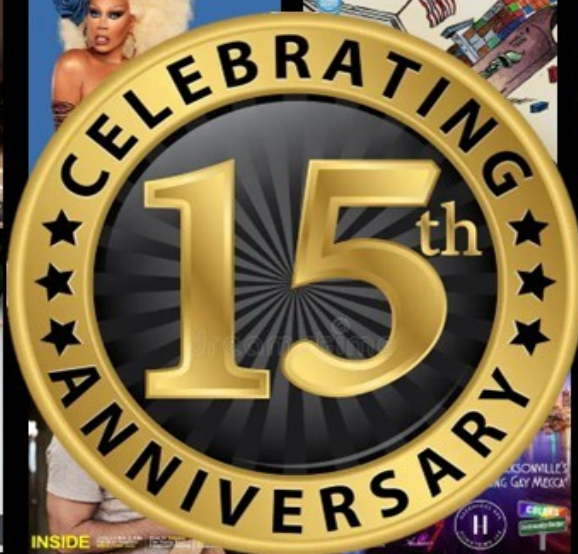




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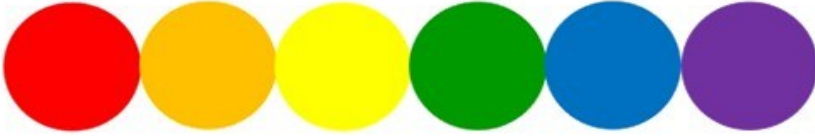
Drag Race Queen Xunami Muse Leaves The Country

Teenage Institution Escape Inspired Netflix's 'Wayward'

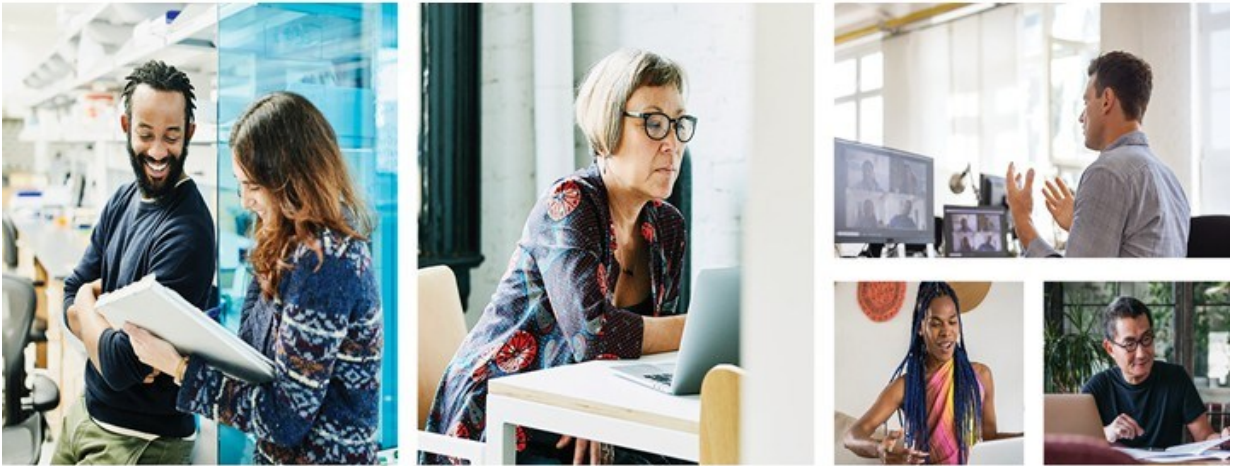
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Jax Gay Mag LLC is the ONLY LGBT+ Publication in Northeast Florida. With monthly readership of approximately 300,000.

Our mission is to promote North Florida and especially in Jacksonville, as a welcoming LGBT+ destination through marketing and events.

Jax Gay Mag produces many events throughout year. Visit www.JaxGayMag.com for more information.

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**Fifteen Years of Pride and Progress:
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News & Politics

Record 62% Of Americans: Gov't Has Too Much Power

By Michael Foster



A poll released Friday shows a record 62 percent of Americans say the federal government has too much power — the highest share since Gallup first began tracking this trend in 2001.

In 2024, a little more than half (51 percent) of Americans surveyed said they believed the federal government had too much power. Among Democrats, the percentage holding this belief surged from 25 percent to 66 percent this year, when President Trump returned to the White House.

Republicans trended in the opposite direction, though to a lesser degree. Seventy-five percent of Republicans surveyed last year believed the government had too much power. This year, that number dropped to 58 percent.

The poll marks the first time since 2007 that Democrats have been more likely than

Republicans to say they believe the federal government has too much power.

Previous polls indicate that the partisan shifts corresponded to changes in presidential administrations, with both sides more likely to say the federal government had too much power if a president of the opposite party was in office.

In the previous Trump administration, only 44 percent to 50 percent of Democratic respondents expressed concern over federal overreach.

Meanwhile, between 74 percent and 82 percent of Republicans said they believed the federal government had too much power during the administrations of former Presidents Obama and Biden.

The poll also found a slight decrease in the percentage of

Republicans who said they believe the government “is trying to do too many things that should be left to individuals and businesses,” down from 79 percent last year to 74 percent.

The percentage of Democrats who said they believe the government is doing too much increased slightly from 29 percent to 34 percent.

A previous Gallup survey found less than a quarter of Americans viewed the government even somewhat positively, with 61 percent of respondents expressing a “somewhat” or “negative” view of it.

Another recent poll, conducted by the nonpartisan Pew Research Center, showed that a majority of Americans believed Trump is exerting more power than his predecessors.



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OUT & HEALTH

World's First Blood Test That Diagnoses Fatigue With 96% Accuracy

By Justin Kerim



Hope might finally be on the horizon for millions living with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

Scientists at the University of East Anglia (UEA) and Oxford BioDynamics have developed a highly accurate blood test to diagnose Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS), also known as Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME/CFS).

The debilitating long-term illness affects millions worldwide, including more than 400,000 people in the UK, but has long lacked a definitive diagnostic tool.

The new test, which boasts a 96 percent accuracy rate, offers a major step forward for patients who have often faced years of uncertainty and misdiagnosis.

Researchers also believe the discovery could pave the way for a similar test to diagnose long Covid, which shares several symptoms with ME/CFS.

Lead researcher Prof Dmitry Pshezhetskiy from UEA's Norwich Medical School said: "ME/CFS is a serious and often disabling illness characterised by extreme fatigue that is not

relieved by rest. We know that some patients report being ignored or even told that their illness is 'all in their head'. With no definitive tests, many patients have gone undiagnosed or misdiagnosed for years."

Decoding the body's folds

The team used advanced EpiSwitch® 3D Genomics technology from Oxford BioDynamics to study how DNA folds within cells, a process that affects which genes turn on or off. The study analyzed blood samples from 47 patients with severe ME/CFS and 61 healthy controls, revealing a unique pattern consistently present in patients with the condition.

Each human cell contains about two meters of DNA tightly folded in complex 3D structures. These folds form a "hidden code" that helps regulate biological processes, and changes in these patterns can reflect disease.

"Chronic Fatigue Syndrome is not a genetic disease you're born with," said Alexandre Akoulitchev, Chief Scientific Officer at Oxford BioDynamics. "That's why using EpiSwitch 'epigenetic' markers — which

can change during a person's life — was key to reaching this high level of accuracy."

He added, "With this breakthrough, we are proud to enable a first-in-class test that can address an unmet need for a quick and reliable diagnostic for a complex, challenging-to-identify illness."

This same approach has previously proven effective in detecting diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, ALS, and prostate cancer.

A vital step forward

The new test demonstrated 92 percent sensitivity and 98 percent specificity, showing how well it excludes healthy individuals.

The researchers also uncovered signs of immune and inflammation pathways involved in the disease, which could help guide treatment in the future.

"This is a significant step forward," said Prof Pshezhetskiy. "For the first time, we have a simple blood test that can reliably identify ME/CFS — potentially transforming how we diagnose and manage this complex disease."

He added that understanding the biological pathways involved “opens the door to developing targeted treatments and identifying which patients

might benefit most from specific therapies.” Researchers hope the EpiSwitch® CFS test could

soon become a vital diagnostic tool in clinical settings, offering more personalized and effective care for patients.



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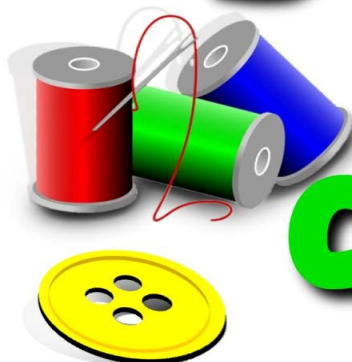
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Science & Technology

China's New Extended-Range EV Offers 755-Mile Range

By Jennifer Smith



China's BAIC Group premium EV brand Arcfox has introduced the Alpha T5 Extended Range Edition – its first extended-range electric vehicle (EREV) and a major step in its electrification strategy.

The mid-size SUV combines CATL's advanced Freevoy battery system with BAIC's Shenqing extended-range powertrain for improved efficiency and durability. It features a 1.5-liter engine acting as a range extender with 40% thermal efficiency, achieving about 45 miles per gallon in hybrid mode.

The Alpha T5 delivers a pure electric driving range of approximately 134 miles and a total range of up to 755 miles, underscoring Arcfox's commitment to blending long-distance capability with high-performance electric technology.

Improved efficiency and 15-minute charging

The Alpha T5 Extended Range Edition delivers strong performance for a mid-size SUV, accelerating from 0 to 62

mph in just 6.5 seconds with a charged battery, or 7.6 seconds when the battery is depleted. Thanks to fast-charging capabilities, the battery can recharge from 30% to 80% in just 15 minutes.

As Arcfox's first extended-range model, the Alpha T5 EREV features CATL's advanced Freevoy battery system, while BAIC's Shenqing power system uses an integrated design that reduces overall weight by 5% and improves both energy recovery and range extender efficiency.

The Alpha T5 EREV's powertrain achieves 40% thermal efficiency, 95% generator efficiency, and over 3.5 kWh per liter oil-to-electric conversion. Its electric drive reaches 98% efficiency, with an estimated fuel economy of 45 mpg and electricity use of 26.5 kWh per 62 mi.

The BAIC Shenqing extended-range system produces 268 hp and 266 lb-ft of torque, while range extender start-stop technology cuts startup vibration by 33% and shutdown vibration by 25%, enhancing both performance and comfort.

Furthermore, advanced active suppression technology reduces fluctuations by 30% and amplitude by 34%, keeping the noise difference between extended-range and pure electric modes below 1 decibel.

First hybrid-electric SUV after T1 hatchback success

BAIC's Arcfox is the company's new energy vehicle brand. So far, the brand has focused on fully electric models, with its most recent release being the T1 hatchback, which competes with the BYD Dolphin and Geely Xingyuan. The introduction of the Alpha T5 EREV is Arcfox's first extended-range model, representing a step into hybrid-electric technology.

The Arcfox T1 made its debut at the 2025 Shanghai Auto Show, offering two battery options – 33.4 kWh and 42.3 kWh – providing estimated ranges of about 200 miles and 265 miles under the CLTC cycle. Arcfox, one of China's earliest EV startups, reported monthly sales in 2020, but public figures have been limited since 2021 amid weaker performance.

With the T1 and the new Alpha T5 EREV, the brand is expanding its lineup to meet the needs of both city drivers

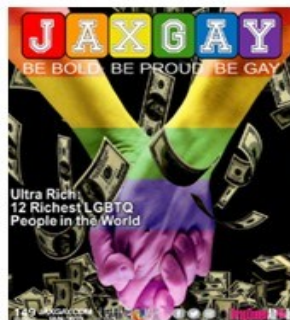
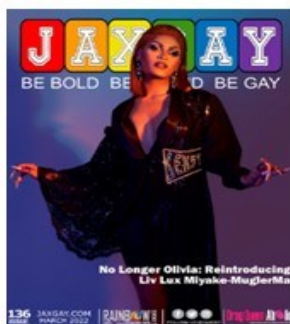
and those who require longer-range vehicles. The move also shows Arcfox's effort to offer more options and maintain a

presence in China's growing EV market.

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Teenage Institution Escape Inspired Netflix's 'Wayward'

By Angie Davis



Wayward, Netflix's newest thriller series about a teen academy with dark secrets, was inspired by a childhood friend of creator Mae Martin.

The comedian revealed the connection at an intimate screening in Los Angeles on Saturday. Abbi Jacobson, Clea DuVall, Natalie Morales, Bobby Berk, and Atsuko Okatsuka were just a few of Martin's friends who attended alongside series star Sarah Gadon. Before screening episodes 1 and 2, Martin talked about the show, which has been in development for six years, being "very personal."

"I have been thinking about it since I was a teenager," they said. "My best friend when I was 16, she was a stoner, not in need of any radical intervention, and she was sent to a troubled teen institute. She was gone for two years and ended up escaping and hitchhiking. The stories that she had about her time there were so crazy, so I've always been interested in that industry."

Wayward follows two "troubled" best friends, Abbie (Sydney

Topliffe) and Leila (Alyvia Alyn Lind), who get shipped off to Tall Pines Academy — an institute run by a spiritual yet controlling director (Toni Collette) whose rehabilitation techniques are, let's say, unconventional. The town's secrets start bubbling to the surface when a sharp-eyed cop named Alex (Mae Martin) moves to town with his pregnant wife (Sarah Gadon), and things quickly get bloody. While Alex is on the case, the codependent besties delve deeper into the underbelly of the school — greatly reducing their chances of escaping unscathed.

The series really takes time to focus on the relationship between Abbie and Leila, and both of their toxic relationships with their families, which Martin addressed at the screening. They explained that they feel "strongly about how we pathologize young people when they might be just reacting to a sick world and how those labels that we give them affect the way they view their own potential." And they described the show as being about "the world that we're handing to the next

generation," in addition to intergenerational trauma.

"As we get older, I feel like we have to suppress so much of our empathy, or critical thinking, just to participate in the world and the systems that govern the world," Martin said. "I feel protective of young people. I feel like we should listen to them, and also we should tap into our inner rebellious teenagers. We're gonna have to, I think, in order to have the kind of conviction and imagination that we need to imagine a different world."

Wayward premieres on Netflix on September 25.

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OUT & HEALTH

Gay Footballer Josh Cavallo: 'Mountains' Of Homophobia In The Sport

By Randy Eisgruber



In an interview with BBC Sport, Cavallo, who in July moved from Australia to England to join non-league Peterborough Sports, opened up about the reality of being openly gay in men's football.

The 25-year-old came out publicly as gay in October 2021. He has since revealed that he faces "multiple death threats" every day.

He said of work still needed to tackle homophobia in men's football: "We've got mountains to do. I don't go more than a week without hearing about an issue."

In January 2022, Melbourne Victory was fined \$5,000 AUD (around £2,500) by Football Australia after fans hurled hateful abuse at Josh Cavallo when his former team Adelaide

United played them.

Cavallo recalled of the incident: "The things I'd hear were hurtful and derogatory towards my community. I didn't react because I knew that would only feed the haters."

'There are a lot of scary things...'

He admitted that it would "move mountains" to have openly gay or bisexual players in the Premier League.

"But I'm not going to sugar-coat it. There are a lot of scary things that would come this person's way. In the world of football, being an openly gay player is a very toxic place," he acknowledged of the reality of coming out with so much public attention.

Football icon Justin Fashanu made history by becoming the

first professional footballer to come out as gay in 1990. He was hounded by the homophobic British tabloid press, and tragically died by suicide in 1998.

Despite being aware of that "toxic masculinity" still has roots in men's football, Cavallo shared that he's been received "really positively" at Peterborough Sports.

He said: "Everyone has been nice. The respect is there. I had offers in other countries before coming to Peterborough.

"It wasn't about picking the club playing at the highest level. It was about finding a club where I was going to be comfortable. The way Peterborough Sports was sold to me was something I could be comfortable with and be who I am off the pitch."

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Life and Style

Give Your Morning Coffee An Even Bigger Boost

By David Vandygriff



Blamed for everything from stunting growth to causing high blood pressure, coffee is often unfairly maligned as deleterious to one's health. Myths about coffee ignore the fact it's high in heart-healthy antioxidants that may actually reduce your risk of many chronic conditions. Among the newest coffee hacks is adding a scoop or two of protein powder to your morning cup of joe. Allegedly, this helps improve workout performance, aids in weight loss, and lets you easily meet daily protein needs. However, is this hack worth the hype?

Adding protein powder to coffee is a quick, simple way to add protein to your diet. Depending on the brand, protein powders typically pack 25 to 30 grams of protein per serving. While precise needs vary based on factors like age, height, and weight, most adults need around 50 grams of protein daily. Although, those

who do resistance exercises frequently may need more. So a little protein powder in your morning coffee makes a sizable dent in your daily protein count and may be especially helpful for challenging workouts.

Can protein powder in coffee help with weight loss? It's certainly possible. Protein helps you feel full for longer stretches, which may reduce your urge to overeat later in the day. There is some evidence that both coffee and caffeine improve metabolism, but the precise connection is murky. While not a miracle fix, coffee and protein powder could support a weight loss journey.

Are there risks associated with adding protein powder to coffee?

Too much of a good thing is possible with everything, protein included. Protein powders are often very potent, making it easy for the average

person to surpass their protein needs. Extra protein may be beneficial if you're very physically active or stick to a vegetarian or vegan diet. However, most people can get adequate protein from their regular diet, and whole foods are typically better than powders or supplements. If you would like to make your coffee healthier, there are plenty of spices that can elevate your coffee and lower your cholesterol such as turmeric and cinnamon.

Those with certain health conditions should exercise caution when hopping on the protein coffee bandwagon. If you have kidney disease, you'll need to be very careful monitoring your macronutrients, protein included. Those with existing digestive issues should talk to a healthcare provider first. The combination of coffee and protein powder can cause additional gastrointestinal discomfort.



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COVER STORY

Fifteen Years of Pride and Progress: Celebrating Jax Gay Magazine's Legacy in Jacksonville

By David Vandygriff

What began as a bold experiment in visibility and voice has become one of Northeast Florida's most enduring symbols of LGBTQ+ pride and progress. This year, Jax Gay Magazine proudly celebrates its 15th anniversary, marking a decade and a half of amplifying queer voices, chronicling local history, and building community through storytelling.

From Grassroots to Ground-breaking

When Jax Gay first launched in 2010, it was little more than a handful of passionate volunteers determined to create a space where the city's LGBTQ+ community could see itself reflected. At a time when representation was limited and acceptance uneven, the magazine offered a platform for connection — a place to celebrate love, creativity, and resilience.

"Jax Gay started as a labor of love," recalls founding editor [Insert Name], who dreamed of a publication that captured

both the struggles and the triumphs of being queer in the South. "We didn't have a roadmap. We just knew our community needed to be seen."

Fifteen years later, Jax Gay has evolved into a multi-platform media brand that highlights everything from nightlife and the arts to advocacy and politics, becoming a vital part of Jacksonville's cultural landscape.

A Chronicle of Change

Over the past decade and a half, Jax Gay Magazine has documented milestones that have shaped Jacksonville's LGBTQ+ community — from the rebirth of River City Pride and the legalization of same-sex marriage to the rise of local queer artists, businesses, and nonprofits.

Through its pages and digital features, the magazine has championed local drag performers, celebrated the success of LGBTQ-owned businesses, and covered the ongoing fight for equality and representation in city



government and beyond.

"Jax Gay has always been more than a publication," says current editor-in-chief [Insert Name]. "It's a living archive of our community's courage, creativity, and continuous evolution."

Community First

Jax Gay's commitment to its readers has always been personal. The magazine has helped foster partnerships with organizations like JASMYN, The LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce, River City Pride, and Will Not Be Erased, ensuring that the spirit of inclusion extends far beyond its pages.

Through countless photo spreads, event features, and human-interest stories, Jax Gay has built a bridge between generations — honoring the pioneers who paved the way while inspiring

new voices to take the lead.

Looking Forward

As Jax Gay steps into its next chapter, the magazine continues to innovate with digital storytelling, community spotlights, and partnerships that elevate queer visibility across North Florida. Plans for the upcoming year include expanded coverage, special anniversary retrospectives, and a gala celebration honoring the people and organizations that have shaped the publication's journey.

"Fifteen years later, our mission remains the same," says [Insert Publisher or Director]. "To tell the stories that matter, to uplift the voices too often ignored, and to remind Jacksonville that our community will never be erased."

A Celebration of Resilience

Jax Gay Magazine's 15th anniversary isn't just a milestone — it's a testament to endurance, creativity, and the unbreakable spirit of a community that continues to thrive in the face of adversity.

In a city still learning to embrace its diversity, Jax Gay stands as a shining example of what happens when visibility meets vision — and when love, in all its colors, finds its place in print.

About Jax Gay Magazine: Founded in 2010, Jax Gay Magazine is Jacksonville's leading LGBTQ+ publication, dedicated to celebrating and connecting the local queer community through news, arts, entertainment, and advocacy.



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Science & Technology

'Quantum Leap' In Secure Comms: Germany Transmits Photons

By Lana Winston



A consortium of German researchers has successfully transmitted individual photons from a moving aircraft, captured them in a mobile ground station, and verified their quantum states.

The experiment, a key part of Germany's QuNET initiative, marks a critical step towards building a global, tap-proof quantum communication network.

The research team successfully measured various quantum channels between the aircraft and the ground, sent the light particles to a sophisticated ion trap, and tested technologies vital for quantum key distribution (QKD).

The successful results have now been presented to the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology, and Space (BMFTR), which funds the QuNET initiative.

Using photons to create keys

This technology harnesses the principles of quantum mechanics, using photons—individual particles of light—to

create cryptographic keys that are practically impossible to intercept without detection.

Such security is paramount for future communication between governments and authorities, as well as for protecting critical infrastructure and everyday data.

"We are working on practical solutions for satellite-based quantum communication, which can be used to transmit quantum states over long distances and generate secure keys," explained Florian Moll from the DLR Institute of Communications and Navigation.

"In fiber optics, this is only possible over a few hundred kilometers. Quantum encryption via satellite, on the other hand, enables arbitrarily greater distances on Earth."

Utilizing DLR Dornier 228 research aircraft

The experiment utilized a DLR Dornier 228 research aircraft, which was transformed into a mobile node in a quantum network.

Scientists installed an optical communication terminal on the

plane, which included a module developed by the Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Optics and Precision Engineering (IOF) in Jena to generate quantum-entangled photons.

During several research flights over Erlangen in recent months, the aircraft beamed these photons to a specialized mobile ground station known as the QuBUS, a container-sized receiving terminal also provided by Fraunhofer IOF.

"The tracking and fiber coupling provided by Fraunhofer IOF thus offered the necessary environment for the actual experiments," said Christopher Spiess from the Fraunhofer Institute in Jena.

Special tracking system

Handling individual photons is an immense technical challenge. The Fraunhofer team implemented a special tracking system in the QuBUS to ensure the receiving terminal precisely followed the aircraft's movements.

To counteract atmospheric turbulence that can disrupt the signal, they deployed adaptive optics developed specifically

for this task, ensuring a stable connection.

Once captured by the QuBUS, the photons were coupled into a fiber optic cable and sent to an ion trap at the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Light (MPL) in Erlangen for analysis.

There, scientists successfully verified the quantum states of the “flying” particles, achieving

one of the experiment’s primary goals.

Could lead to future quantum internet

The success of the flight campaign demonstrates the viability of using mobile platforms like aircraft, and eventually satellites, to build expansive quantum networks.

“We have shown in various

experiments that this is possible. The approach we tested can be used not only from aircraft, but also from satellites,” concluded Moll.

This technology is not only groundbreaking for secure communications but also for a future quantum internet, which will connect powerful quantum computers and quantum memories across the globe.

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BUSINESS & TRAVEL

Second Jacksonville PDQ Converting To Saucy By KFC

By Michael Bryson



Saucy, a reimagined KFC spin-off brand, is entering Jacksonville's southside area, replacing a former chicken spot.

The PDQ location in the Jacksonville Town Center is undergoing a conversion to become the first Saucy location in Northeast Florida, according to our news partners at The Daily Record.

A permit for the estimated \$375,000 conversation of the location at 4816 Gate Parkway is under review by the city.

The modernized Saucy restaurant is known for its 11 signature sauces that customers can choose to coat their choice of hand-breaded tenders.

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"With Saucy, we've taken KFC's famous Original Recipe® and amplified it with a brand-new concept that lets consumers play with flavor. You can pick a combo, choose a flight of sauces or, my personal favorite, mix sauces and sides to create your perfect meal," KFC Chief New Concept Officer Christopher Poirier said on the company's website.

The tenders can be paired with toasted Hawaiian rolls, crinkle cut fries and coleslaw. The restaurant also offers

sandwiches, salads and dessert options, the website said.

The new concept restaurant debuted its first Florida location in Orlando in December.

The company said more locations are expected to pop up with Jacksonville's becoming spot number two.

The remaining four PDQ locations throughout Jacksonville are also expected to close by the end of the year, according to an associate at the Town Center location who spoke to TDR.

Yum! Brands acquired the leases for 13 PDQs in Florida, TDR reported. Not all locations will be converted to Saucy.

The opening date is expected to be released soon.



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BUSINESS & TRAVEL

What Is A Jubilee? These Catholics Just Became The First LGBTQ+ People To Participate

By Drew Williams



For the first time in the history of the Catholic Church, a group of out LGBTQ+ people proudly participated in a pilgrimage during the Vatican's Jubilee events.

Over 1,300 LGBTQ+ people and their families crossed through the Holy Door of St. Peter on Saturday, carrying a rainbow crucifix and wearing shirts with rainbow hearts. The event marked the first time an LGBTQ+ group's pilgrimage has been included in the church's official agenda.

"It is necessary to get rid of prejudices," Monsignor Francesco Savino, Bishop of Cassano all'Jonio and vice president of the Italian Episcopal Conference, said during mass at St. Peter's Basilica, according to La Tenda di Gionata, the group that organized the pilgrimage. He added, "No one must feel excluded. I insist, no one should feel excluded."

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What are Catholic Jubilees?

Jubilees are celebratory years of remission and universal pardons that typically occur once every 25 years and usually involve a pilgrimage to a sacred site. Those who travel to Rome can pass through "Holy Doors" that open at four basilicas within the city.

Anyone can perform a

pilgrimage, as the journey to a holy place is thought to lead to personal transformation. Most are not considered a major event on the church's Jubilee calendar, which would include the opening of the basilica doors and prayer services for other groups such as the Sick and Health Care Workers, Youth, People with Disabilities, and more.

Who are the LGBTQ+ Catholics that made pilgrimage?

La Tenda di Gionata (Jonathan's Tent) is an Italian association for LGBTQ+ Christians that arranges pastoral events —spiritual retreats, community meetings, pilgrimages, and more — for "all who are interested to help LGBT people and their families feel welcome in their Church, but also to foster in our Christian communities listening and to get to know each other."

The group celebrated when their event was initially included in the calendar for the Catholic Holy Year, which began on Dec. 24 and runs through Jan. 6, 2026, calling it "a unique opportunity to stand united and

bear witness to the beauty of a Church that embraces everyone without exclusion."

What is Pope Leo's stance on LGBTQ+ rights?

Pope Leo's views on the LGBTQ+ have not been widely reported, though he has so far taken Pope Francis' approach of preaching compassion without changing church teaching on marriage equality

or the ordination of women. He did not attend the pilgrimage of LGBTQ+ Catholics.

Leo lamented at a meeting of bishops in 2012 that Western news media and popular culture fostered "sympathy for beliefs and practices that are at odds with the gospel," according to The New York Times . He specifically mentioned the so-called

"homosexual lifestyle" and "alternative families comprised of same-sex partners and their adopted children."

Leo also said in a private meeting with the Vatican diplomatic corps in May that the family is "founded upon the stable union between a man and a woman," the Associated Press reported.



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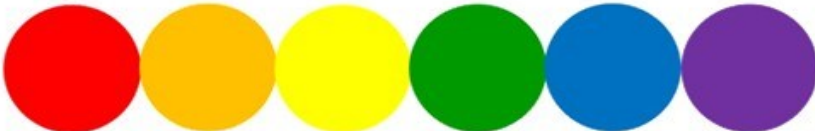
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Life and Style

What Is 'G,' The Party Drug All The Gays Are Doing?

By Adam Sullivan



Look, sex is fun and drugs can be fun, so it's understandable why so many gay men combine the two despite the dangers associated with "chemsex."

Most of us are chasing the high of mind-blowing sex, so it makes sense that people would give chemsex a try since drugs can make you feel euphoric, decrease your inhibitions, and increase sensations. And when they are ever present at parties, many gay men have given them a try or even struggled with addiction because of them.

Drugs like mephedrone, ketamine, cocaine, speed, and crystal methamphetamine are all common chemsex options, but one of the most popular in the gay party scene is G.

But what is G, why is it so popular, and what are the dangers of using it? To break it all down we spoke with Dr. Phillip Kuan, Chief of Anesthesia at cosmetic surgery center New Look New Life; Justin Todd, co-founder of AddictionResource.net, a free resource for individuals living with substance abuse, addiction, and mental health disorders; and Mell McCracken, a certified alcohol

and drug counselor, and executive director at No Matter What Recovery in Los Angeles.

What is 'G' and what was it initially created for?

G is a slang term for Gamma-hydroxybutyrate, better known as GHB. It was FDA approved as an anesthetic in the 1960s and induces "amnesia, euphoria, and hallucinations," Dr. Kuan tells PRIDE. "The high of GHB is similar to alcohol, in that it increases disinhibition and causes relaxation and less anxiety."

According to McCracken, after being used in hospitals as anesthesia, it becomes a workout drug before becoming a popular gay party drug.

"It became popular in the fitness world under a false belief that it would increase HGH production. At one point, it was marketed in health and wellness stores as a supplement to build muscle. GHB eventually made its way to nightlife and party environments, where it gained a reputation for causing euphoria, profound relaxation, and disinhibition."

What are its effects?

G is a popular chemsex option

because of the sexual liberation it offers and because it can extend sex longer than you'd be able to achieve without it. "At lower doses, users report that G produces feelings of euphoria and increased confidence," Todd explains. "Some also say it makes them feel more sexually uninhibited. Higher doses can lead to unconsciousness and overdose."

What are its dangers?

While G may be a fun addition to sex in the short term, it can have devastating consequences. Since it's unregulated and there isn't a standard dose there is a risk of overdose and even death, especially if you combine it with alcohol or other party drugs. And there is a risk of addiction as well.

"It can cause high blood pressure, which increases strain on the heart and vascular system," Dr. Kuan. "When combined with other substances like alcohol or other depressants, it can amplify the mental and respiratory changes, which may lead to greatly depressed breathing and possible hypoxia. At high doses, it can lead to confusion, seizures, coma & and death."

GHB, or G, is also often called the “date-rape drug” because it causes memory loss even at low doses and because it’s mostly odorless and colorless it can be hidden in a drink.

“Another danger is when it’s used as a party drug to have sex. G can severely impair an individual who may not realize they are being injured during sexual penetration or other acts,” Todd warns.

“Additionally, the impaired individual may engage in riskier activities such as unprotected sex, leading to STIs and other negative consequences.”

Why has it become so popular in the gay party scene?

G is inexpensive and increases libido and sexual feelings so it’s easy to see why it’s become a popular choice in the gay party scene. “G’ has seen a resurgence in recent years as it is often viewed as a ‘safer’ alternative to other drugs, such as methamphetamine, that have historically been used in chemsex. It is also cheaper than other drugs. A single dose in one area can be as little as \$5,” Todd says.

According to McCracken, not only is it cheap, but it became a popular gay club drug in 1990s and 2000s because it was “easy to carry around and it’s cheap and the high feels euphoric, gives decreased inhibitions, increased physical touch, and often a very sexual type of high.” McCracken elaborated, “In those chemsex environments, you hear men

say how it made them feel more confident, more bonded with other people, less anxious when it came to sex or intimacy. It acts as a social lubricant for many.”

What kind of harm reduction can be done to improve safety?

While the experts say that avoiding the drug altogether is the best way to avoid the consequences to your physical and mental health, if you are going to use G there are some steps you can take to reduce those risks.

“Safe use includes making sure your measuring the amount your taking with a syringe or dropper, spacing them two to three hours apart,” McCracken says. “NEVER mix with alcohol or other depressants as that can lead to overdoses. Friends should watch for warning signs like sudden drowsiness or loss of consciousness and call for help immediately—if you notice slow or stopped breathing as it can be fatal.”

Todd also advises following the “buddy system” to make things safer. “Ideally, the ‘buddy’ is not on the drug in the event you both overdose,” Todd says. “Being able to call EMS and let medical professionals know what has happened can be the difference between living and dying in an overdose.”

And if you are a parent worried about your kid using party drugs like G, Dr. Kuan says you should be having “frank and open conversations” about “drug use and coping

mechanisms to resist peer pressure.”

What should you do if you become dependent on G?

McCracken explains that withdrawal from G can actually be dangerous so if you are struggling you should seek help. “Ongoing use is likely to lead to dependence, and stopping suddenly may trigger severe anxiety, paranoia, seizures, or even death. Medical detox is critical for those who are regular users,” they say.

Todd warns that addiction rates are higher in the LGBTQ+ community and so it’s important for users of gay party drugs to know that there is help out there if you’re struggling with a substance abuse issue.

Todd’s organization, AddictionResources.net, created a list of the 12 Best LGBTQ+-Friendly Rehab Centers in the U.S. that can be found here.

Sources cited:

Dr. Kuan, Chief of Anesthesia at cosmetic surgery center New Look New Life.

Justin Todd, co-founder of AddictionResource.net, a free resource for individuals living with substance abuse, addiction, and mental health disorders.

Mell McCracken, a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor, and Executive Director at No Matter What Recovery in Los Angeles.

Drag Race Queen Xunami Muse Leaves The Country Citing Immigration Status

By Debi Rivers

RuPaul's Drag Race alum Xunami Muse says she has relocated from the U.S. to Panama.

In a Wednesday, July 16, Instagram post, Xunami wrote that she made the decision, in part, "to be able to explore the WORLD [sic]" and cited "a difficult and complicated" situation in the U.S.

As noted, while competing in the 16th season of Drag Race, Xunami opened up about being a beneficiary of the U.S.'s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) immigration policy. Enacted by former President Barack Obama in 2012, the program allowed some people who came to the United States as minors without documentation to apply for a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation, granting them a

Social Security number and work authorization.

The policy has been tied up in court since 2017, when the first Trump administration announced its intention to repeal it. Former President Joe Biden signed a 2021 executive order reinstating the program, but the following July, a federal judge ruled that DACA was "created in violation of the law" and "illegally implemented" because Obama had bypassed Congress by creating it via an executive branch memorandum.

However, the ruling allowed for "Dreamers" — those already protected by the program — to retain their protected status and for renewals to proceed.

"We're not citizens," Xunami explained on Drag Race in 2024. "We're kind of in limbo. We're legally here because we

were already here, but we don't have the full rights of a citizen."

While Xunami did not directly cite the current administration's ongoing brutal crackdown on undocumented immigrants, she did note that she will be joining fellow Drag Race stars Aja, Kandy Muse, and Dahlia Sin on a 10-city European tour next month, followed by a tour of Australia in November. To travel outside the U.S. and return legally, DACA recipients must apply for Advance Parole.

Amid the administration's mass deportations and ICE raids, at least one fan on social media likened Xunami's decision to "self-deportation."

"DACA queens are self-deporting now," X user @CTprogressive_ wrote. "I hate how this country treats immigrants. She deserved better."





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News & Politics

Kirk's Group Chases Anti-Fascism Professor Out Of The Country

By Gabby Khubchandani



A history professor is abruptly leaving the U.S. after a conservative group founded by the late Kirk singled him out for persecution, according to a report on Wednesday.

Mark Bray, who has taught about antifascist movements at Rutgers University since 2019, notified students Sunday that his courses would immediately move online as he and his family prepared to flee the country for their safety, reported the Washington Post.

"Since my family and I do not feel safe in our home at the moment, we are moving for the year to Europe," Bray told students by email. "Truly I am so bummed about not being able to spend time with you all in the classroom."

Far-right social media accounts called attention to Bray in late September, after news outlets quoted his remarks about President Donald Trump's executive order designating antifa as a "domestic terrorist organization," and the Washington Post confirmed three death threats sent to the professor since Sept. 26.

One online activist called him a "domestic terrorist professor,"

while another shared his home address in NJ, and the Rutgers chapter of the conservative student group Turning Point USA, which was founded by the late Kirk, launched a petition Thursday demanding Bray's firing, referring to Trump's executive order and smearing the educator as a threat to their safety.

Bray decided to move his family to Spain for the rest of the year, and he's optimistic they'll be able to return one day.

"I'm hopeful about returning, and I'm hopeful — and I say this as a history professor — that someday we will look back on this as a cautionary tale about authoritarianism," Bray said.

The university told the Post that administrators were aware of the Turning Point USA petition and Bray's message to students.

"We are gathering more information about this evolving situation," the university said in a statement.

Bray, the author of four books on anarchism and antifa, also faced widespread criticism when he told NBC News's

"Meet the Press" in 2017, while a lecturer at Dartmouth University, that violence was sometimes justified, after the deadly "Unite the Right" white supremacist rally in Charlottesville.

Dartmouth's president at the time condemned Bray in a statement and accused him "supporting violent protest," but more than 100 of the university's faculty members rallied around him.

Turning Point USA did not respond to requests for comment on the report, but the Trump administration justified the threats he received by blaming Kirk's assassination, which remains under investigation, on "Democrat violence," but Bray characterized the threats chasing him to Europe as part of the president's crackdown on academic freedom.

"There's been a concerted attack on universities, and I feel like this is a facet of that," Bray said, "to make it so that professors who conduct research on protest movements don't feel safe sharing their research or teaching about topics that the administration doesn't like."

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'One Battle After Another' Is An American Masterpiece

By Maggie Williams



In Paul Thomas Anderson's gloriously messy, madcap roller coaster ride through modern America, objects in the rear view may go out of sight, but they don't disappear.

Political struggles never die in "One Battle After Another," they just repeat. Or maybe they grow older and become paranoid, pot-smoking, pajama-wearers like Bob Ferguson (Leonardo DiCaprio), a washed-up revolutionary living off the grid with his daughter, Willa (Chase Infiniti). The cycles of oppression and resistance are palpably felt in Anderson's film, a decades-spanning odyssey where gun violence, white power and immigrant deportations recur in an ongoing dance, both farcical and tragic.

But "One Battle After Another" could also be fairly described as a sweet movie about a father coming to terms with his teenage daughter having a phone — which is one example of how Anderson's destabilizing approach to big themes can turn poignant and revelatory. "Sweeping" would normally be a way to characterize a nearly three-hour-long,

multigeneration saga like this, but Anderson works in a more rough-hewn, compassionate register that burrows strangely but acutely into the American psyche.

"One Battle After Another" is arriving after months of speculation and some skepticism because it's easily Anderson's biggest budgeted, largest scaled film yet. But scale is an interesting thing when it comes to Anderson's movies. "Magnolia" is modest by most metrics, but you'd be hard pressed to find a more ambitious movie. "There Will Be Blood" didn't feature much spectacle beyond some rickety wooden oil rigs, but it feels about as large as the frame of Daniel Day-Lewis' Daniel Plainview, which is to say terrifyingly enormous.

Likewise, "One Battle After Another," shot on VistaVision, is big and long but feels intimate and fast. That's partly due to the propulsion of its opening prologue and the absurd knockout vigor of Teyana Taylor as a scorching, potent screen presence. Her Perfidia Beverly Hills is at the center of the movie's beginning. And she makes such a powerful mark

that it takes half an hour for "One Battle After Another" to pick up the pieces after it moves on. (My personal recovery time is ongoing.)

We first see Perfidia, dressed in all black, striding across an overpass. Below is an immigration detention center. The atmosphere is tumultuous. Bob is there, ready to set off fireworks or bombs, but has little clue of the plan. She assures him: "Make it big, make it bright. Inspire me."

They and their co-conspirators soon announce their intentions, freeing the immigrants, tying up the military guards and declaring that they're the radical group the French 75. This is the start, Perfidia says, of a revolution. Their cause is righteous but their drive is visceral and sexual. Bomb-making and sex go hand in hand. Bob trails after Perfidia, in love with her but also in awe. Perfidia's mother doesn't give them much of a chance as a couple. "She's a runner and you're a stone," she tells him.

At the same time, Perfidia comes in contact with Col. Lockjaw (Sean Penn), a rock-jawed military man who,

too, swoons for Perfidia. When they first meet, she holds him at gunpoint and tells him to “Get it up,” and she doesn’t mean his hands. These charged scenes, followed by Perfidia’s pregnancy and new police trouble for the French 75, set the table for the drama to come, set 16 years after this opening salvo, a frenetic eruption of Black and female power.

By then, the forces fought by the radicals have clawed back their advantage. Lockjaw (this is a taut, drained, maniacal Penn) now moves with impunity, directing troops on illegal raids where he chooses. Some of those in power like what he’s doing. A secret white supremacist group called the Christmas Adventurers (they speak of cleansing the Earth and greet each other with “merry Christmas”) offers him a membership.

The French 75 are essentially no more. Bob is now alone with their 16-year-old daughter. He’s grown less connected with the world. He calls his daughter’s friend “Homie,” has trouble with pronouns and

usually has a roach going. It’s the most Lebowski-esque performance by DiCaprio, whose recent gravity toward less polished, error-prone characters (“Killers of the Flower Moon,” “Once Upon a Time in Hollywood”) has made for some of his most interesting movies.

Willa, though, is said to have her mother’s courage. (Infiniti, a newcomer, has an inner strength that comes across clear as day.) When Lockjaw comes looking for Willa, a new cycle of state-sponsored violence is set off. That brings in a delightful Benicio Del Toro as a combination sensei and Harriet Tubman-like figure to immigrants who shepherds Bob when the authorities are closing in. This is probably the most shambolic section of the movie, but Del Toro’s Sergio St. Carlos is also the film’s most resonate encapsulation of freedom. He’s free because his purpose is clear and principled.

This is a movie filled with police convoys across the land and military tactics that effectively turn modern-day America into a battlefield. The film, inspired by

Thomas Pynchon’s “Vineland,” shares some of the culture clash of Anderson’s earlier Pynchon adaptation, “Inherent Vice.” But “One Battle After Another,” graced with a swelling score by Johnny Greenwood that gives the movie a hint of epic, feels more urgently contemporary and more morally motivated.

That makes “One Battle After Another,” as a major studio release clattering with straightforward representations of racism, xenophobia and vigilantism, an exception in almost every way to modern-day Hollywood. I’m sure that will bring debate, just as any good movie does. And I’m sure some will find its American portrait muddled and chaotic. But those aspects feel true, too, just as does the movie’s abiding fighting spirit.

“One Battle After Another,” a Warner Bros. release is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for pervasive language, violence, sexual content, and drug use. Running time: 170 minutes. Four stars out of four.

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