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3 Key Things for LGBTQ+ Prospective Parents to Know

by Dana Rudolph | drudolph@mombian.com
contributing writer

Starting a family is always a momentous decision. Doing so as an LGBTQ+ person often means additional complexities and considerations, especially at a time when our rights and identities are under attack. For those considering parenthood or newly decided on it, here are three things I would emphasize right now.

LGBTQ+ parents and our children have a long history

What you are doing (or contemplating) is not a newfangled social experiment, nor unknown territory. The first large wave of LGBTQ+ people intentionally parenting after coming out started in the 1970s, evolving into the "gayby boom" of the 1980s. (The earliest use of the term was by Newsweek in 1990, noting a movement that already existed.) The first comprehensive book on queer parenthood of any identity came out four decades ago during that boom (and contributed to it): Cheri Pies's 1985 "Considering Parenthood: A Workbook for Lesbians."

Even before that, since about the 1940s, out LGBTQ+ people were parenting, mostly in the context of people who had children in different-sex marriages before coming out. And LGBTQ+ parents and our children can also be found in centuries past, arguably all the way back to Sappho

see **MOMBIAN,** *page 7*



Menino was an ally to the black LGBTQ+ communities

by Rev. Irene Monroe
contributing writer



Mayor Thomas Menino. City of Boston Archives, via Wikimedia Commons.

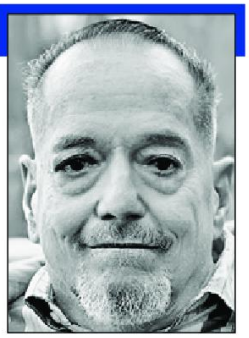
The Boston Convention and Exhibition Center was renamed Saturday, July 12, to honor Mayor Thomas Menino. For more than 20 years, Menino was major to all the people of Boston. He had a deep commitment to equality, and he understood the plight of the underdog. The LGBTQ+ black community had an ally in Menino at a time when our struggles mainly went unheard.

Every year, Mayor Tom Menino's Office of Arts, Tourism, and Special Events put on its annual Boston GospelFest at City Hall Plaza. And because the Gospelfest was a public and taxpayer-funded community event,

see **MONROE,** *page 4*

OBITUARY

Larry Basile



Courtesy photo.

By Bay Windows Staff

Age 75, passed away peacefully on June 14, 2025, on Gay Pride Day in Boston, a city he loved deeply.

Born February 26, 1950, at Fort Belvoir, VA, to Colonel Anthony L. and Marion F. (Heaney) Basile, Larry was raised in West Roxbury and graduated from Xaverian Brothers High School in 1968. He briefly attended St. John's Seminary before earning an MBA from William & Mary in 1975 and completing graduate studies at NYU Business School.

A visionary entrepreneur and LGBTQ+ pioneer, Larry founded Dial Info Services in the 1970s, the first

see **BASILE,** *page 7*

Trump Administration Ends Specialized 988 Suicide Prevention Services for LGBTQ+ Youth



Photo via Adobe Firefly.

By Bay Windows Staff

The Trump administration officially terminated the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline's specialized services for LGBTQ+ youth on July 17, ending a program that had served more than 1.3 million young people since 2022.

The closure means callers to 988 can no longer "press 3," text "PRIDE," or connect with counselors specifically trained to respond to the unique needs of LGBTQ+ youth and young adults under 25. The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) announced the decision in June, stating it would "no longer silo LGB+ youth services" to focus on serving all help seekers.

The move has drawn sharp criticism from mental health advocates who point to alarming suicide rates among LGBTQ+ youth. According to The Trevor Project's most recent survey, approximately 40% of LGBTQ+

see **988,** *page 2*

MA Hate Crimes Decline Overall, But Antisemitic Incidents Surge

By Bay Windows Staff

Massachusetts reported fewer hate crimes in 2024 than the previous year, but the data reveal troubling trends in bias-motivated incidents targeting specific communities, according to preliminary state statistics released this month.

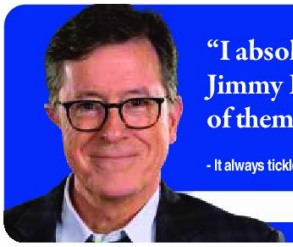
The state recorded 466 hate crimes in 2024, down from 561 incidents in 2023 — an overall decrease that marked progress in combating bias-motivated violence. However, 2024 still recorded the second-highest number of hate crimes of any year on record.

The decline was driven largely by a significant drop in anti-transgender hate crimes, which fell nearly 42% from 24 incidents in 2023 to 14 in 2024, matching 2022 levels.

But antisemitic hate crimes surged 20.5%, rising to 130 incidents in 2024 compared to 105 in 2023. This represents a dramatic increase from recent years — just 39 such incidents were reported in 2020.

Other religious bias crimes remained relatively low, with 23 incidents targeting various faiths: 10 anti-Islamic incidents, six against "other"

see **HATE CRIMES,** *page 2*



"I absolutely love that Colbert got fired. His talent was even less than his ratings. I hear Jimmy Kimmel is next. Has even less talent than Colbert! Greg Gutfeld is better than all of them combined, including the Moron on NBC who ruined the once great Tonight Show."

- It always tickles me when someone praises someone I've never heard. Like, who is Greg Gutfeld? And why is "Moron" capitalized? Is that a job? Like Moron in Chief?

more in Billy Masters on page 6!

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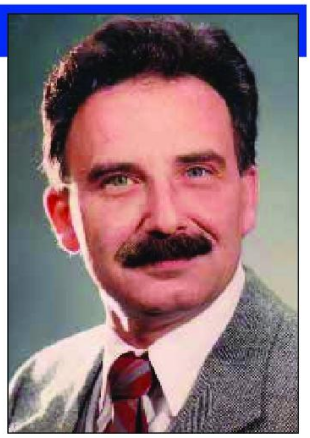
John F. Kelly

September 4, 1942 to July 4, 2025
Submitted by John McLaughlin



Courtesy photo.

For John Kelly, service to others was central to how he interacted in the world. No matter who he encountered, he was determined to find something he could like about the person. He understood how much each of us needs love, respect, and support. Perhaps his great sensitivity to others came from his having been given up for adoption by his birth mother. When she left him with the Kelly's who later adopted him, she said she was going to get him an ice cream cone, but she never returned.

In his early years, he lived with James Kelly and Bridget Kelly in South Boston, MA. After graduating high school, he enlisted in the Air Force and served for five years.

He attended Northeastern University in Boston, MA and subsequently built a career at Arthur D. Little, heading their Graphics and Printing department of thirty staff who admired him.

At St. Cecilia's Catholic Church in Boston, he served at Masses helping people receive Holy Communion, and was instrumental in establishing the Rainbow Ministry, which welcomes and celebrates the LGBTQ+ community. John was always seeing what he could do to help. He was a President of GBBC (Greater Boston Business Community) and an active contributor. When he was part of the retirement community at Fenno House, he organized yard sales, auctions, fund raisers, Halloween parties and all sorts of events to liven up the place.

He was a loyal, generous, and thoughtful friend to so many and how he loved his Chloe (Apricot toy poodle) and other pets.

A great and happy shock in his life was being discovered and warmly embraced by his half-sisters, Bernice Navin, Florida and Patricia and Peter Brun, of Burlington and his niece, Sarah Buhler of Tewksbury, and his nephew Alan Brun of Salem. This was the treat, the ice cream cone, promised and the unexpected union of two parts of his life.

Donations may be made in memory of John to St. Cecilia's at www.stceciliaboston.org. For guestbook gormleyfuneral.com.

Hate Crimes

Continued from page 1

religions, two each targeting Catholic and other Christian faiths, two anti-Sikh incidents, and one targeting atheism.

The mixed data come as communities nationwide grapple with rising tensions and bias incidents. While Massachusetts officials noted the overall decrease in hate crimes, the sharp rise in antisemitic incidents reflects broader national concerns about religious tolerance and community safety.

The data underscores the complex nature of hate crime trends, where overall improvements can mask concerning increases targeting specific vulnerable communities.

988

Continued from page 1

youth considered suicide in 2024, making them more than four times as likely to attempt suicide than their peers.

The specialized service was created with bipartisan support when President Trump signed legislation in 2020 establishing 988 as the national suicide prevention number, recognizing that LGBTQ+ youth face heightened suicide risks. Congress had most recently appropriated $33 million specifically for the LGBTQ+ service within the broader $520 million 988 budget.

While the general 988 service remains available to all callers, mental health experts warn that removing specialized support could be "destabilizing" for vulnerable youth who had begun to rely on counselors with shared experiences and specific training in LGBTQ+ issues.

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline can still be reached by calling or texting 988, with general crisis counselors available 24/7.

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GSC's 'Garbologists' Strikes Gold in the Daily Grind

The Garbologists, Gloucester Stage Company, through July 29. 978-281-4433 or gloucesterstage.com



Paul Melendy and Thomika Marie Bridwell in Gloucester Stage Company's "The Garbologists." Photo. by Shawn G. Henry.

By Jules Becker
Contributing Writer

Are sanitation workers modern day archaeologists? Think of the famous idiom that "One man's trash is another man's treasure." Many audience members at Gloucester Stage Company's veritable trove of a regional premiere of "The Garbologists" by Lindsay Joelle ("Trayf") are likely to take this insight seriously. Moreover, artistic director Rebecca Bradshaw's smartly you-are-there staging should make Joelle's affecting and informative play a delightful eighty minute dig.

In making the GSC production a real experience, scenic designer Kristin Loeffler has placed bags of refuse not only onstage but also at the edges of the audience. Adding to the authenticity, Costume designer Jen Greeke has production stage manager Marsha Smith and assistant stage manager Colby Hairston dressed in sanitation worker uniforms that match those of Paul Melendy as veteran garbage collector Danny and Thomika Marie Bridwell as newbie Marlowe. Smith and Colby rate kudos for their smooth movement of the two-part garbage truck — the front where the workers sometimes sit and the back where the bags are actually collected.

Do not be fooled. "The Garbologists" is much more than a visually and verbally precise look at the title pair's profession. Danny and Marlowe dig into each other's back story, goals and points of view as much as the intricacies of their work. Initially the two characters could not be more different. Danny reads a Staten Island newspaper while Marlowe reads the New York Times. Danny speaks of each garbage truck having its own personality while Marlowe, a summa cum laude graduate of Columbia University, who studied art history, is prepared to rely on her knowledge and self-confidence. Danny vents about his wife Tiffany's brief restraining order and his difficulty spending time with his son. Marlowe eventually reveals that her son died of cancer at the age of four.

Playwright Joelle is astute enough to make her characters complex and never stereotypical. Danny may call Marlowe "a Shakespeare on my route," but he surprises her by speaking of the fiction of significant African American writer Zadie Smith. For her part, Marlowe turns out to favor the New York Rangers — Danny's favorite hockey team. Marlowe may act as though she does not really want to be Danny's partner, but the two sanitation workers ultimately realize that they have a lot in common as human beings struggling with personal challenges as well as the demands of their jobs.

Melendy and Bridwell skillfully capture both the conflicts and the growing understanding between their characters. Melendy has all of Danny's authority as he advises Marlowe about how to judge the content of the garbage bags (especially avoiding dangerous items), lifting only one bag at a time to avoid backaches and learning about a person "from what they throw away." The comically gifted actor makes the most of a moment when Danny invites Marlowe to look at the dildos in a box put out for collection. Bridwell catches Marlowe's inner strength volleying responses to sharp comments from Danny and her vulnerability as she speaks about her late son. Theatergoers should find a surprise revelation near the end, tying the characters together properly.

Marlowe introduces the title word for sanitation workers. After seeing Joelle's disarming play, audience members may agree that 'garbologists' are refuse scientists. On the strength of GSC's beautifully bagged premiere, theatergoers should find the invitation at the end of "The Garbologists" to "share some trash" exhilaratingly understandable.

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In the face of fear, grasping hope

Let's buy our MAGA friends a cup of coffee

by Richard J. Rosendall | rrosendall@starpower.net
contributing writer

Florida Congressman Maxwell Frost was appalled by the sweltering, overcrowded, and unsanitary conditions at the Alligator Alcatraz internment camp in the Everglades.

I wonder if he is equally appalled by our short attention spans, since that story was replaced (for a while at least) by Donald Trump's latest distraction.

I would be happy to keep my attention on Frost, who is far more decent, honest, and faithful to the Constitution than our president. But Trump, rewriting history, was blaming Democrats for his own endless hyping of conspiracy theories about Jeffrey Epstein's client list.

Frost's outspokenness favorably contrasts with the enabling compliance of the White House press corps, whom MSNBC's Lawrence O'Donnell described as "using their talking-to-pets voices" with Trump instead of yelling out questions as they did to Joe Biden. But all of that may be changing with the refusal by Trump's MAGA followers to drop the obsession that he himself stoked over Epstein, who died during Trump's first term.

Trump's gift for deflection may at last be failing him. It is unclear why he expected his base to be more titillated by an old story on Sen. Adam Schiff's house mortgage in Maryland than by their fantasies of Deep State orgies at Epstein's private retreat in the Virgin Islands.

Trump is all about putting show ahead of substance. His exploitation of bigotry, viciousness and gullibility has millions of Americans too busy indulging their paranoia to remember that sabotage and plunder are not governance.

The only way to overcome the reigning madness and meanness, I suspect, is appealing to the better angels of our nature, in the words of Lincoln. That is always an uphill battle.

I have decided to counter the gloom by making a list of good things I am observing, large and small.

The dogs in my neighborhood make new friends within two seconds. Summer storms are often preceded by a cool, refreshing breeze. Straight men are increasingly comfortable interacting with gay men without overcompensating like a closeted senator. Most people I chat with are not remotely as stupid as the president of the United States.

Few Metro riders are committing assaults or armed robberies. Most motorists do not blast their horns outside my window in the middle of the night. I do not work on Sunday morning, unlike the people setting up booths at the flea market. I did not suffer a fatal fall from a greenhouse roof during an ICE police raid.

The McDonald's up the street is diverse and friendly. A Metropolitan Police officer wearing a name badge and no mask, who has just picked up his breakfast, holds the door open for me. Inside, a kind older lady overcomes a language barrier to buy a poor man breakfast.

Back home I watch as MSNBC's "The Weekend" co-host Eugene Daniels mentions his husband from South Dakota in describing the adverse effects on rural communities of defunding PBS and NPR. Despite ramped-up immigration enforcement and expanding revenge against Trump's perceived enemies, erasing America's diversity remains a monumental task for Trump and company, who pose the true threat to our country.

Even escapist summer fare reminds me of current events. I recently reread the 1962 science fantasy novel A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle prior to attending a new musical adaptation. The children in the story use something called a tesseract to travel to other planets. This transport method remains purely imaginary, as far as I am aware. But how would we know about an ultra-secret government program? Perhaps someone at Fox News would tell us. Unfortunately, several of them are now working for Trump and assisting with cover-ups.

Why not treat this as an opportunity to buy our disillusioned MAGA friends a cup of coffee and lend a sympathetic ear? Surely we can endure an hour's discomfort if it might help heal our republic.

Speaking of Trump hirelings, I would like to ask Deputy FBI Director Dan Bongino if he thinks he spends enough time at the gym. He is so beefed up, he looks overinflated. Despite my opposition to violence and an otherwise reasonable grip on reality, I briefly wonder if sticking him with a pin would make him fly around the room like a pricked balloon.

Please do not attempt such a thing lest you be sent to Alligator Alcatraz. Too many of us already imprison ourselves in an alternate reality while all around us the apparatus of fascism advances.

We begin to halt it by recognizing one another's humanity.

Richard Rosendall is a writer and activist who can be reached at rrosendall@me.com.

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Monroe

Continued from page 1

it was open to all, including its black LGBTQ+ community. However, when Pastor Donnie McClurkin was billed as the main event, many of us in the Black LGBTQ+ community decided not to attend the 2010 event. And neither did the Menino.

Menino ranked among the most pro- LGBTQ+ mayors across the country. He refused to participate in Boston's St. Patrick's Day parade when organizers barred an LGBTQ+ group from participating in the march. Menino blocked the Atlanta-based Chick-fil-A chain from setting up shop in Boston because of its homophobic remarks. He was always an advocate for marriage equality. He attended our gay pride parades and was there for us during the AIDS crisis. Menino utilized his power and advocacy on behalf of LGBTQ+ civil rights, and he succeeded in most instances.

However, when it came to persuading many of Boston's black ministers on LGBTQ+ civil rights, Menino's struggle had been and was like that of other elected officials and queer activists—immovable. Sadly, many of Boston's black ministers were in lockstep with conservative ministers across the country.

Menino's absence from 2010's Gospelfest was another sad example of how Boston's black ministers, an influential and powerful political voting bloc of the mayor's, would rather compromise its decades-long friendship with City Hall than denounce McClurkin's appearance, putting the mayor between a rock and a hard place with LGBTQ+ and African American communities, especially its black LGBTQ+ community.

For many in the black LGBTQ+ community, we, too, along with our heterosexual Christian brothers and sisters, excitedly await Boston's annual Gospelfest. Gospelfest brought together large gatherings of black church-going Christians across Greater Boston, regardless of denominational affiliation, in fellowship with one another. For many black heterosexual Christians, Gospefest was a second worship service for the day because it was always held on a Sunday after church service. However, for many black LGBTQ+ Christians, Gospelfest was our only worship service for the year. With too few black "open and welcoming" churches in Greater Boston, Gospelfest afforded many of us in our black LGBTQ+ communities a sweet moment- as unabashedly Christians and unapologetically LGBTQ+—in corporate worship and celebration with our faith communities in an inclusive and public space.

"God did not call you to such perversions. Your only hope is Jesus Christ. Were it not for this Jesus, I would be a homosexual today. This God is a deliverer" was just an example of the continuous flow of McClurkin's homophobic remarks stated at the Church of God in Christ's (COGIC) 102nd Holy Convocation International Youth Department Worship Service in November 2009, just months before being invited to Gospelfest.

Ms. Julie Burns, the then-director of Arts, Tourism, and Special Events for the Mayor's Office, was unaware of McClurkin's anti-gay rhetoric. When Burns called me on June 24th about the McClurkin kerfuffle with Gospelfest just weeks away, she was apologetic.

"I learned yesterday—through the Phoenix article regarding the City of Boston Gospel Fest—of the depth and breadth of Donnie McClurkin's views on the Gay community. I am embarrassed to say that I was not aware of this, and we obviously should have vetted him further. Gospel Fest is in its 10th year and is arguably the largest Gospel event in New England. Minister McClurkin was recommended to us by a number of people, and we were swayed by his artistic honors. Of course, this does not excuse the situation that we now find ourselves in! Please rest assured that Mayor Menino did not know anything about this and would never condone "hate speech" of any kind, "Burns wrote in an email to me.

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Back in the Land

by Judah Leblang | www.JudahLeblang.com
contributing writer

Though I often returned to my hometown—*Cleveland, Ohio*—to visit, and to take care of my elderly mother who passed away last year, I'd never had the chance to live back in the city that formed me. And so, in early April I packed up my car and headed 700 miles west, a three-month experiment to see if Thomas Wolfe was wrong, and if it was possible to go back home to a place I hadn't lived since the early '80s, when I had a different name, a different life.

Back then I was just out of college, a new graduate with a degree in deaf education and no idea of how to actually teach the deaf and hard of hearing students who filled my classes in the Cleveland Public Schools. I was closeted, still wrestling with my sexuality, trying (and failing) to ignore it. (It would be five long years before I finally crept out of the closet in Columbus, Ohio in 1985.)

Now, at 68, I was coming back as a semi-retired writer, a Senior Citizen, with my parents gone and the city changed, half the population vanished—its residents lost out to the suburbs—generic, far-flung—or moved out of state (like I did) out of state, to points east or west.

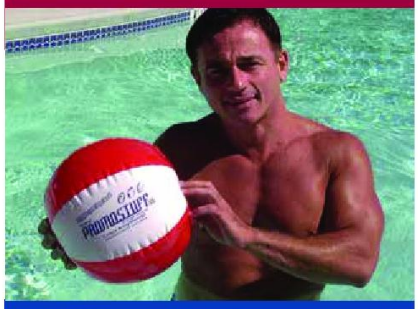
Here's what I've learned so far:

How to Return to Your Hometown After 44 Years: A User's Guide

1. *Do* bring a carload of blankets, quilts, flannel sheets, and winter clothes as Cleveland spring begins in late May and not—as you recalled from childhood—in early April.
2. *Do* carry pictures of your now-deceased Cleveland family—father, mother, and younger brother—to remind you of who and where you come from, even though some of those memories are painful, achy, picking at scabs on a wound.
3. *Do Not* expect "Midwestern Nice" as you drive around town/come to realize that Cleveland drivers are no less cold, aggressive, daring than their Boston peers but that they will (unlike Bostonians) use their turn signals when they cut you off.
4. *Do Not* forget that you are in a Red State when Governor Dewine—who lacks a spine—signs the "Parents Bill of Rights" into law, essentially outing gay, lesbian, and trans kids in Ohio's public schools.
5. *Do* bundle up/borrow a friend's ski jacket, mittens, vest to attend the Guardians' home opener on a sunny 32-degree April day, with the wind howling off Lake Erie where you will sit just under and almost on the roof, and where the two teams will score a grand total of one run and the Guardians will win by walking in that run in the 9th inning.
6. *Do Not* lift a heavy mountain bike out of the trunk of your car and tweak your low back, forgetting that you are 68 years old and not the lean mean running machine you were when you left town in 1981.
7. *Do* bring your writing books, notes, and course outlines even though the class you were scheduled to teach will not run because even though you think about/fixate/live and die for Cleveland and its teams you have not lived here for 4-1/2 decades and remain obscure, an unknown quantity.
8. *Do Not* forget your hoodie, mask, and eyewear when the midges (thousands of tiny bugs that travel in virtual clouds from lakefront to ten miles inland) emerge in late May, adhering to car, door, window screens and face, tunneling into any orifice they can find.
9. *And finally*—Do N*ot carry expectations/agendas/a to-do list for the following*:
   - To meet your *life partner* or a short-term facsimile during your three months in Cleveland
   - To find God, Moses, the meaning of life and/or what if means to be a Jew during your one 45-minute chat with a local rabbi
   - To see a Cleveland team—the baseball Guardians or basketball Cavs—win a championship because Cleveland teams do not win, rarely win, almost never win and they got one 9 years ago
   - To figure out if you could/should/would move back to this city on a Great Lake which, whether you stay or go, will always feel like home.

Judah Leblang is a writer, teacher, and storyteller. He divides his time between Cleveland and Boston. Find out more at judahleblang.com.

HOT IDEAS



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billy masters

The city: Fort Lauderdale, FL. The Place: Chase Bank. I went to my local branch after receiving an offer of $500 for opening a business account. Since I've been troubled by Citibank's rapidly diminishing branch locations, I was happy to give their competition my business—especially if I got paid for it. I sat down with a woman reminiscent of a young **Julie Kavner**—in her "Rhoda" days playing Brenda (who also worked in a bank). I decided to not share my observation with the gal. A smart decision, since her first question to me was the following—"Are you a member of the adult entertainment industry?" Why? Perhaps she's a fan. Or maybe seen some of my oeuvre (I quickly made sure my oeuvre wasn't showing). Or perhaps it's my choice in paramours (or, dare I say, spouses). Or perhaps it was the stack of bills I presented for deposit which gave off a faint but pungent odor. Nonetheless, I responded with a somewhat convincing "No", while making sure my tear-away shorts were fastened tight!

You probably wouldn't be too surprised if I told you someone was outed at a **Coldplay** concert. But what if I told you that someone wasn't **Chris Martin**? Oh, sure, now you're surprised. It all happened at Gillette Stadium—just south of my native Boston. As often happens at these concerts, random audience members were featured on the Jumbotron. The camera settled on a man embracing a woman from behind. Chris Martin says, "Oh, look at these two." The woman covers her face and turns around; the man ducks down below the camera. "Come on, you OK? Uh, what?" continues Martin. "Either they're having an affair or they're just very shy. I'm not quite sure." I'll give you two guesses! It might have all ended there, except someone in the audience filmed the entire encounter and posted it on that Chinese video streaming site that all the kids like. And that's how the world discovered **Andy Byron**, CEO of Astronomer, was canoodling with a woman who was most certainly not his wife. It only got worse when reports indicated that the woman in question was Astronomer's Chief People Officer!

Byron quickly issued a mea culpa, which included this rapturous bit of prose: "What was supposed to be a night of music and joy turned into a deeply personal mistake playing out on a very public stage." Except he didn't actually say that! While the incident and video are very real, the apology statement was a hoax, made by a fake Andy Byron! What wasn't fake was that Byron did resign. His former company posted this on Twitter: "Andy Byron has tendered his resignation, and the Board of Directors has accepted." Chris Martin made a statement of his own shortly after the couple ducked out of view of the KissCam: "Holy shit—I hope we didn't do something bad."

Speaking of bad things happening to CEOs, remember **Luigi Mangione**? The fetching fella who allegedly shot and killed the CEO of UnitedHeathcare? Didya know he had a very wealthy granny (or, more likely, nonna)? We hear that when Mary Mangione died in 2023, she was worth around $30 million. She left this money to her 10 children and 37 grandchildren. For those of you whipping out your abacus (or whatever you're whipping out), 47 people getting a share of $30 million end up with about $643K each. But maybe it will only have to be split amongst 46 people. According to Mary's will, the Trustees could use their discretion to disinherit anyone convicted of a felony. So not only might Luigi end up in the pokey, he might not even have a pokey to piss in!

Someone who knows a thing or two about fetching felons would be **Cooper Koch**, Emmy nominated for his portrayal of **Erik Menendez**. Hot on the heels of dropping his drawers for Calvin Klein (which is typically a good career move), he's been cast in **Luca Guadagnino's** next film, "Artificial". While we're told his role is being kept "under wraps" (very unlike him), the flick is a "comedic drama set in the world of artificial intelligence."

We previously reported the Stonewall National Monument website removed any reference to trans people. Last week, the bisexuals were also eliminated. This was first reported by **Erin Reed** on July 10th. Within 48 hours of her report, bisexuals were reinstated. The squeaky wheel...

Nobody will ever get me to say anything against the delicious **Tom Daley**. Not a single thing. But I did enjoy his latest video promoting swimwear for Adidas—which he pronounces as AH-dee-das. Maybe it's a British thing...

At long last, **Dolly Parton** has unveiled her long-awaited musical biography. "Dolly: A True Original Musical" had its world premiere at Nashville's Fisher Center for the Performing Arts last week. Similar to the **Cher** and **Donna Summer** musicals, this show features three actresses playing Dolly at various ages... and sizes. The actresses on hand opening night were **Katie Rose Clarke, Carrie St. Louis and Quinn Titcomb**—and I couldn't make that up if I tried! The run has been extended two weeks and will now close on August 31st. After that...who knows.

Few things make me happier than a story about **Marissa Jaret Winokur**, the original star of "Hairspray". But what about a story about Winokur returning to "Hairspray"? The talented Tony winner will be directing a production of the musical for 5-Star Theatricals at the Scherr Forum Theatre in Thousand Oaks. Opening night is October 10th. More details can be found at 5StarTheatricals.com.

I've already told you about the Hollywood Bowl's upcoming semi-staged production of "Jesus Christ Superstar" which runs Aug 1-3. You already know that **Cynthia Erivo** will be playing Jesus, and **Adam Lambert** will play Judas. We can now tell you that they will be joined by **Josh Gad** as Herod, **Phillipa Soo** as Mary Magdalene, and **Raul Esparza** as Pilate. Frankly, I was really looking forward to Raul's Magdalene. Well, maybe next year.

Mattel has announced they are expanding the Barbie line. We've already had Barbies of various sizes, colors and ethnicities. We now have a Barbie with Type 1 diabetes! She'll even come equipped with her own glucose monitor! I look forward to a more full-figured Barbie in a blue dress taking a little pill with a big story to tell!

Someone who has actually been a Barbie is **Cher**. And, boy, did she knock 'em dead last week in Rome. She did a performance at Dolce & Gabbana's Alta Moda show. Easily looking two decades younger than her chronological age, she performed a number of ditties in a number of outfits while sporting a number of different hair styles and colors. While I can't say she actually "sang", they did turn her microphone on for some mid-show patter, including an endless anecdote about filming "Tea with Mussolini" in Rome. You can see the full show on BillyMasters.com.

I must confess, I haven't watched any of this season's "...And Just Like That". I like to wait until the full season has aired—which, in this case, means I'll have something to do mid-August. Anyhoo, many of you have asked why I haven't written about **Mario Cantone** and his Hot Fellas. I can tell you that Mario and **Sebastiano Pigazzi** dropped in on the Hot Fellas pop-up at Librae Bakery in NYC. Of course, the photos can be found on our website.

Hot out of our "Ask Billy" mailbag is a note from Karl in San Francisco: *"What did I hear about **Cameron Mathison** doing a shirtless backflip?"*

There's one thing I know for sure—Cameron Mathison will bend over forwards and backwards for his fans. The incident in question happened on a sand dune in Oregon. But, to be totally honest, he wasn't shirtless...at least not this time. Since Cameron was posting his latest flip, he decided to take to Instagram and show he's a giver (one of my two favorite kinds of flips). He included some tumbles—many of them shirtless—from various locales around the globe, including Australia, Fiji, and Greece. But, please, don't try this at home...even if you are greased up. For those of you less than technically adept, I link to all of this footage on BillyMasters.com.

When Cam is flipping for his fans, we've definitely come to the end of yet another column. You'll certainly flip when you check out www.BillyMasters.com—the site that has no Chinese fingers in it (well, there was that one time in Detroit). Unlike Mathison, I'm willing to flip for fans and foes alike. Just send an explicit e-mail to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I do something bad to an eagerly receptive Chris Martin! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

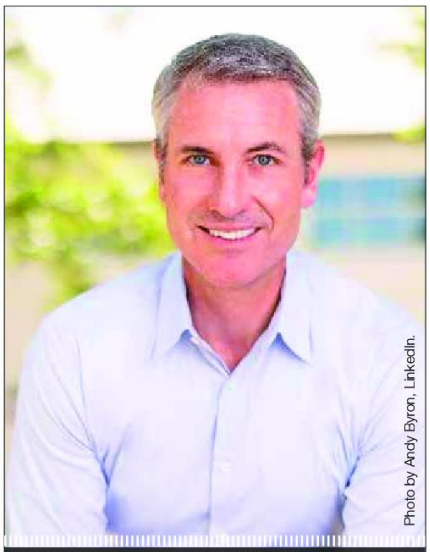

Photo by Andy Byron, LinkedIn.

Andy Byron



Photo by Matthew Murphy

"Dolly: A True Original Musical"

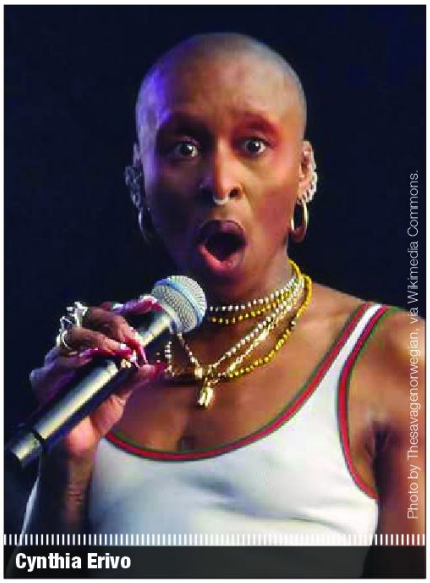

Photo by Thesavagenorwegian, via Wikimedia Commons.

Cynthia Erivo

Mombian

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(7th to 6th century BCE), who may have had a child.

We have done a good job of parenting, too, with the overwhelming majority of studies since the 1980s showing that kids with LGBTQ+ parents are just as likely to turn out happy and well-adjusted as any others, and even tend to score higher on some metrics of psychological well-being.

LGBTQ+ parents and our children have a vibrant present

Five million children are being raised by nearly 2.6 million LGBTQ+ parents in the U.S., according to the latest research from UCLA's Williams Institute. And 32% of LGB adults and 19% of transgender adults report ever having a child (who may now be grown or living elsewhere).

Even in the current era, when LGBTQ+ equality is under threat, we are still making inroads. In 2024 and 2025, Michigan, Massachusetts, and Hawaii became the most recent of the 12 states that have enacted updated, comprehensive, LGBTQ+-inclusive parentage legislation, joining California, Colorado, Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington. (As of this writing, similar legislation in Illinois awaits the governor's signature.) While some details vary among states, the legislation all lays out clear and equitable ways to secure legal ties between parents and children, including children formed via assisted reproduction and those with LGBTQ+ parents. And Vermont and New Mexico this year enacted bills that will make it easier for nongestational LGBTQ+ parents to confirm their legal parentage via adoption, without burdensome and unnecessary requirements.

This is not to say that serious obstacles don't exist. Anti-LGBTQ+ bias, hate, and misunderstanding abound. Executive orders and U.S. Supreme Court decisions are directly targeting LGBTQ+ families and people. Parentage legislation is still in need of improvement in most states. But LGBTQ+ families continue to exist, to see our children grow, and to find queer joy.

Many resources exist, too, to help us start, grow, and nurture our families. Support and information are out there, in the form of parenting guidebooks, national and local organizations, online communities, podcasts, and more. National organizations you should know about include Family Equality, now in its fifth decade of helping LGBTQ+ families via advocacy, resources, and events (online and in-person); COLAGE, for and by people with LGBTQ+ parents and/or caregivers; and GWK Academy, which began as a spinoff of the queer men's community Gays With Kids, but this year became a non-profit and expanded its mission to support all LGBTQ+ prospective parents on their family-building journeys.

Some regions have more localized LGBTQ+ family groups, while LGBTQ+ community centers may also offer family resources and events. If you don't live near any of these, or prefer to engage online, check out virtual offerings from the above organizations, as well as the online communities and information provided by Pregnant-Together; Gay Moms Club; Trans Fertility Co.; and my own site, Mombian, among other places.

LGBTQ+ parents and our children are shaping our future

The challenges we face right now are daunting, to be sure, but even a brief look at our history shows us that we have overcome challenges before. I have not yet given up hope that we can do so again. For myself, I find that taking action helps dispel feelings of helplessness, so I encourage you to try the same, whether that means showing up at a local school board meeting (or running for the board yourself), volunteering for a local or national organization, contributing financially to LGBTQ+ family organizations if you are able, participating in online forums to share your experiences with others, or simply being visible in your community, if you safely can. And if your family needs help, ask. You are not alone.

Parenting isn't for everyone, and only you can decide if it's right for you. But if you think it might be, know that you will be stepping into a community rooted in the past, growing in the present, and actively working towards a better future.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), a two-time GLAAD Media Award-winning blog for LGBTQ+ parents plus a searchable database of 1,800+ LGBTQ+ family books.

(Disclosure: I am an unpaid, volunteer member of Family Equality's Communications Committee, and a marketing partner of GWK Academy for one of their upcoming events.)

Basile

Continued from page 1

phone platform for gay men to connect, and later launched Online Buddies, which created Manhunt.net, the first gay hookup website. He also owned The Chandelier Inn Hotel and co-founded beloved Boston gay bars Fritz and Cathedral Station.

Larry was a fierce advocate for civil rights and AIDS awareness, working with Act Up!, the Human Rights Campaign, and the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force. He founded the Grass Roots Gay Rights Fund and the Boston Gay Pride Street Dance, raising over $800,000 for community organizations. His compassion extended to causes supporting the homeless and underserved, including Rosie's Place and Pine Street Inn.

In his final years, Larry found peace tending gardens at his 44-acre Stonewall Farm in Douglas.

He is survived by his brother Matthew Basile and wife Charlene of Danvers; sister Joanne Harrington of Hanover; nephews Joseph, Michael, and John Basile, and Matthew Harrington; nieces Kelly Dedeo and Leah Harrington Dexter; his Stonewall Farm community; and devoted caretaker Sidnei Alves.

Larry was predeceased by his beloved husband, Clement "Clem" Pepe.

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