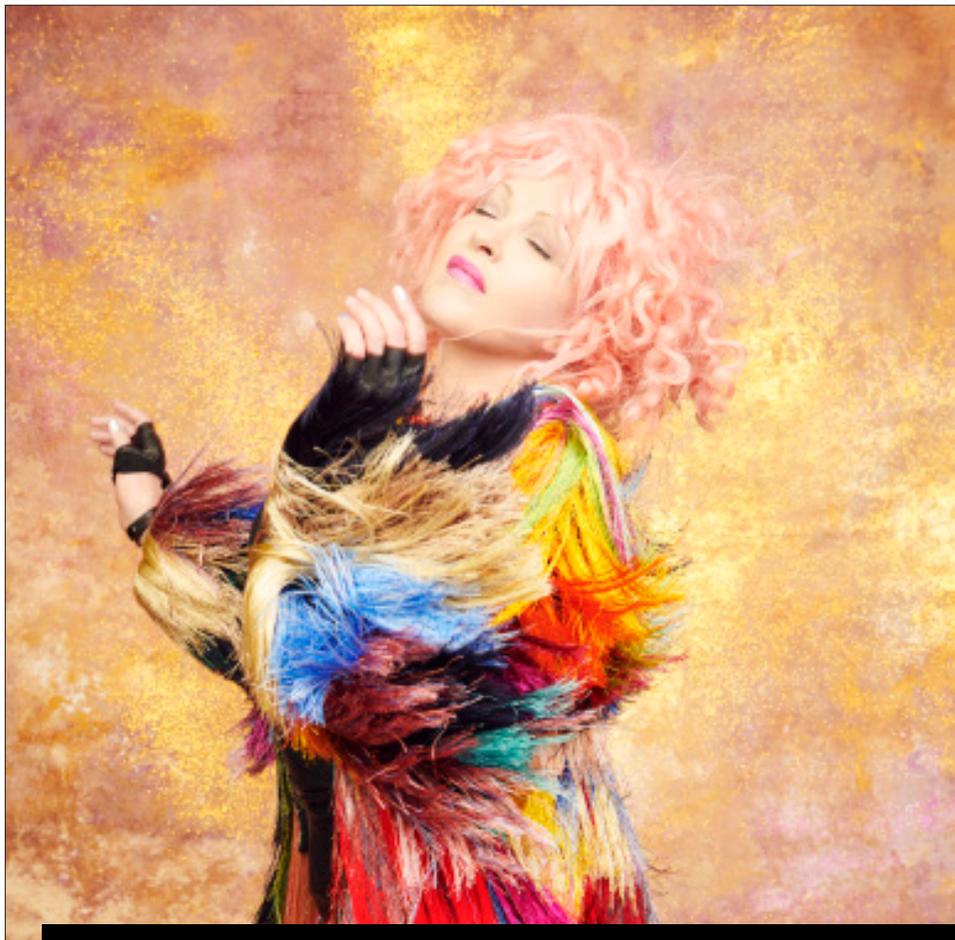
CL: When they came at me again, I said, "I want a film, not a TV special. So, how about Alison Ellwood? She makes films." She wanted to do it! I think she did a good job. It's not your typical story. I don't think anybody's story is typical. Right? We think we know people but I guess we don't. You think, "It's typical! You start a band." Which is always my theory! If something's wrong, start a band, start playing out, you'll feel a lot better!" [Laughs] It doesn't always go that way.

GS: With the end of touring in sight, is there a possibility that you might do more film work for a potential Oscar to complete your EGOT status?

CL: Listen, I happen to love independent films. For that I would write. I wrote "Unhook the Stars" for...

GS: ...the Gena Rowlands movie.

CL: Right! Usually, I like an independent movie because then you get to talk to the director and then you have to



Cyndi Lauper has been a friend and ally to the LGBTQ+ community throughout her career.
CREDIT: Ruven Afanador

understand what their vision is. That's interesting, because each director is a different personality and a different kind of artist. You have to listen and see what story they're trying to tell and then have a couple of different suggestions. When we first wrote "Who Let in the Rain," I wrote it with Allee Willis...

GS: Oh, the late Allee Willis.

CL: Allee Willis was a great songwriter.

GS: Did you see that documentary?

CL: No, I wish I did because I miss her so much. I guess I was talking to the director, and we didn't have a band, so I just sang (sings) "They fall like rain," and, in between, her dog, Orbit would bark. I was like, "Okay, the dog is musical," and everyone laughed. Then, I described it to the director as "Chinese Motown." That would scare most people. To me, I hear influences of every culture in American music. That's how I make my music: with different influences. Like cooking, like spices. I feel grateful that I was brought up in New York City because I was exposed to so many different cultures.

GS: With the upcoming election, which is so terribly important, especially for women and LGBTQ+ folks, is there anything you'd like to say to your fans?

CL: Absolutely! There is an organization called Vote411.org. Taylor Swift recently finally put that up. You go online and you find out all the questions and all the people that are running and what they voted for so that you can make an intelligent decision on who is going to represent you, not them. This war against women has been going on since the '60s, it's just been going and going, and we need to stop it because we are

half the population. As far as the LGBTQ people, you have to vote. You have to be informed. Every time you have to vote, you vote! Don't say, "Oh, it doesn't matter for this one." It matters! Because they put laws in there. There are community people that represent you and you need to start on a community level, a grassroots level to ensure that there are people that are going to speak for you as a human being. We are all human beings here. As I said, women are half the population and LGBTQ, I venture to bet are pretty large part, too. This country was founded on the separation of church and state. Separation! I don't want anybody to have ownership over my body. They say they want local communities in charge but yet they have SCOTUS making federal laws about what you do in your bedroom and what you do with your body and who you are and nullifying families. Oh, I have a lot to say about that. You need to vote! You vote on every voting occasion. You can't just lie down and get rolled over. This is our country, too. And always share your stories. Because people who work with you, that you're friends with, sometimes they don't understand. They don't know. What's really interesting now, from when we started with True Colors United, I think that people do not understand gender identity, which is a whole different thing. If you want people to listen to you, you've got to listen to them. Just because they're different from you, doesn't mean that you have to be like them. You have to learn on both sides of the fence. Knock the fence down, because we're all human beings; just everybody's different, that's all. ::

The southeastern leg of Cyndi Lauper's Farewell Concert tour takes her to State Farm Arena in Atlanta on Sunday, Nov. 8. For ticket information go to <https://tickets-center.com>.

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For LGBTQ+ History month: 'But the Bible says!'

How one mistake accidentally sparked today's anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric

by Lauren Rowello/ Philadelphia Gay News

After months of deliberation, David Sheldon Fearon wrote a letter in 1959 to the committee responsible for developing the Revised Standard Version (RSV) of the Bible. Fearon, recently deceased, was then a 21-year-old seminary student in Canada who hoped to call attention to a mistranslation he'd discovered.

The passage in question: 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, a list of vices which outlines who will not "inherit the kingdom of God." The list emphasizes and clarifies the comment that precedes it, which underlines that the "unrighteous" will not be rewarded with this privilege.

The recipients of Fearon's letter — 22 men who were appointed by 44 Protestant denominations to develop the RSV — had added the word "homosexual" to that list, a move Fearon called a "serious weakness in translation." He even attached an appendix to his letter to prove his interpretation was scholarly and sound.

Although academic rigor is reason enough for a change, Fearon was also concerned for LGBTQ+ people like himself who had been "wronged and slandered by the incorrect usage of this word."

Documentarians of the film "1946: The Mistranslation that Shifted a Culture" highlight an emerging connotation at the time of the translation, naming "homosexual" as synonymous with a "pedophile" or a "molester." Fearon underlined in his letter that misconflating the two concepts already had serious consequences.

"Since this is a holy book of Scripture sacred to the Christian, I am more deeply

concerned because well-meaning and sincere, but misinformed and misguided people (those among the clergy not excluded) may use this Revised Standard Version translation of 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 as a sacred weapon, not in fact for the purification of the church, but in fact for injustice against a defenseless minority group..." he wrote.

The RSV committee had convened in 1929 to create a Bible that would reintegrate some of the "beauty and power" lost by the overly literal translation in another option for English speakers — the American Standard Version of 1901. The group aimed to bridge the need for a more modern and accurate translation with the need to reflect the true meaning of the original texts, de-emphasizing word-for-word translations.

In their process, translators shorthanded two Greek words — *malakoi* and *arsenokoitai*, which can have multiple meanings but have sometimes been translated as "effeminate" and "men who share a bed" respectively.

"Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God," reads the American Standard Version of 1901, which the RSV committee was hoping to update.

After visiting the original Greek, the RSV committee combined the Greek terms into a simplified, more modern word they'd hoped would convey the same meaning: "homosexual."

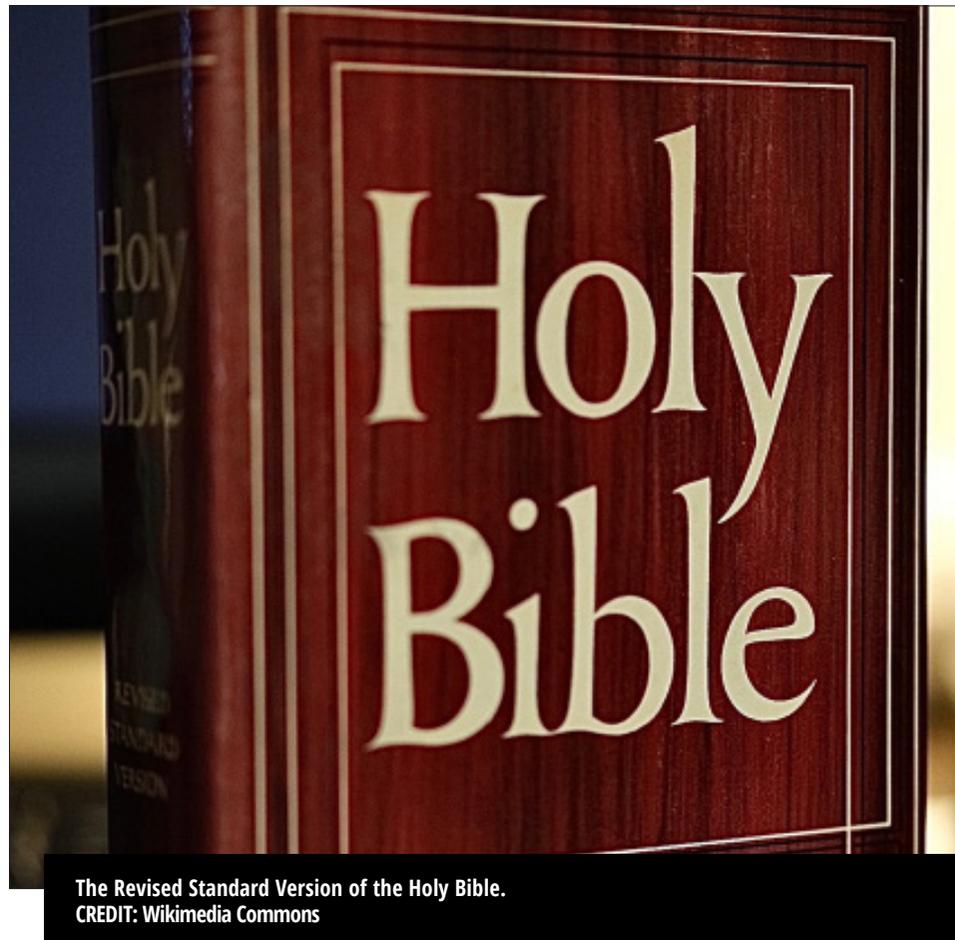
But many scholars — including Fearon — feel this was an error of oversimplification, as the original Greek likely required a more nuanced reading.

Rather than broadly referring to the queer community or even specifically to gay men, some of the earliest translations point to *malakoi* as meaning "weak" — more likely referring to moral weakness and a lack of self-control in this context. Coupled with the word *arsenokoitai* — which today's scholars liken to using power as means to exploit others in broader ways, a better shorthand might be "sexual abusers."

Christian researchers Kathy Baldock and Ed Oxford recently discovered the correspondence between Fearon and Luther Allan Weigle, head of the RSV committee, and were surprised to learn that the mid-century team of translators had been receptive to Fearon's feedback about the mistranslation.

Weigle assured Fearon the information he provided would be considered when the team met again to continue revisions — but this would not occur for almost ten years.

In 1968, the RSV committee reconvened — and those scholars decided to strike their phrase about "homosexuals," replacing it with "sexual perverts" in 1 Corinthians. It's a broader description that more accurately



The Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible. CREDIT: Wikimedia Commons

conveys the injustices warned about in the original Greek — even if by today's standards, the phrase needs additional refining if the hope is to condemn abusers and exploiters.

Despite the win, the change came too late. Two decades of damage had already been done, cementing the mistake's legacy.

The New American Standard Version, for instance — a revision of the text that the RSV was based on, which never included the term "homosexual" — added the word for this updated version in 1971.

Because the correction didn't come sooner, the 1946 version of the RSV became the first standard text circulated throughout the evangelical boom of the 1950s through '80s that birthed today's extremist, conservative Christian movement. And dozens of future translations and interpretations were based on it — many of them further skewing from original Greek, Hebrew or Aramaic words and context.

Although the RSV translators only included the word "homosexual" in just one passage, the mistranslation informed future translators — who added the word at least five more times to other versions of the Bible as an alternative to broader language that had been used in the past.

Some anti-LGBTQ+ Christians now promote dozens of additional passages through a queerphobic lens. This has resulted in countless experiences of religious trauma — creating both internal and external conflicts for people brought up in queerphobic faith traditions.

Although religiosity is often associated with lower risks for depression and

suicidality for other groups, lesbian, gay, bisexual and questioning adults who view religion as important aspects of their lives are still at increased risk for suicide — with those who are questioning placed at the highest risk.

One study showed that the religious views of parents doubled suicide risk for LGBTQ+ young adults. Conversion therapy — which is largely pursued by parents and offered by religious leaders — can also double an LGBT person's risk for suicide attempt.

According to the Trevor Project, Pennsylvania is the state with the largest number of identified conversion therapy practitioners by a strong margin. A 2022 report by the Trevor Project notes that 16% of LGBTQ+ youth in Pennsylvania have been threatened with conversion therapy or have experienced conversion therapy — a practice that is still legal in the state, though five state boards recently adopted new policies to oppose it.

A growing movement to not only welcome but affirm and protect LGBTQ+ people is emerging in some Christian spaces — and as more people learn about how the Bible gets translated, the interest in reclaiming mistranslated texts for the purpose of calling out abusers (rather than LGBTQ+ people) is beginning too.

This brings hope for the next generation. Meanwhile, conservatives continue to lean on mistranslations to condemn the queer community and harm LGBTQ+ people — as the "sacred weapon" Fearon predicted they might. ::



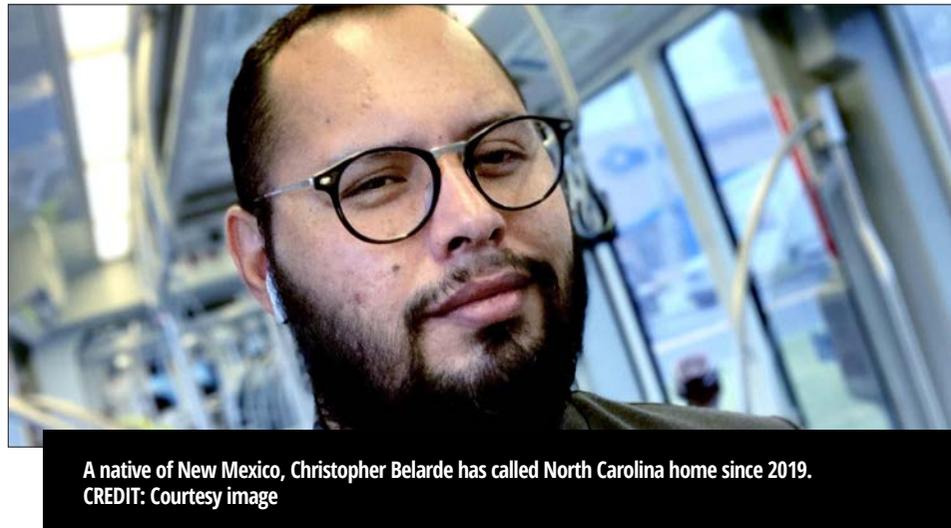
The poster for "1946: The Mistranslation that Shifted a Culture." CREDIT: Publicity Image

Our People: Christopher Belarde

Director of Charlotte Pride Band talks about music, life and more



by David Aaron Moore
Qnotes Staff Writer



A native of New Mexico, Christopher Belarde has called North Carolina home since 2019.
CREDIT: Courtesy image

Christopher Belarde is a busy man. He does a lot of things and has many interests. In fact, his partner Billy Lawson once asked him if he ever thought about just doing nothing. His response? "I would die."

While we think Belarde also has dramatic talents he has yet to tap into, it's clear he's high energy, focused and always on the move. With as much as he has on his plate, those are admirable skills to possess.

In the Queen City, he's well known as the director of the Charlotte Pride Band. But there's so much more to know, and you're about to learn a lot of that right now.

David Aaron Moore: Tell us about your involvement with the Charlotte Pride Band.

Christopher Belarde: So, with Charlotte Pride band I'm currently, in short term, the President. We have a board of operators, like order directors that operate the band, and I'm currently the chairperson of the board. I've been on the board for probably the last five years now, I joined the band shortly after I moved to Charlotte. So, yeah, that's pretty much what I'm doing with the band right now. I also play in the Jazz Ensemble, as well as the wood ensemble.

DAM: What instruments do you play?

CB: I play trumpet and I play double horn, which a lot of people call French horn, but most horn players will say double horn, or just horn, but those are my two instruments.

DAM: Where did your interest in music begin?

CB: I grew up in New Mexico. Being Hispanic and Mexican, and also growing up Catholic, I guess the trumpet was always such a powerful instrument that I just always had my mind set on. I don't think that I went in wanting to play percussion or Woodwinds or saxophone. It's like I knew I wanted to play the trumpet as soon as I got to grade school, so I started in fifth grade playing trumpet. I didn't know it was something, you know, very magical. My mom was a single mom, and it was so important for her. I don't know if she knew this, but it was so important for me to own my own instrument. I think that's kind of what continued my interest, like my mom making it so important that we're not renting an instrument, but, you know, buying me an instrument and saying, This is your trumpet. This is going to be something that you're going to carry with you [throughout] your life, essentially. And I still have my student trumpet! So I think that's where it started for me. Listening to mariachis growing up and the folk music of Mexican culture.

DAM: In addition to the work that you do with the band, do you have

another career?

CB: Yeah. I'm a human resource specialist. Currently I'm a consultant, a human resources consultant. I've been working in that field for 10 years, and two years ago I started breaking into diversity, equity, inclusion, and getting a certification in that, as well as my SHRM [Society for Human Resources Management] certification.

DAM: How long have you been in Charlotte and what prompted you to move here?

CB: I moved here in 2019. My partner, Billy [Lawson], actually got a job offer to move here from New Mexico. We met in Las Cruces, New Mexico. I had purchased a home there in New Mexico, so he moved first. The goal was for me to tidy up things with the house, figure out if we're going to sell it or if we're going to rent it out, or what was going to happen. And then once that was settled, I would move here, too. So he moved in December 2018 and I moved in April of 2019.

DAM: What kind of music do you enjoy listening to?

CB: Oh, that's a good one. Let's see. So I run a lot of Spotify. I can tell you some of my heavy rotation right now because I was just listening to an album. I was listening to Radiohead earlier this morning. So definitely that and Tove Lo is one of my favorite artists right now. Muse is one of my favorite groups, too, and I also like Charlotte Adige'ri and Bolis Pupul. They have some great international and electronic music that they put together.

DAM: Tell us about your partner.

CB: Billy. He definitely is my biggest supporter with the band. He keeps me sane. And he's always volunteering. He's always like, you know, willing to give me feedback whenever we're trying to prepare for concerts, proofreading things that I might get ready to publish like music composer notes. He definitely is a huge supporter. He doesn't play any musical instruments. So typically, on Thursdays, he goes out with the other other partners that [don't] play in the band, and they have their own group night on Thursdays. He is definitely into

literature, so he loves reading books. He's gotten into, this last year, wanting to delve into playing piano [and] seeing if it's something that he's really into. [Professionally,] he's a product analyst. He's worked in analytics for Allstate and he was working with a workforce management team where he led a team. That's what brought him here, being promoted to a team leader. And he's loved moving out here

DAM: You have a lot going on and a broad variety of interests. Tell me about the other things in your life that keep you occupied?

CB: Sewing, I got Billy hooked on crocheting because I did crocheting, miniature painting, board games, D&D trading card games like Lakana Magic. The old Harry Potter trading card game. We bought a bunch of those packs off of eBay. Let's see. Watercolor painting, video games. But yeah, I just have so many things that I collect and are part of my hobbies, [especially] sewing. I have so much fabric. [Laughs] I go places, and if I like fabric I see, I'll just buy the fabric.

DAM: So for people who are interested in joining the band, how does that process go?

CB: We're a community band, so we'll never have auditions for either jazz or concert. If you're interested, just visit the website and make an appointment or just show up at a meeting one day, Brad will reach out ... with all the details, you know, and it's whether you're interested in jazz with ensemble or both. ::

If you'd like to see and hear the Charlotte Pride Band in performance, don't miss "Tuba Christmas," December 14 at 2 p.m. at Northlake Mall and "Home for the Holidays" December 14 at 4 p.m. at Park Road Baptist, along with Mahari Freeman and One Voice Chorus. For more details take a look at the Qnotes Holiday Events Calendar or visit the Pride Band website at <https://www.charlotteprideband.org/>

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