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Oliver Stark Wants To Keep Exploring Buck's Bisexuality On 9-1-1



INSIDE

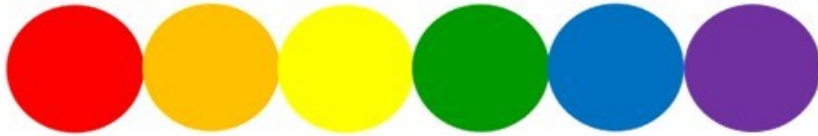


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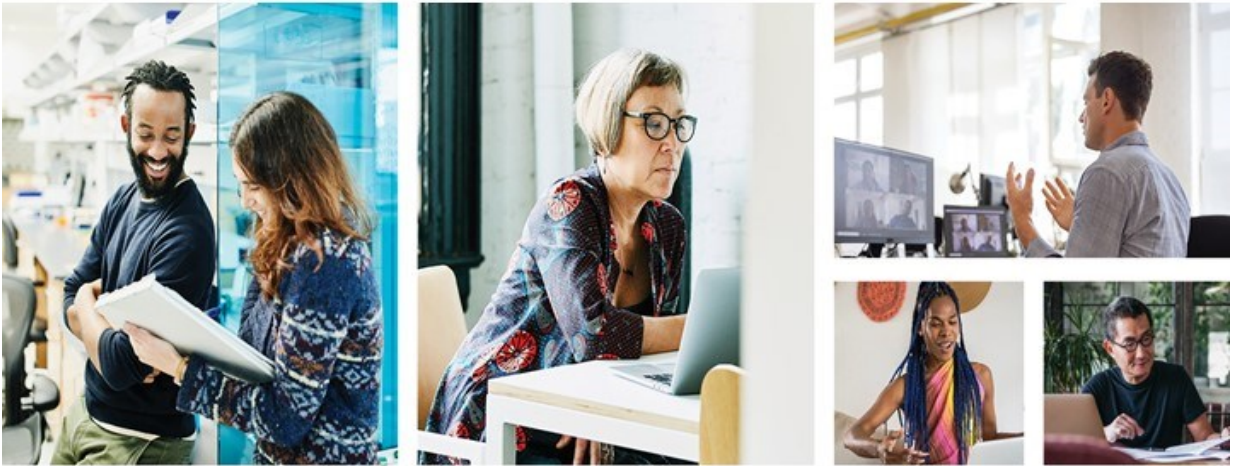
David Archuleta
Powerful New Music Video 'Hell Together'

United Methodists
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WHO WE ARE

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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By David Vandygriff



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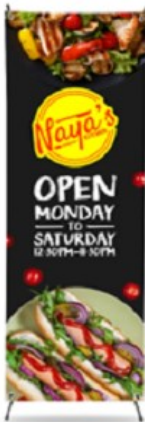
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News & Politics

U.S. Private Sector Job Growth Higher Than Expected

By Jimmy Massengill



Hiring in the US private sector cooled in April but job growth was still higher than anticipated, boosted by the services sector, payroll firm ADP said Wednesday.

Companies added 192,000 jobs last month, down slightly from a revised 208,000 in the month before, the report said.

The labor market has shown resilience despite the US central bank's efforts to keep interest rates elevated and fight stubborn inflation.

While higher rates raise the borrowing costs for consumers and businesses -- and can weigh on employment -- the jobs market has held up with employers reluctant to let go of workers they initially struggled to find.

The strength of the job market has in turn helped to support consumer spending.

"Hiring was broad-based in April," said ADP chief economist Nela Richardson.

She added that only the information sector, such as telecommunications and media, showed weakness.

In particular, the leisure and hospitality sector added a solid

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56,000 jobs while the construction sector added 35,000 roles.

Wage growth "continues to slow," ADP said, though the average hiring pace has accelerated in the last three months.

This should provide some relief to policymakers and assuage concerns that high wages could add to inflation.

Pay gains for those who remained in their jobs were little changed at five percent, while gains for those who switched jobs slipped from 10.1 percent to 9.3 percent.

Other sectors adding jobs included trade, transport and utilities, as well as education and health services, said ADP.

But analysts caution that private payroll numbers can be revised significantly.

"The labor market is likely to loosen going forward on the effects of restrictive monetary policy," said economist Rubeela Farooqi of High Frequency Economics.

"But we expect job growth to remain positive and expect the unemployment rate to remain low, supportive of economic activity this year," she added.

Later Wednesday, the Federal Reserve is set to announce if it will make changes to interest rates.

The central bank is expected to keep rates steady with inflation still above policymakers' longer term two percent target.

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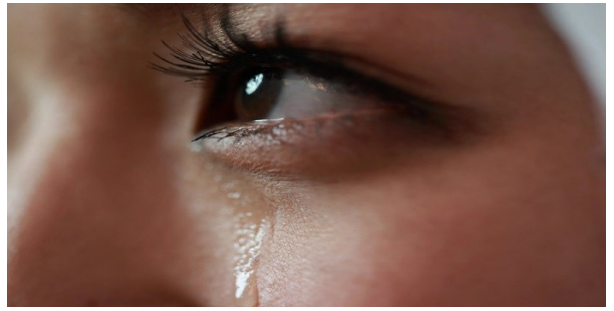
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OUT & HEALTH

LGBTQ+ Youth Mental Health Is Suffering, Care Is Lacking

By Brenda Davis



The Trevor Project released its 2024 US National Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ+ Young People, the wide-reaching findings of which showed that queer & trans youth continue to report high rates of mental health challenges & suicide risk, as well as discrimination, and threats of physical violence. Notably, the insights also indicate low access to mental health care, highlighting an inherent gap between issues LGBTQ+ youth face & potential solutions.

“This survey shows that considering or attempting suicide is not uncommon among LGBTQ+ young people,” said Dr. Ronita Nath, VP of Research at The Trevor Project. “However, many of the contributing risk factors for suicide are preventable, & rooted in victimizing behaviors of others.”

Data showed 39% of LGBTQ+ young people “considered attempting suicide in the past year,” including nearly half of trans and nonbinary young people. According to the report, LGBTQ+ youth of color reported higher rates of attempted suicide than their white peers — disturbingly,

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Native and Indigenous youth were nearly twice as likely to attempt suicide in the past year as counterparts from every other racial group.

A staggering 90% of LGBTQ+ young people respondents saying their well-being was “negatively impacted due to recent politics.”

“With such striking numbers & families literally wanting to uproot their homes to seek safety, lawmakers must reconsider the real and damaging impact that their anti-LGBTQ+ policies & rhetoric create. No ‘political victory’ should be worth risking the lives of young people,” said Janson Wu, Senior Director of State Advocacy and Govt Affairs at The Trevor Project. “Much of our efforts to address the public health crisis of suicide among LGBTQ+ young people are made that much harder by the ongoing wave of anti-LGBTQ+ policies pushed by extremist lawmakers across the country.”

Data indicates that environmental influences and access to identity-affirming and care-driven spaces impact mental health. For example, nearly half (49%) of

respondents ages 13-17 said they experienced bullying in the past year, and those who did also said had higher rates of attempting suicide. On the other hand, respondents who reported living in very accepting communities attempted suicide at less than half the rate of those who reported living in unaccepting communities. Suicide attempt rates also decreased for respondents who said they had access to LGBTQ+-affirming spaces, and for transgender and nonbinary youth who had access to gender-affirming spaces.

While 84% of all LGBTQ+ youth who were surveyed wanted mental health care, only half (50%) were able to get it, meaning one in two people who expressed desire for care were not able to access it. The most common reasons per the report being “afraid to talk about mental health concerns with someone else” and lack of financial resources.

“The results of this survey clearly identify a need for adults and allies to create more affirming environments for LGBTQ+ young people, and better support them in being their true selves,” Nath said.

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Science & Technology

Intel Unveils Latest AI Chip

By Drew Williams



Intel unveiled its latest artificial intelligence chip, called Gaudi 3, as chipmakers rush to produce semiconductors that can train and deploy big AI models, such as the one underpinning OpenAI's ChatGPT.

Intel says the new Gaudi 3 chip is over twice as power-efficient as and can run AI models one-and-a-half times faster than Nvidia's H100 GPU. It also comes in different configurations like a bundle of eight Gaudi 3 chips on one motherboard or a card that can slot into existing systems.

Intel tested the chip on models like Meta's open-source Llama and the Abu Dhabi-backed Falcon. It said Gaudi 3 can help train or deploy models, including Stable Diffusion or OpenAI's Whisper model for speech recognition.

Intel says its chips use less power than Nvidia's.

Nvidia has an estimated 80% of the AI chip market with its graphics processors, known as GPUs, which have been the high-end chip of choice for AI builders over the past year.

Intel said that the new Gaudi 3 chips would be available to customers in the third quarter, and companies including Dell, HP and Supermicro will build systems with the chips. Intel didn't provide a price range for Gaudi 3.

"We do expect it to be highly competitive" with Nvidia's latest chips, said Das Kamhout, vice president of Xeon software at Intel, on a call with reporters. "From our competitive pricing, our distinctive open integrated network on chip, we're using industry-standard Ethernet. We believe it's a strong offering."

The data center AI market is also expected to grow as cloud providers and businesses build infrastructure to deploy AI software, suggesting there is room for other competitors even if Nvidia continues to make the vast majority of AI chips.

Running generative AI and buying Nvidia GPUs can be expensive, and companies are looking for additional suppliers to help bring costs down.

The AI boom has more than tripled Nvidia's stock over the past year. Intel's stock is only up 18% over the same time

period.

AMD is also looking to expand and sell more AI chips for servers. Last year, it introduced a new data center GPU called the MI300X, which already counts Meta and Microsoft as customers.

Earlier this year, Nvidia revealed its B100 and B200 GPUs, which are the successors to the H100 and also promise performance gains. Those chips are expected to start shipping later this year.

Nvidia has been so successful thanks to a powerful suite of proprietary software called CUDA that enables AI scientists to access all the hardware features in a GPU. Intel is teaming up with other chip and software giants, including Google, Qualcomm and Arm to build open software that isn't proprietary and could enable software companies to easily switch chip providers.

"We are working with the software ecosystem to build open reference software, as well as building blocks that allow you to stitch together a solution that you need, rather than be forced into buying a

solution,” Sachin Katti, senior vice president of Intel’s networking group, said on a call with reporters.

Gaudi 3 is built on a five nanometer process, a

relatively recent manufacturing technique, suggesting that the company is using an outside foundry to manufacture the chips. In addition to designing Gaudi 3, Intel also plans to manufacture AI chips,

potentially for outside companies, at a new Ohio factory expected to open in 2027 or 2028, CEO Patrick Gelsinger told reporters last month.



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ART AND ENTERTAINMENT

David Archuleta's Powerful New Music Video 'Hell Together'

By Graham Bennett



American Idol alum David Archuleta has had a great run over the last year or so in particular, from his appearance on The Masked Singer, making us sweat with his viral workout posts, and taking home the GLAAD Media Award for "Outstanding Breakthrough Music Artist."

A few weeks ago, Archuleta released a song called "Hell Together" that debuted at #5 on iTunes and is based on a conversation he had with his

mother about his sexuality and departure from the Mormon church.

"'Hell Together' is inspired by what my mom said to me after I left my Mormon faith and religion altogether," he said in a statement. "It was a scary place... A few days after I publicly announced leaving the Mormon church, my mom texted me saying she had decided to leave, too... I asked what made her feel she needed to leave because she didn't

need to follow my example. She said, 'If you go to Hell, we're all going to Hell with you. We're a family and we'll always be there for each other, in good or in bad!' I was really moved by that."

Archuleta recently returned to the American Idol stage, where he launched his career in 2008 to perform the new hit song, which received a standing ovation from the judges and the crowd.

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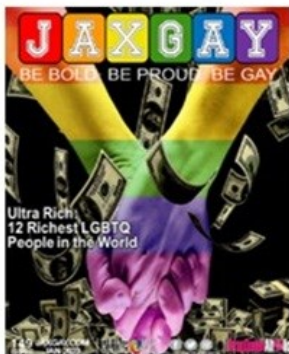
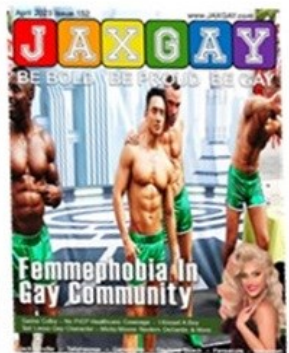
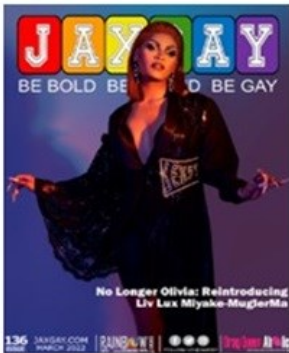
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OUT & HEALTH

Mobilizing For HIV/AIDS Awareness Days
By Lisa Bar



The effort to bring an end to the HIV epidemic is a battle being fought on many fronts. Research provides a greater understanding of what causes the spread of HIV and how to prevent it. At the same time, the development and testing of treatments improve the quality of life for those who contract the virus.

Awareness still plays a crucial role in maximizing these efforts. Awareness breaks down barriers and opens the way for the type of progress that can bring an end to the HIV epidemic.

National HIV/AIDS Awareness Days, coordinated by the US Department of Health and Human Services, are held regularly throughout the year to address the unique challenges that threaten effective prevention and treatment. These designated days help us pursue the overarching goal of increasing our understanding of HIV and how it impacts communities.

HIV is one of many preventable chronic health issues causing suffering in the world today. Yet, unlike others, HIV involves a stigma that makes treatment

and prevention challenging. From the earliest days of the epidemic's onset decades ago, those living with HIV have faced shame, blame, and judgment. As a result of the HIV stigma, most people are reluctant to have healthy conversations that support prevention and treatment efforts.

HIV awareness events create a safe space for healthy conversations, setting the stage for messaging that removes shame and judgment and replaces it with support and understanding. Awareness initiatives push past the stigma, helping those at risk or in need acquire the information and the help they require.

Many HIV awareness events slated throughout the year focus on unique population segments. These include awareness days for American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian communities on March 20, the Asian and Pacific Islanders community on May 19, Southern US communities on August 20, faith communities on August 27, African Immigrants and Refugees on September 9, gay men on September 27, the Latinx community on October

15, the Black community on February 7, women and girls on March 10, and youth on April 10. According to Advocates for Youth, youth with HIV face legal and cultural discrimination that blocks access to treatment and support. National HIV and AIDS Awareness Day is designed to educate the public on how HIV and AIDS affect youth and urge policymakers to take appropriate action.

There are also several annual HIV awareness days focused on critical issues that play a role in prevention and treatment. For example, May 18 is HIV Vaccine Awareness Day, which focuses on the work being done to develop an HIV vaccine. Additionally, National HIV Testing Day is held annually on June 27 to encourage people to get tested, know their status, and connect with care when needed.

The stigma associated with HIV and the challenges it poses to prevention and treatment are addressed explicitly during Zero HIV Stigma Day, which is held on July 21. This day is designed to draw attention to how the stigma reinforces and amplifies the HIV epidemic by

increasing irrational and negative attitudes.

Bringing an end to the HIV epidemic starts with a conversation. Awareness days foster that conversation, but they also have the potential to move people to action.

Awareness days inspire action, help motivate those at risk of exposure, and provide treatment guidance to those living with HIV/AIDS. For everyone, awareness days communicate the need to get tested and know your status.

Great strides have been taken in recent years to improve the prevention and treatment of HIV, yet the stigma that endures keeps advancements from achieving their full impact. Awareness days allow everyone to join the conversation, understand the risks, and take the steps needed to end the epidemic.



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Life and Style

United Methodists Repeal Ban On LGBTQ Clergy

By John Hendricks



The United Methodist Church, which has some 10 million members around the world, repealed on Wednesday a ban on ordaining gay clergy and same-sex marriage.

Church leadership, at a conference held in North Carolina, approved the moves in a 692-51 vote.

The church removed its 1984 ban on the ordination of clergy who are "self-avowing

practicing homosexuals."

It also decided that clergy who perform same-sex marriages will not be subject to any penalties. Neither will clergy or churches which refuse to hold same-sex weddings.

"Delegates and observers applauded after the vote," the church news agency said.

"Many hugged and more than a few cried, in a mass release of

joy for those who had pushed, some for decades, to make The United Methodist Church fully inclusive," it added.

The LGBTQ moves have not been without controversy. Thousands of more conservative United Methodist congregations have left the denomination in the past few years over the issue. About half of the church's global membership is in the United States.

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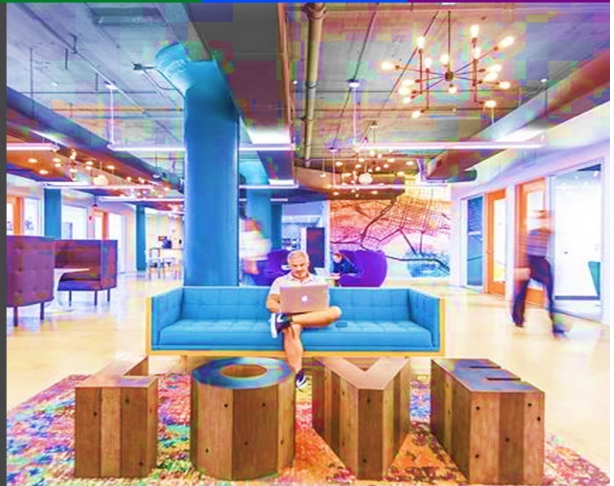
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Science & Technology

**BYD's Scissor-Door Supercar
Bao 9 To Enter Production**
By Denise Sappington



China's electric automaker giant BYD's Fang Cheng Bao brand has unveiled its latest concept supercar, the Super 9 (or Bao 9). Roofless and sleek in design, its dual "cockpit" look is akin to the famous 1960s Batmobile.

However, the comparison with the 1960s Batmobile ends with the dual-cockpit design of the iconic car from TV and film. According to the latest news, the Super 9/Bao 9 started as a concept but is getting ready for production soon.

According to the market information, Fang Cheng Bao's parent company, BYD, is officially the world's largest electrical vehicle (EV) maker, with a 20% market share. BYD has been increasing its global export share in the last few years, focusing mainly on the Chinese EV market.

Fang Cheng Bao is a premium brand being developed by BYD. Currently, the brand is mainly focused on producing electric sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and has only released one model so far—the PHEV Bao 5 (aka the Leopard 5).

1960s Batmobile Inspired?

The company has previously showcased two other SUV concepts (the Leopard 3 and Leopard 8).

The introduction of an open-top sports car in the Super 9 concept suggests that multiple vehicle lines may be produced under the Fang Cheng Bao brand in the future.

According to New Atlas, the former concept Super 9 will be called the Bao 9 when/if it enters production. The name may also indicate that we could see another 8 Bao vehicles sometime in the future. It could also indicate plans for several other Leopard vehicles.

The planned Super 9/Bao 9 is likely going to be a battery electric vehicle (BEV). It also appears to be a two-seater car split across dual-exposed cockpits with scissor doors.

A thin bodywork strip separates the two passengers, each sporting what appears to be carbon fiber seats. The cockpits themselves have been described as fighter-style, with the driving appearing to benefit from a Formula One-style steering wheel.

The driver's cockpit is also well furnished with a bank of buttons and other controls on either side and below, the center console.

The Bao 9's chassis is also said to be primarily carbon fiber to reduce weight. This will be necessary given the likely weight of the battery pack needed to power the supercar.

The Bao 9 Is A Bold Concept

One of the Bao 9's main design features is its apparent lack of a roof and diminutive windshield. Both the driver and passenger are treated with smaller windshields, making them, more or less, completely exposed to the elements when cruising around.

The Super 9/Bao 9 concept is especially unique with its roofless, dual-cockpit design. McLaren Elva and Aston Martin V12 Speedster have already released similar roofless designs.

McLaren is more interesting among the two as it channels a wall of air through the hood to create a virtual windshield that keeps your hair in better shape while driving on the highway.



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BUSINESS & TRAVEL

Walmart Will Close All Of Its Health Care Clinics

By David Vandygriff

Walmart, the largest retailer in the United States, will close all 51 of its health care centers in six states and end virtual health care services, the company said Tuesday.

Walmart had made a big push into health care in recent years, opening clinics next to its superstores that offered primary and urgent care, labs, X-rays, behavioral health and dental work — Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Missouri and Texas. Walmart believed it could use its massive financial scale and store base to offer convenient, low-cost services to patients in rural and underserved areas that lacked primary care options.

But the announcement is an abrupt reversal in Walmart's strategy and may leave a gap in health care access, particularly for lower-income patients without insurance who relied on the centers. Walmart also said it will end virtual health care services.

"One of unique things was they were focused on stores located in underserved communities. It's disappointing that Walmart wasn't able to make it work

because these patients need care and don't have as many options," said Ateev Mehrotra, a professor of health care policy and medicine at Harvard Medical School who researches retail health clinics.

Walmart said it was a "difficult decision," but its health care push was not profitable for the company because of the "challenging reimbursement environment and escalating operating costs."

"We determined there is not a sustainable business model for us to continue," the company said.

Mehrotra said Walmart's closures reflect the challenges for primary care providers in the United States. A shortage of up to 55,000 primary care physicians is expected in the next decade, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges.

"This experience highlights the financial struggles that primary care has in general. It really speaks to what primary clinics are facing," he said.

Walmart said it will continue operating its 4,600 pharmacies and more than 3,000 optical centers around the country.



Walmart's Health Push

Walmart opened clinics to try to fill a gap for its customers without health insurance, as well as people who have insurance plans with high deductibles and out-of-pocket costs.

"Health care looks like a big opportunity," Walmart CEO Doug McMillion said in 2020, shortly after the first clinics opened.

Soaring costs and access to primary care options remain persistent challenges, especially in rural areas. Walmart chose some of its locations because the areas had higher rates of chronic disease and fewer primary care physicians than average US communities.

Marcus Osborne, Walmart's former vice president of health and wellness transformation, said in 2020 that people who came into the clinics often had not seen a primary care physician in two or three years, or a dentist in five years.

Walmart's closures show that strength in retail does not always translate into health care, he said.



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Oliver Stark Wants To Keep Exploring Buck's Bisexuality On 9-1-1

By David Vandygriff



The procedural drama series 9-1-1 reached 100 episodes following its move from Fox to ABC for season 7. That 100th episode, which aired on April 4, centers on Buck (Oliver Stark) dealing with complicated feelings toward Tommy (Lou Ferrigno Jr). The episode unfolds with Buck finally confessing his feelings, which results in a kiss between Tommy and Buck, and leads to the two of them agreeing to go on a date.

Dedicated 9-1-1 fans had long speculated about Buck's sexuality and eagerly anticipated his first kiss with another man on the show — and it finally happened in a way that was exciting, but also pointedly casual for the characters involved.

"Something that's always touched me emotionally, more than anything in my life, is when people are able to live as their authentic selves," actor Oliver Stark, who plays Buck on 9-1-1, tells Out. "It's something that has always, for whatever reason, brought a tear to my eye. When I see somebody living openly and proudly as who they are, it has always really affected me." |

see him get a little emotional talking about it. "So, to get to now go through this storyline and hopefully help people feel more seen, that really means a lot to me."

It isn't until shooting episode 98 that Stark finds out about Buck's first kissing scene with a man in the 100th episode of the series. "Tim Minear, who writes the show, called me up and said, 'I want to pitch this Buck storyline to you,'" Stark recalls. "He proceeded to tell me about the character of Tommy and what that would lead to. He wanted to know how I felt about it and if I was on board with it. And obviously here we are, so of course I was. I was really excited for it, and I'm really happy with how it's played out."

Despite the undeniable progress of LGBTQ+ storytelling and inclusion in mainstream media, there are still people in our community who are glaringly underrepresented in film and television. Bisexual people, for instance, continue to be intensely misjudged, misunderstood, and misrepresented on and off the screen.

We see it on Insecure when

Molly goes on a date with a guy who casually comes out as bi, and when Hannah Einbinder from Hacks denounces a "lack of grace" for bisexual women on television, and even hear it from Heartstopper star Kit Connor commenting on the "shockingly low" number of bi characters in movies and TV shows.

"A friend of mine — I actually met her through work; she was a guest actress many years ago — is bisexual and reached out to me. She waited to reach out because she had been reading stuff, and she just felt very emotional. She thought it was a really lovely story to be telling, and that it was done in the right way."

He adds, "Because that's the other thing: we want to tell it in an honest way where not everything is going to be easy and carefree. There are going to be issues, but we also don't want it to feel like it's down or too heavy. We want to tell this queer love story in a very honest way, but also in a very loving way."

Buck's attraction to women was on full display for six seasons of 9-1-1. Now, he's also getting to express his feelings for

another man, share a kiss, and make plans for a future date, which doesn't negate any relationship that's come before.

"Even the fact that Buck is learning more about his sexuality in his thirties is a really great story to tell," Stark says. "People comment things on my Instagram like, 'Well, there would've been signs. How come it's taken him so long?' I think it's important to show that we're always learning more about ourselves. It's never too late to uncover a new side of yourself. In fact, if you go back to season 1 of the show, Athena's husband comes to terms with his sexuality as a man in his forties or fifties. There's no formula for how you find things out about yourself or learn to love things about yourself. This is just Buck's journey."

Fox's 9-1-1: Lone Star, a spinoff series from 9-1-1 that is soon returning for a fifth season, has long featured LGBTQ+ actors Brian Michael Smith, who is trans; Rafael L. Silva, who is gay; and Ronen Rubinstein, who is bisexual. Rubinstein and Silva play T.K. Strand and Carlos Reyes, respectively, and make up the fan-favorite couple referred to as Tarlos among fans.

Stark highlights that Rubinstein and Silva have always been supportive of him, his character, and the show overall. "Tarlos is a beautiful relationship," Stark says. "I'm just honored to get to tell a story that can kind of partner up with that and maybe

continue with a similar thread." Stark adds, "Rafael and I used to bump into each other a lot. I mean, we went to the same gym, so I used to see him at the gym a lot. But I recently stopped going to that gym." And when Stark had to defend Buck's bisexuality on social media, he recalls that Rubinstein re-shared his social media post in a gesture of support.

"I was so excited to see Buck's evolution as a character hit this beautiful point," Rubinstein said when reached out for comment. "As an out bi actor, I'm beyond happy such a fan-favorite gets to explore this journey on such a massive show. I know Oliver will handle it with the ultimate care and respect, and you can always trust in Tim Minear. I guess he knew exactly what he was doing when T.K. told Buck he already had a boyfriend in the crossover episode."

While there was some conservative backlash to the scene of Buck and Tommy kissing on 9-1-1, Stark continues, "One of the things that makes me laugh is... women will be like, 'Oh, but I was attracted to Buck, and now I'm not.' And it's like, 'Well, these are fictional characters, so you didn't have a chance with him anyway, because he's not real.' [laughs] This is a show that has always contained queer storylines and queer characters. If [adding] one more is the tipping point or a deal breaker, then what were you watching to begin with?"



Looking ahead into the future of 9-1-1, Stark wants Buck to continue on this path of self-discovery and love.

"I really want to see Buck continue to explore what it is that really speaks to him, and what he's into," Stark says. "He's obviously going to continue down this path with Tommy for now. I don't know what that story is going to end up being, but I would really like for Tommy to stay a part of Buck's life, regardless. He's obviously opened this door for him, and I think it would be really nice if [Tommy] was able to continue to hold [Buck's] hand and could help guide him through this process. As somebody who's a little older and more experienced, to kind of help shepherd Buck into this new phase of understanding who he is."

New episodes of 9-1-1 season 7 air Thursday on ABC. The entire series is also available for streaming on Hulu.



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ART AND ENTERTAINMENT

Law & Order: Organized Crime' Fifth Season Announced

By Chris Joshlin



Law & Order: Organized Crime began with octopus-soaked humor amid dark material and grew more serious over time. Case in point: Elliot Stabler began to grow a beard and go undercover, which meant things were very serious. Unlike with SVU, crimes were also not solved over the course of a single episode, and that was apparently a reason why the show isn't considered to be as "mainstream" as its franchise colleagues. That much is true, but the Chris Meloni-starring series still

draws a rabid enough fanbase that the awkward situation has worked out, sort of.

The spin off's fifth season was the subject of panicked speculation after NBC renewed the Law & Order revival and SVU earlier this year and left Organized Crime dangling. Now, a compromise has been struck, and this move is likely designed to boost Peacock streaming subscriptions. Via Hollywood Reporter, it's close to happening:

Sources tell The Hollywood

Reporter that Peacock is putting the finishing touches on a deal that would see Law & Order: Organized Crime move from NBC to the streamer for a fifth season consisting of 10 episodes.

Viewers should not fear for this series ending anytime soon. If this follows the pattern of NBC's Criminal Intent, there are many more seasons ahead. You know, it also wouldn't hurt to bring back the weaponized mollusk or Dylan McDermott. Just saying.





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Life and Style

5 Biggest Decorating Mistakes For A Small Kitchen

By Brandon Garrett



An large eat-in kitchen with a breakfast nook and double island is ideal, that's simply not the reality for most of us. However, while you can't physically make a small kitchen larger, the right decor can help make it feel more spacious. On the other hand, choosing the wrong accessories can have the opposite effect. Here are five common mistakes to avoid when decorating a small kitchen.

Having Too Many Small Appliances Out on the Counter

While it might be nice to have a spacious kitchen with room for everything from an electric stand mixer to one of those coffee machines that also makes lattes and cold brew, if you have a small kitchen, there's probably not enough room for all of those cool gadgets. "One common mistake is overcrowding countertops with various appliances, utensils, and decorative items," says interior designer Audrey Scheck. "This clutter not only restricts workspace but also creates visual chaos, making the kitchen appear smaller and less organized." So, if you're downsizing your kitchen, it's

best to declutter appliances that aren't essential."

Lastly, if it's within your budget, install an appliance garage to clear your countertop.

Installing Window Treatments

Natural light makes any space look larger, but it's usually sparse in smaller kitchens. So, if you have a window in your kitchen, it's best to skip the blinds and other window treatments. "Try to keep the window clear of window treatments to maximize natural light," says Dawson.

If you want Roman shades, the designer suggests doing an outside mount, but hang it approximately six inches above the window frame to give the illusion of a taller window.

Alternatively, Scheck recommends adding ambient lighting by placing small table lamps to illuminate dark corners if there is space.

Choosing a Dark Paint Color

Another small kitchen decorating mistake is painting the walls and cabinets too dark of a color. "While dark hues can add depth and drama to a larger space, in a small kitchen, they tend to absorb light and make the room feel closed-in.

Opting for lighter shades can help reflect light, making the space feel brighter and more open," says Scheck.

Insisting on a Door

According to Dawson, kitchen doors that swing open can make small kitchens feel even more cramped. "If there's a door into your small kitchen, remove it altogether. Remove the hinges, if possible. It gives you so much more space to have that door gone."

Alternatively, pocket doors that slide into the wall rather than swing open offer the best of both worlds.

Using Too Many Different Types of Hardware

While it might be nice to mix up your hardware in a larger kitchen, the same rule simply doesn't apply to a smaller one. "If your kitchen is small, go with the same pulls on all cabinets and all drawers. Don't mix pulls with knobs. Keeping everything uniform will give it a tidier look!" kitchen, the same rule simply doesn't apply to a smaller one. "If your kitchen is small, go with the same pulls on all cabinets and all drawers. Don't mix pulls with knobs. Keeping everything uniform will give it a tidier look!"



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Trinity The Tuck Is Your Sinful Pop Goddess & Her New EP

By David Vandygriff

Trinity the Tuck truly is a multi-hyphenate talent. She's a drag artist, dancer, singer, and actor (seriously, Slay was a total slay) and so if her deadliest sin is pride, well we could hardly blame her.

Speaking of pride and deadly sins Trinity announces today that her all-new EP titled *Sinematic* is set to drop just in time to become this year's Pride soundtrack of the summer, when it arrives on June 1!

This new EP follows the success of her chart-topping

albums *Plastic* and *EGO*, and her various appearances in music videos including Taylor Swift's "You Need to Calm Down," Aja's "I Don't Wanna Brag" and recently hosting the drag series "Love for the Arts." This truly is the year of Trinity who also is serving as one of the six faces for SERV Vodka, the aforementioned Slay movie for Tubi, and of course, now this dark and catchy concept record.

The new album features seven (duh) new tracks all inspired by one of the seven deadly sins,

pride, greed, wrath, envy, lust, gluttony, and sloth. Plus the album features fan-favorite Jujubee on the track "Til Death Becomes Us," which also takes inspiration from the camp classic *Death Becomes Her* — and by the way, is a total banger!

Sinematic drops June 1, but in the meantime, you can check out the video for "Ti; Death Becomes Us," featuring Kylie Sonique Love, Peppermint, Sherry Vine, Mr. Bradford, Matt Palmer, and Jujubee below. It's such a vibe.

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News & Politics

Evictions Surge In Arizona With Housing Shortage And Rising Prices

By Michael Brayson

"It's a slow day" in Maricopa County, Arizona, he says.

Maricopa is home to Phoenix, one of the fastest growing cities in the United States, a place where rents have skyrocketed since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, leaving an ever-increasing number of people in trouble.

"I typically do between 19 and 25 (evictions) a day," said McCloskey, one of 26 such officers in Maricopa.

Much of the United States has seen house prices shoot up in recent years, taking rents with them.

At the same time, wages have not kept pace, making housing an ever-larger proportion of a family's costs.

Simply not being able to afford the rent is one of the main reasons behind the shocking 3,000 evictions that take place in Maricopa County every month -- a place expected to be a key battleground in this November's presidential election between Joe Biden and Donald Trump.

"What's particularly dramatic about Phoenix is how expensive it is and how quickly

it's changed," said Glenn Farley of the Common Sense Institute, an economic research firm.

"Five years ago, Phoenix still had a reputation as being relatively affordable; rent was low, housing costs were low. That has pretty much reversed more or less overnight."

Servicing a mortgage in 2019 was viable for someone working an average job for 40 hours a week, he said.

"Today, in 2024 in the greater Phoenix area, you need to work about 68 hours. That's more than 50 percent longer."

In 19 years of enforcing court orders, McCloskey, 68, has seen it all: homes turned into drug warehouses, people who sublet to third parties or leave children in the house alone to avoid eviction, and even a baseball player who had simply abandoned everything in situ.

But what he sees most nowadays is people who haven't been able to scrape together enough money to make the rent that month -- sufficient cause for a landlord to get a court ordered eviction.

"I've seen guys that are working, trying to work two jobs

to keep this going, or they have multiple families live in the house or the apartment... the wages don't compensate the rent," said McCloskey.

That's an observation that is borne out by the numbers, says Farley, who notes that between 2020 and 2022 wages did rise by upwards of 20 percent.

"The trouble is that inflation alone has absorbed that 20 to 30 percent, and housing costs (have risen) more than double that."

Alex, a mechanic in his 30s whom McCloskey had to evict, is a case in point.

"I have two jobs and it's not enough," he told AFP as he moved his belongings out of the two-bedroom house where he lived with his wife, their daughter and pet dog.

"I've worked my whole life (yet) I can't afford to pay the rent. It's ridiculous," he said as he watched two men change the locks of what until then had been his home.

Alex said he was two months behind on his rent -- which came to around \$3,000 a month with bills -- when the eviction order came through.



"I don't know how other people do it, but like I said, I've worked my whole life and it's never been this bad," he said.

Joe Biden won Arizona by just over 10,000 votes in 2020 and the state is expected to be close again when Americans go to the polls in November.

Many of the issues that are uppermost in voters' minds across the country are particularly acute here -- from immigration to abortion, to the state of the economy.

Some of the blame lies with the pandemic.

With millions able to work from home during lockdowns, people fled pricier real estate markets like California for somewhere with a bit more space.

The increased demand -- and in some cases spare cash generated by the sale of an expensive Californian home -- sent costs up in Phoenix, at a time that house building was stalling, leaving the city with an estimated 65,000-home shortfall.

"You got a surge in demand, a surge in population, a collapse in supply. The result was rapid price increases," said Farley.

That means a boom in work for McCloskey and his colleagues.

"It makes it tougher for people," sighed McCloskey as he got back into his car after delivering bad news to another family.

"It seems like an endless problem."

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BUSINESS & TRAVEL

Vegas Audiences Blown Away By Carrie Underwood

By Grant Wilson



Audiences are blown away over Carrie Underwood!

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Heading into spring, the star has a slew of performances coming up including shows in May, June, August, and October.

With a slew of hits including "Before He Cheats," "Church

Bells," "Good Girl," "Blown Away," and so many more... generations of fans can't get enough of Underwood's show.

What's even more impressive is that Underwood has maintained a huge interest as a Las Vegas headliner even when she went on tour during her Denim & Rhinestones Tour from 2022-2023.

The Denim & Rhinestones Tour sold out arenas across the country and gave fans a show they'll never forget, but her REFLECTION residency offers

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## PARTY IN THE PARK

SUNDAY JUNE 30<sup>TH</sup> 12PM-5PM

DJ Rockstar Aaron has played at some of the best award-winning nightclubs including a multi-year residency at Piranha Nightclub in Las Vegas and EDC (Electric Daisy Carnival Las Vegas), headlines Pride events in Denver and San Diego. Provided DJ support for national touring acts including icon Cyndi Lauper, Journey & Toto, Girli, Amorphous and many others. Shared the stage with Katy Perry, performed DJ sets for Ariana Grande, Lil Nas X, Janet Jackson and many other high-profile artists.

DJ Tannr is a high energy Washington, DC based club, event, and party DJ/emcee with 25+ years experience. Spinning Top40/Pop, 80's, 90's, EDM, as well as the classics, DJ Tanner's dance-floor is packed with enthusiastic guests into the night.

Performances by vocalist, Drag Queens, Pageantry, Trans Performers, and much much more!!! A must attend EVENT.

**Tickets Go On Sale May 1, 2024**  
**[www.UnityGayJax.com](http://www.UnityGayJax.com)**

**NOTE: PARTY IN THE PARK LOCATION TBA UPON  
CITY APPROVAL OF PERMITS SUBMITTED**





2024   
**unity**  
GAY JAX 

*3<sup>rd</sup> Annual*

*Big Gay*

**PICNIC**

**SUNDAY JUNE 30<sup>TH</sup> 12PM-5PM**



HAMBURGER & HOTDOGS PROCEEDS  
BENETING COLOR JAX COMMUNITY CENTER  
DJ's & DRAG QUEENS, & VOCALIST PERFORMANCES

Tickets Go On Sale For All Events May 1, 2024  
[www.UnityGayJax.com](http://www.UnityGayJax.com)

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