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Kim Petras

Calls Anti-Trans
'Plague Of The Planet'

INSIDE

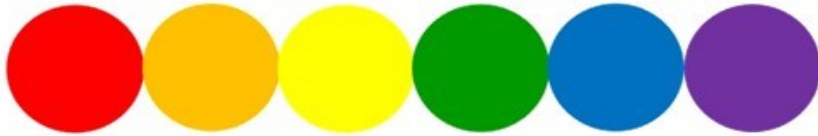
Kim Petras
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Views 'Plague
Of The Planet'

First-Ever Space-
Made **HIV Drug**
Crystals Touches
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'I Don't Need To Win
Again' Drag Race Star
Alaska



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Jax Gay Inc. is a Community Marketing and Events organization incorporating Jax Gay Magazine, Rainbow Events, and Drag Queen Aholic.

Our mission as a 502(c)3 non-profit is to promote North Florida and especially in Jacksonville, as a welcoming LGBTQ+ destination through marketing and events. Jax Gay produces many events a year, including Jax Equality Festival in Jacksonville. Other events include the Rainbow Awards Show, White Party, Big Gay Picnic, Taste of Pride and Red Party. Visit www.JaxGayMag.com for more information.

Jax Gay Inc. also plans to launch our Jax Event Center & LGBTQ+ Art Gallery in Fall of 2023.

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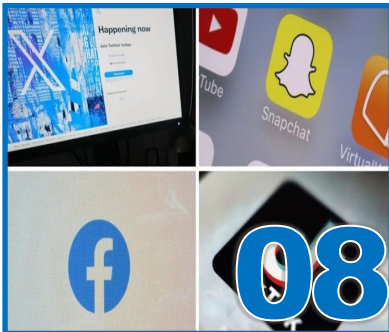
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**Kim Petras Calls Anti-Trans Views
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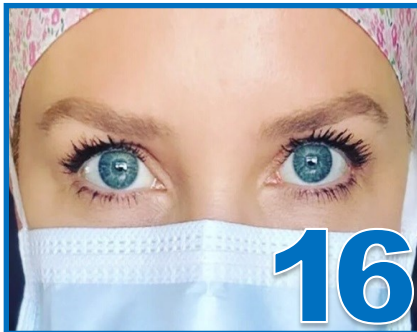
By David Vandygriff



28



08



16



24



26



36



42

Florida Lawmakers Ban Kids Under 16 From Social Media P8

First-Ever Space-Made HIV Drug Crystals Touches Down Earth P10 | Jessica Capshaw Teases

Grey's Anatomy Return P16 | Asthma Drug Can Drastically Reduce Food Allergies P18 |

Why Is Whiskey The Color Of Caramel? P24 | Airlines Raise Baggage Fees & Charging More At

Airports P26 | Kim Petras Calls Anti-Trans Views 'Plague Of The Planet' P28 | No Ru Hasn't Said

She's Quitting Drag Race Down Under P32 | The Best Drink To Serve With Lobster Tails P34 | 'I

Don't Need To Win Again' Drag Race Star Alaska P36 | Trump Appears To Be Showing Gross

Signs Of Dementia P38 | Housing Market's 'New Normal' 7% Mortgage Rates P42

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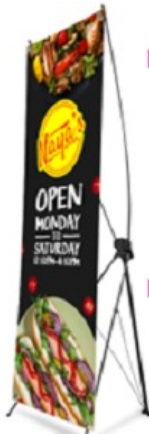
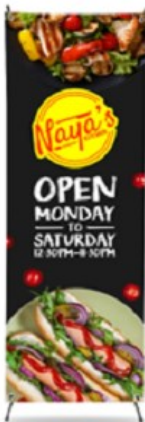
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News & Politics

Florida Lawmakers Ban Kids Under 16 From Social Media

By Drew Smith



Florida lawmakers have fast-tracked legislation that forces social media companies to keep most minors off their platforms.

The legislation, which passed the state House Thursday after earlier being approved by the Senate, now heads to Gov. Ron DeSantis's (R) desk, though he says he's not quite ready to sign on.

DeSantis told reporters Friday that he thinks there needs to be a "proper balance" between government regulations and parental input on the social media issue.

"We'll be wrestling with that," he said.

The governor said he'll be assessing the final version of the legislation likely through the weekend.

"Federal law says 13 and under can't have social media accounts. That's not really enforced," he said.

DeSantis, who suspended his bid for the GOP's 2024 presidential nomination in January, has been an advocate of reining in media and conversations available to children outside of family

atmospheres. He championed efforts to censor public school books and discussions of sexuality in public schools.

The lawmakers who championed the proposed social media ban, which would require platforms check the ages of users through a third-party source, argue it will make the online landscape safer for youths.

A Pew Research Survey in 2023 found that a third of teens aged 13 to 17 said they use the most popular social media platforms "almost constantly." It also found that smartphone ownership is nearly universal among teens surveyed — spanning all genders, age groups, economic backgrounds and races and ethnicities.

"It's time to take decisive action to protect our most vulnerable population — children," Florida state Sen. Erin Grall (R), one of the bill's leading sponsors,

wrote on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter.

"We're talking about businesses that are using addictive features to engage in mass manipulation of our children to cause them harm," Grall further said on the Florida Senate floor Thursday.

The legislation passed 108-7 in the state House and 23-14 in the Florida Senate within a matter of hours Thursday.

Grall, a Florida attorney and mother of three kids, didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

Representatives for Snapchat, TikTok, and Meta, the parent company of Facebook and Instagram, didn't immediately respond to requests for comment. X's press office autoreplied to a request for comment with the message: "Busy now, please check back later."

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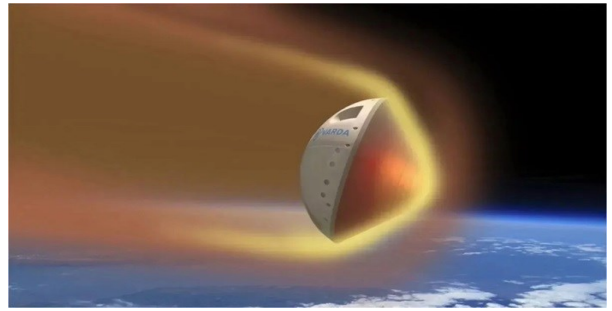
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OUT & HEALTH

First-Ever Space-Made HIV Drug Crystals Touches Down Earth
By Michael Brayson



California-based startup Varda Space Industries has made history by successfully returning samples of the drug made in space.

The company's in-space manufacturing capsule faced months of orbital confinement due to re-entry denial from the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

After obtaining the necessary approvals, the re-entry capsule safely landed in the Utah desert at the Utah Test and Training Range on Wednesday, February 21.

Parachutes facilitated the touchdown of the W-1 mission re-entry capsule, which contained the space-grown antiviral drug crystals.

Drug Production Took Place In Late June 2023

SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket carried the 264-pound (120-kilogram) first-ever mini-space drug facility into orbit on June 12.

The crystallization process for Ritonavir, an HIV treatment drug, took place in late June 2023.

The in-orbit production of drug crystals occurred onboard the conical W-Series 1 satellite, 10 www.JaxGayMag.com

which was affixed to Rocket Lab's orbital Photon platform.

The capsule was originally planned to land in July, but the FAA denied the re-entry permission. The FAA is tasked with ensuring the safety of commercial launch and reentry missions.

After a long wait, approval was finally granted last week.

Shortly afterward, Rocket Lab initiated preparations for the reentry maneuvers of W-1.

Over the past few days, the Photon executed several engine burns, aligning the spacecraft and the W-1 capsule on the proper course for return to Earth.

While the Photon mainly burnt up in the process, the W-1 capsule made it through Earth's atmosphere and landed safely at the UTTR.

The Drug Crystals Will Now Undergo Further Evaluation

Microgravity offers a unique setting for the development of small drug crystals.

Drug crystals have the potential to form more efficiently in the absence of gravity compared to Earth.

In microgravity, the impact of gravitational forces on crystal

growth is minimized, resulting in purer and more precisely defined crystal structures. This has significant implications for pharmaceutical research and drug development, potentially enhancing drug formulation and effectiveness.

"Processing materials in microgravity, or the near-weightless conditions found in space, offers a unique environment not available through terrestrial processing. These benefits primarily stem from the lack of convection and sedimentation forces, as well as the ability to form more perfect structures due to the absence of gravitational stresses," mentioned Varda's website.

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Jessica Capshaw Teases Grey's Anatomy Return

By Glenda Rutherford



Jessica Capshaw gave us every emotion possible and some we didn't even know existed during her run as the pediatric-turned-fetal surgeon Dr. Arizona Robbins on Grey's Anatomy. From her initial debut in season 5 back in 2008 all the way to her exit in 2018 after the season 14 finale, Dr. Robbins has long been cemented as a fan-favorite, even after she left the show.

Six years later, Capshaw is set to return for the upcoming 20th season, and fans are losing their minds.

Capshaw posted a photo on her Instagram of her in scrubs and a face mask with the simple caption "4.04.24," with the season 20 premiere slated to debut on March 14.

According to Variety, exciting as it is to see her return, she will only appear as a guest star in one episode. When her return was first announced, the date was not, but Capshaw's caption has us thinking they'll be in the season's fourth episode, which is slated to air on April 4.

Fans are eagerly awaiting her return, regardless of how short or long she'll be part of the show. When Capshaw first parted after season 14, sources told Deadline that creative differences with the show's direction as the reason why she left.

Still, even then, showrunner Shonda Rhimes eluded that it wouldn't be the last time we

saw our favorite lesbian doctor, especially since Capshaw brought some much-needed representation to the show with her relationship with Callie Torres (Sara Ramirez.)

Comments under Capshaw's post are flooded with excitement from fans of the show, and many are looking forward to the closure fans need for Callie and Arizona's fate, as well as how they're faring as they raise their daughter, Sophia (Eva Ariel Binder), together.

Though we don't yet know exactly what Arizona's character will bring to the new season, we'd be lying if we said we didn't hope this turns back into a recurring or starring role instead of a guest one.

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OUT & HEALTH

Asthma Drug Can Drastically Reduce Food Allergies

By Dennis Bennett



About 20 million people in the U.S.—including four million children—have food allergies. Now, there's a new way to reduce their risk of severe allergic reactions. A study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* reports that the drug omalizumab, or Xolair, allows people with food allergies to tolerate higher doses of allergenic foods before developing a reaction after an accidental exposure. It also leads to milder reactions if they are exposed.

The drug was originally approved more than two decades ago to treat allergic asthma. But because of this new study and other data, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration expanded the approval of Xolair on Feb. 16 to include treatment of food allergies in anyone one year or older. It's now the first drug approved to treat allergies to multiple foods.

Anabelle Terry, a 12-year old with severe peanut and tree nut allergies, experienced that benefit firsthand as a participant in the trial. While participating in the study, she ate half a cupcake while with friends that she thought was nut-free but had made been

made with cashew flour. Within about an hour, her stomach and throat started to hurt and her lips tingled, so she thought she was having an allergic reaction and went home. Her mom gave her an antihistamine, which was enough to quell her symptoms. Before Xolair, if she ate even a tiny amount of peanuts or tree nuts, she would generally need a shot of epinephrine, which is an emergency treatment for an allergic reaction, and a visit to the doctor. "I did notice a difference—I didn't react as badly as I thought I would have," Terry says. "I only had half, but it was a big cupcake, and it was amazing to see that even though I accidentally ate some, I was okay."

Xolair does not cure food allergies, so people must continue to avoid allergy-causing foods by reading labels and asking how food is prepared. But people now "have another layer of protection in case of accidental exposure," says Dr. Sharon Chinthraja, associate professor of medicine at Stanford University School of Medicine and co-lead of the study.

How Xolair Works To Fight Allergic Reactions

The drug works by mopping up something called immunoglobulin E (IgE) cells, which activate the immune cells responsible for inflammation and allergic reactions. "I think of the drug as a sponge that takes allergic antibodies out of circulation," says Chinthraja. It was this mechanism that led to Xolair's original approval in 2003 for allergic asthma, since IgE cells play a role in that condition as well. "There were suggestions that the drug should work in food allergy too, but no study until this one demonstrated that to the level required by the FDA to add it to the label, says Dr. Robert Wood, director of pediatric allergy, immunology, and rheumatology at Johns Hopkins Children's Center and the principal investigator of the study." In fact, because of the way the drug blocks IgE, it "may be more applicable to food allergies because asthma has a lot of different triggers, but food allergies are pretty much an IgE-driven reaction."

What The New Study Shows

The study included 177 children from ages 1 to 17 at 10 different sites in the U.S. The participants were randomly assigned to receive Xolair as an injection either every two

weeks or every four weeks, depending on their body weight and levels of IgE (a proxy for how severe their food allergies are), or a placebo. All of the participants were allergic to peanuts and at least two other foods such as tree nuts (cashews, walnuts, and hazelnuts), milk, eggs, or wheat. After about four months of receiving the injections, the kids were given high levels of peanut or other food allergens—much higher than doses they might encounter by accidentally taking a bite of food containing them. Of those who took Xolair, 67% were able to tolerate the higher dose of peanut without a severe allergic reaction, compared to 7% of those getting placebo. The breakdown was similar for the other allergens.

“Over half [of the participants] could eat a lot of the foods they were allergic to,” says Dr. Robert Wood, director of pediatric allergy, immunology, and rheumatology at Johns Hopkins Children’s Center and the principal investigator of the study. “More than 50% could eat the equivalent of 16 peanuts with no reaction.”

Among the remaining half, about 15% experienced allergic reactions even at small doses of exposure, but all of the reactions were milder among the Xolair group than the placebo group. It’s not clear how long the drug blocks IgE activity, but doctors anticipate that people will have to continue getting the shots to lower their risk of severe reactions.

How To Use Xolair For Food Allergies

For Anabelle, the drug provides a sense of security. “I’ll be able to try new things and do some things that I wasn’t able to before,” she says. “I love traveling even more now because I don’t always have to be worried about whether a new food is safe. I’m still cautious, but more free to experience things.”

Xolair isn’t an emergency treatment. It’s designed to be a maintenance therapy that keeps the immune system in check for as long as people take the medication, so that if someone is accidentally exposed to an allergy-causing food, their reaction will be

dampened and not life-threatening. The first few doses might be given at the doctor’s office to make sure people don’t have adverse reactions to the shot, but parents give subsequent doses to children at home. Adults can also give the shots to themselves.

To work, a person has to keep taking the shots. That can get expensive: A spokesperson for Genentech, which makes the drug, says the injections for food allergies will cost the same as those for asthma, which amounts to \$2,900 for children and \$5,000 for adults each month. It’s not clear yet whether insurers will cover Xolair for treating food allergies, but many do cover the drug for asthma. For the uninsured, Genentech offers a patient assistance program.

Anabelle’s parents are still discussing with their allergist how Xolair might fit into her life. Anabelle completed the trial in 2022 and has not taken the drug for two years. “I would be willing to go back on it,” she says. “Maybe with more treatment, it could become even less severe and make me less stressed about food.”



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Life and Style

Why Is Whiskey The Color Of Caramel?

By Al Jenkins



No matter what type of whiskey you get, you can usually count on it having a rich, caramel hue. This may seem confusing, since most spirits tend to be clear unless they've been infused with something else, like in the case of spiced rum or sloe gin. Whiskey can come in all sorts of different flavors, but these aren't what give it that amber sheen.

Whiskey — much like its grain-based counterparts, vodka and gin — is clear after distillation. Its color comes during the aging process, in which the wooden barrel used for storage transfers pigments (as well as its earthy aroma and taste) to the liquid inside. Naturally, this means that, the longer whiskey ages in a barrel, the darker it will be, with shades varying from pale gold to reddish amber to deep treacle.

An even darker whiskey can be achieved through charring, a process in which the barrel is exposed to intense heat for up to a minute, depending on the distiller's preference. Some whiskeys, such as bourbon, are required to be made in a charred barrel, but this process is not universal. Charring is said to heighten the infusion of the wood's sweeter notes,
24 www.JaxGayMag.com

leaving you with an end product that's not only darker but also more flavorful.

Types Of Wood Used For Aging Whiskey

The type of wood used to age a whiskey will also influence its color, but this influence doesn't stop there. Most whiskeys are aged in oak barrels because of the bark's distinct flavor — Gallic acid from European oak provides spice, while vanillins in American white oak fittingly lend the spirit a vanilla flavor. Some whiskeys, like scotch, have to be matured in oak casks for at least three years to earn the categorization.

While oak is by far the most common wood used to age whiskey (why fix something

that isn't broken?), some categorizations allow for a bit of wiggle room. Irish and Canadian whiskeys, for example, don't specify what type of wood should be used, which has led some to experiment. Method and Madness whiskey, for example, is aged in French chestnut barrels, and the brand behind this claims on its website that the product contains notes of spice and ripe banana, among other things.

It's even possible to find a white whiskey if you look hard enough. Also known as "new" whiskey, this powerful stuff skips the aging step altogether and is sometimes compared to moonshine because of its color and strength.

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BUSINESS & TRAVEL

Airlines Raise Baggage Fees & Charging More At Airports

By Zack Majors

Airlines are raising their prices to check a bag — again. Just how much you it will cost you, however, depends on when you pay for the service.

United Airlines, American Airlines and JetBlue Airways are among the carriers that have raised the price to check bags this year. Each of them charge customers more if they check their bags at the airport or close to their departure compared with paying to check a bag online in advance.

Carriers are encouraging customers to pay to check their bags ahead of their flight, an approach the airlines argue will free up employees at check-in areas and get travelers to their gates faster.

Earlier this week, American Airlines raised its checked bag fees for the first time in more than five years and adopted the two-tiered strategy that United, JetBlue and several budget airlines already have.

American Airlines customers traveling in coach will pay \$35 to check a first bag for domestic flights if the service is booked online in advance, or \$40 if they purchase the option at the airport, the carrier said

26 www.JaxGayMag.com

Tuesday. American Airlines previously charged \$30 for either service.

There are exemptions. Customers who have certain airline or other rewards credit cards, are traveling in a top-tier class or have elite frequent flyer status generally can check at least one bag for free on domestic or short international flights.

Why Does It Cost Less To Check A Bag In Advance?

“It allows our team members to spend more time with customers who require additional assistance with their travel journey,” said an American Airlines spokeswoman.

American this week also said it is reducing fees for slightly overweight bags, which used to force some travelers to remove items from their bags last-minute at the airport to meet the threshold.

The different fee tiers is an approach ultra-low-cost airlines already had to luggage fees.

“It incentivizes people to get the transaction out of way. It’s easier for them, and honestly, it’s easier for us,” said Frontier Airlines CEO Barry Biffle.



“There are people who need legitimate assistance” at the airport.

The prices differ depending on demand and other factors. Most travelers who add on baggage pay the fee ahead of time, Biffle said.

United first started charging customers more for paying for checked bags at the airport in 2020. On Friday, the carrier said it was raising bag fees by \$5 for most flights in North America to \$35 if customers prepay online at least 24 hours before their flight, or \$40 otherwise, starting with bookings made on Feb. 24. A second checked bag will cost \$50, or \$45 at least 24 hours in advance.

Why Are Airlines Raising Baggage Fees?

Luggage fees are a big moneymaker for airlines. In the first nine months of 2023, U.S. airlines brought in more than \$5.4 billion from baggage fees, up more than 25% from the same period of 2019, according to the Transportation Department’s latest data.

Airlines have argued that higher costs such as labor and fuel, their biggest expenses, mean they had to raise bag

fees.

“While we don’t like increasing fees, it’s one step we are taking to get our company back to profitability and cover the increased costs of transporting bags,” JetBlue said in a statement about its latest increases. “By adjusting fees for added services that only certain customers use, we can keep base fares low and ensure customer favorites like seatback TVs and high-speed Wi-Fi remain free for everyone.”

Southwest Airlines is an outlier among the large U.S. airlines. It allows customers to check two bags for free. “That’s the way it’s going to stay,” Chief Operating Officer Andrew Watterson said.

“It does not cost us \$35, \$40 ... to handle a bag,” Watterson said in an interview. Many customers on major airlines bring carry-on bags to avoid bag fees, but Watterson said that could slow down the operation, a big deal for Southwest, which he said tries to turn aircraft around for the next flight in 45 minutes, and even less for some of its smaller Boeing planes.

“It does smooth the operation for people to check it rather than bring it on,” he said.

“Overall, we think the benefit is a combination of some efficiencies but also customers coming back to us. A repeat customer business cannot be overstated. And when you treat your customers well, give them a fair policy, they come back over and over again.”



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Kim Petras Calls Anti-Trans Views 'Plague Of The Planet'

By David Vandygriff



Kim Petras has spoken out against anti-trans and sexist views, calling them “the plague of this planet”.

One thing about Petras is that she'll always speak her mind in support of the LGBTQ+ community, and that's exactly what she did in a recent interview about her new album, *Slut Pop Miami*.

Speaking to the BBC about her latest EP, released on 14 February. The album discusses themes of sex-positivity and LGBTQ+ inclusivity in several of its tracks, with the singer telling the outlet that it's something she feels “strongly about”.

“I've always been surrounded by incredible women,” she began. “Even at school, the people who stood up for me and understood my condition were female,” she said.

The Grammy award-winner went on to reject anti-trans and

sexist policies — which have been seen in the US with drag bans and anti-trans bills, to the UK government's alarming school guidance on teaching trans pupils, and Rishi Sunak's apparent disregard for murdered trans teen Brianna Ghee.

“I think men's desire to control women's bodies has been the plague of this planet forever,” she said. “It very much goes hand in hand with being transgender. The people who wanted to forbid me to transition are the same ones who want to forbid women to have abortions or have sex and even make money from it.”

Petras went on to credit Madonna for her work in *Erotica* (1992) and her book *Sex*, which she noted was “misunderstood...as just filth”.

“But female sexuality isn't filth and shouldn't be written off like that. Neither is trans-feminine

sexuality or anyone's sexuality. I think everyone should be equal.

“That's not to say *Slut Pop* [Miami] is a big political statement. It's supposed to just be fun, but the conversation it stirs up is a good thing.”

Petras has previously been vocal about the anti-trans rhetoric in politics, telling *Entertainment Weekly* she is “extremely alarmed by it”.

“Trans people have always been used to outrage people, but you have to remember that we're only one percent of the population.” Continuing, Petras reflected on her childhood, noting that though “everyone would call [her] crazy,” as a young trans person, being trans “wasn't so publicly demonized.”

She added: “It's scary for all of us who just want to live a normal life.”



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**No Ru Hasn't Said She's Quitting
Drag Race Down Under**
By Brenda Davis



Another month, another rumor about Mama Ru supposedly retiring from her hosting gig in the RuPaul's Drag Race franchise. Eyeroll!

This time, the rumors are specifically related to RuPaul's Drag Race Down Under — the international spinoff of the show based in Australia and New Zealand — and it all started with a few comments from Willam during an episode of Race Chaser.

“Those Australian girls already know [RuPaul] because she judged down there,” Willam said while talking about Down Under star Hannah Conda competing on RuPaul's Drag Race UK vs the World season 2. She added, “But not anymore, [RuPaul is] leaving, and that's tea. You heard it from Race Chaser.”

Due to Willam's complicated relationship with “spilling Drag Race tea” in the podcast, Race Chaser cohost Alaska did warn fans to “take that [information] with a grain of ketamine.”

Nonetheless, X fanbase @ThePopTingz still reported on the “report” shared by

32 www.JaxGayMag.com

Willam, adding that Michelle Visage is “rumored” to be the new host of Down Under starting with season 4. Again, this is all based on a comment made in passing by Willam on Race Chaser. There are no real or actual reports about RuPaul stepping down from hosting and judging Down Under as of this writing.

“Poptingz reporting on offhand comments Willam makes on her pod,” actor and writer Paul McCallion wrote. “I can't wait to see how this turns out.”

Unlike McCallion (and I), Drag Race fans have once again been quick to jump to the conclusion that this information is absolutely true. They've also started speculating who would replace Mama Ru in the Down Under series — from Michelle Visage to Courtney Act to other names being thrown in the mix.

And yet, it bears repeating that RuPaul stepping down from any Drag Race hosting gig has not been reported by any publication thus far. Quite the contrary, actually. There are plenty of rumors and reports that RuPaul is working on even more shows than before, which

is the opposite of what is being suggested in this new update regarding Down Under season 4.

As of Tuesday, Feb. 20, casting for Down Under season 4 is open for applicants, and there's no update about RuPaul stepping down from the series. If he were to do it, one could assume that Michelle would be a good option to step up to the hosting gig. But, again, that hasn't been confirmed or even rumored outside of Willam's statements in the podcast.

While some fans have questioned the continuity of Down Under due to low engagement about the series on social media, Ru's role on the show hasn't been a point of contention. So, as expressed by Alaska, definitely take this “rumor” with a grain of salt.

RuPaul's Drag Race season 16 airs every Friday on MTV.

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Life and Style

The Best Drink To Serve With Lobster Tails

By James Duncan



For seafood lovers, lobster is often viewed as a delicacy. Despite its frequently hefty price tag, its chewy consistency provides a nuanced, fishy flavor that makes every bite worth savoring. While dipping lobster meat in melted butter and adding a squeeze of lemon juice is a popular combination, finding the right beverage to complement these flavors can take a bit more thought.

Typically, white wine is the ideal choice for most seafood dishes, because lighter meat has a delicate flavor profile that can easily be overpowered by stronger beverages like red wine or dark beer. The reason for deliberation, however, is that there are many different types of white wine. Knowing the best variety to pair with lobster tails will only serve to elevate your meal.

Chardonnay, in particular, is an excellent option for those who enjoy their lobster with butter or a decadent sauce. This is because the often dry, full-bodied nature of this still white wine can match lobster's richness while cutting through its fatty elements and providing a perfect palate cleanser.

Which Chardonnay To Choose

34 www.JaxGayMag.com

Chardonnay is historically made from green grapes that are grown in the Burgundy region of Eastern France. This wine is known for its subtle citrus aroma that complements lobster in a similar manner to lemon juice. These days, chardonnay grapes are grown more globally and can be transformed into various types of wine.

While the growing location and aging process can cause slight variations in flavor, Burgundy chardonnay is produced in a relatively cold climate. This increases its acidity and helps enhance the lobster's taste. Acid and citrus pair wonderfully with lobster tail, because the wine's natural sugars allow the lobster meat's elusive sweetness to shine through.

Alternatively, California chardonnay, which is grown in a warmer climate, has a much richer, almost buttery taste. It features a smoky element, too, as it's aged in oak barrels. This fermentation can also enhance the wine's sweetness, bring out notes of vanilla, and create more tropical fruit flavors. These qualities perfectly balance the decadence of heavier lobster dishes like pasta, lobster bisque, and

lobster mac and cheese.

The Options Are Nearly Endless

Chardonnay is an exceptional white wine for your lobster dinner party because it can feature so many tasting notes. The way you cook your lobster tail can impact your dish's overall flavor, so it's helpful to understand the different types of white wine that will best accompany your cooking technique. If your lobster has smoky notes and a slight char from the barbecue, Grüner Veltliner is an excellent choice, as it contains notes of stone fruit and white pepper that add depth. It's also aged in oak barrels and bottled for years, creating deep, woody notes and complex flavors of spice and acidity to match.

Boiling or steaming lobster tails and serving them with lemon and butter helps retain their vibrant, fresh ocean flavor. For this technique, a traditional full-bodied chardonnay shines through — its richness parallels the butter, while the refreshing, acidic citrus notes blend well with the lemon. Similar types of sparkling white wine made from the same chardonnay grape variety are great go-tos for your lobster dinner.

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'I Don't Need To Win Again' Drag Race Star Alaska

By Drew Williams



We're not just talking about the state.

Alaska Thunder**** 5000 needs no introduction. Anybody who knows anything about RuPaul's Drag Race knows who this queen is.

Not only is she recognized from her Drag Race fame, but the star has successfully dabbled in all areas of entertainment by releasing music, hosting a popular podcast, produced musicals, and appeared in a slew of TV shows.

But could she replace mother RuPaul as the host of Drag Race one day? It seems like she's more than open to the possibility.

"I would love to do it. I feel like a lot of people think RuPaul's job is easy. RuPaul makes it look easy and she's running that whole ship over there. I

don't flatter myself to think that I could do that job, but of course I would love it," said Alaska.

Even though she thinks she's been blackballed from Drag Race, Alaska has no intentions of ever returning as a competitor to the main stage.

That means... don't expect Alaska to return to the werkroom on a future All Winners season.

"Honestly, I've already done that. I don't need to win again. When I won, it was way worse than losing. I'd rather take the hosting thing."

Speaking of hosting, Alaska is honing her skills in real-time with season two of her hit OUTtv docuseries.

The queen puts in a ton of work to throw her Drag Queen of the Year Pageant Competition Award Contest

Competition (you read that right), which is a pageant that she created with fellow drag artist and best friend Lola LeCroix.

"We love it. It's always great to have a camera crew there to capture everything that's happening. We also get to just share the stories of these amazing eight artists," Alaska says.

"In season two, you have a whole slew of entertainers who will knock your socks off. We have eight contestants who are all completely different and vying for the same title. When you get to see them on stage, you're seeing so many different versions of drag," LeCroix adds.

Behind the Drag Queen of the Year Pageant Competition Award Contest Competition returns this spring on OUTtv.



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News & Politics

Trump Appears To Be Showing Gross Signs Of Dementia

By Paul Roberts



According to psychologist Dr. John Gartner, formerly of Johns Hopkins University Medical School, Donald Trump's slurring and inability to sometimes formulate complete sentences appears to be a sign of growing dementia and possibly early stages of Alzheimer's.

In an interview with Salon's Chauncey DeVega, Gartner bluntly stated the former president is "showing gross signs of dementia" and fellow experts are not pointing out the warning signs nearly enough.

Gartner, who has been warning about Trump's diminishing mental capacity since contributing to the 2017 book, "The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump: 27 Psychiatrists and Mental Health Experts Assess a President," asserted the former president is becoming more dangerous by the day and the closer he gets to returning to the Oval Office.

After telling Salon's DeVega, "There is also this focus on [President Joe] Biden's gaffes or other things that are well within the normal limits of aging. By comparison, Trump appears to be showing gross

signs of dementia. This is a tale of two brains. Biden's brain is aging. Trump's brain is dementing," he was asked for evidence.

Trump, he noted, appears to be spiraling into "phonemic paraphasias" during his rally speeches, which he described as, "the substitution of non-words for words that sound similar—are not normally seen until a patient enters the moderate to severe stages of Alzheimer's."

According to Gartner, "Some examples of Trump's non-words: Beneficiaries becomes 'benefishes.' Renovations become 'renoversh.' Pivotal became 'pivobal.' Obama became 'obamna.' Missiles became 'mishiz.' Christmas became 'Crissus.' Bipartisan became 'bipars.' This is a fundamental breakdown in the ability to use language. If you were talking to your father on the phone and he did this you would think he is having a stroke. There is no healthy older person who speaks that way."

He also noted Trump's tendency to go off in odd directions while talking to audiences.

Referring to the former president's "tangential speech," he elaborated, "He just becomes incomprehensible when he engages in free association word salad speech that is all over the place. Again, that's a sign of real brain damage, not being old, not being slow, not losing a step not being, but of severe cognitive deterioration."

He continued, "What I don't understand is why those clips aren't replayed over and over in the mainstream media. Isn't Trump babbling incoherently the most newsworthy part of his rally? You can be sure it would be if it were Biden."

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BUSINESS & TRAVEL

Housing Market's 'New Normal' 7% Mortgage Rates

By Sean Hopkins

Mortgage rates are high and housing inventory is tight, but some experts see the market's deep freeze starting to thaw this spring.

Homebuying started to pick up during and after the holidays. Existing home sales increased 3.1% from December to January, according to the National Association of Realtors. Meanwhile, the inventory of unsold existing homes rose 2% from December to January, totaling around 1 million at the end of last month, slightly expanding buyers' options.

"While home sales remain sizably lower than a couple of years ago, January's monthly gain is the start of more supply and demand," NAR chief economist Lawrence Yun said in a news release Thursday.

"This might be the market's first steps toward a 'new normal'— a world where inventory remains rather scarce by pre-pandemic standards, but buyers are not

exactly swarming the doorway of every open house like in 2021 and early 2022," Zillow senior economist Jeff Tucker wrote in a blog post last week.

"More revived supply should help meet the returning demand, and head off the risk of renewed overheating," he said.

For the last few years, limited housing inventory and low rates have put the housing market on ice. Many homeowners who'd otherwise be eager to sell have hesitated to shake off the so-called golden handcuffs of mortgage rates as low as 2% or 3%.

That's finally starting to change, experts say — even though rates are now much higher, climbing again past 7% in recent weeks.

"Markets are just kind of recalibrating for the reality that the Fed is not going to cut interest rates right away," said Greg McBride, Bankrate's chief

financial analyst. For many buyers and sellers alike, it's beginning to sink in that "we're not going back to three and four percent mortgage rates" anytime soon, he said.

In many cases, lifestyle factors — like empty-nesters looking to downsize or growing families hunting for more space — are pushing people to move, rather than wait around for sweeter deals.

"It's a new cycle for real estate," said Bess Freedman, CEO of Brown Harris Stevens, a real estate agency that operates throughout the East Coast. Already, she said, that shift in mindset has started to put some more "good opportunities out there. The people who are serious about it are getting into the market and taking advantage of it."

Experts expect buyers to have a bit more leverage this year compared to last. Data from Zillow shows that 1 in 5 home listings saw a price cut in



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January, and the typical home was on the market for 29 days — longer than during last year's buying frenzy, but 19 days shorter than the average before the pandemic.

"We'll probably see several years of pretty tepid home price appreciation," McBride said.

Tucker gave a similar forecast. "Home prices will neither be skyrocketing nor plunging, but hopefully moving on a slow, boring trajectory like they historically have, and a little higher in spring than in winter," he wrote.

That could benefit those who are still browsing and saving up for a first home, McBride said. "If you get that promotion, you pay off your student loan debt, you really build up your savings, you're going to be in a position where home prices may not be much different two years from now than they are

today. But your financial position is a lot better," he said.

Buyers should take the time now to improve their credit and get pre-approved for a loan. Freedman also cautions against waiting for lower rates if you can afford to buy. If you happen to find something you love, she said, "you can probably negotiate well and get your financing in place, and you won't regret it."

With supply increasing, buyers stand to benefit from a little more time in the process than in years past, when countless buyers were waiving inspections and bidding well over asking prices just to be in the running.

Right now, "you have the ability to do appropriate due diligence. You don't need to feel pressed into making an offer on the spot, and if you do, that's a pretty good indicator that

maybe you should walk away," McBride said. "Making the biggest financial decision of your life under duress rarely leads to success."

Sellers may increasingly find they need to work with an agent who's tapped into local trends to avoid having their homes sit on the market for a long time, Freedman said.

"If you're priced right, it's definitely a seller's market. If you're priced too high, you're just going to sit there," she said.

If a home you're trying to sell is languishing but you can't reduce the asking price, McBride recommends dangling other concessions. "Offering a temporary mortgage rate buy-down for the seller could be the type of incentive that gets a deal," he said.

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