

The Paper.

PRIDE GUIDE

FREE

JUNE 05, 2024

VOLUME 05 | ISSUE 23

Cover art by Rachel Mills

**We're Here!
We're Queer!
You're Used to It!**

By Damon Scott p. 10

Plan your Pridefest p.5

“PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY RELIEF!”

Bernalillo resident Maria R had been experiencing the debilitating side effects of Peripheral Neuropathy.

"I was beginning to have other health issues due to the lack of sleep. I needed help just standing up and when I was standing I was afraid I would fall because I had no feeling in my feet. My life felt like a nightmare."

Then she met Albuquerque's very own Dr. Andrea Brogdon

"I was so desperate to the point of giving up" exclaimed Maria R. from Bernalillo. "I was in so much discomfort due to the numbness, tingling, and burning on the back of both legs and in my feet."

Maria R had been diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy and had seen a neurologist with no relief. To complicate things further, Maria had been diagnosed with two fractured discs in her back that were causing her severe pain. "I was no longer able to do surgery and all other treatments didn't work. I was starting to feel hopeless."

Maria is one of 3 million people in the United States suffering from peripheral neuropathy, a degenerative disease of the peripheral nervous system. "Those with peripheral neuropathy experience numbness, tingling, burning and even severe cramping due to the dying off of the peripheral nerves," explains Dr. Andrea Brogdon of Albuquerque Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine. "These nerves continue to die off until they have completely expired leaving sufferers with numbness and debilitating balance issues. Patients come to see me after having seen many other doctors with no relief. They have been told that there is nothing they can do or that they just have to live with it."

"I was beginning to have other health issues due to the lack of sleep. I needed help just standing up and when I was standing I was afraid I would fall because I had no feeling in my feet. My life felt like a nightmare," says Maria.

"I learned about Dr. Andrea Brogdon from an article I read and learned that she helped others like me, experiencing the same symptoms.

I made an appointment hoping she was going to be able to help me. It was my last resort."

Dr. Andrea Brogdon has helped thousands of patients get their life back after being diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy and living with the debilitating effects of the disease. How does she get such amazing results? "Acupuncture has been used for centuries to improve circulation but the real magic happens when I integrate ATP Resonance BioTherapy™." By using modern technological advancements alongside the time tested science of acupuncture, Dr. Brogdon is able to reverse the effects of this degenerative disease, regardless of its origin.

"Early detection is key when it comes to improving your chances of a full recovery," explains Dr. Brogdon. Which is why she starts every patient with an initial consultation during which a sensory exam is performed. "This helps to determine just how much nerve damage has occurred," tells the doctor. "This is important because if the patient has suffered more than 95% sensory loss there is very little I can do at that point."

"After several treatments, I experienced tremendous relief. Life is good! I have seen a huge improvement in my walking, I sleep better, even my mood is better! I am so grateful I never stopped searching!"
exclaims Maria.

If you or a loved one are living a life of suffering due to peripheral neuropathy and your pain has prevented you from doing the things you love with the people you love, it's time to call Dr. Brogdon and the staff at AAIM.

Call (505) 355-1984 today to schedule an initial consultation or visit AAIM-ABQ.com to read more incredible success stories.



**PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY?
Call (505) 355-1984
to schedule a consultation!**

**10400 Academy Rd NE Suite 210
Albuquerque, NM 87111
WWW.AAIM-ABQ.COM**

The Paper.

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Pride After the Parade.



Saturday, June 8th

11:00am - 2pm

Help us celebrate!

Come by after the parade for
Dancing, Poetry, Pizza, and more.

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Weak in Review: June 5

Quick hits on this week's news bits

Donald Trump was convicted in a New York court of falsifying documents.

Wait, Donald Trump lied about something? Get out!



Many local Republicans publicly criticized the legal system after Trump's conviction.

Seriously, when are rich white guys finally going to get their turn?

Legendary basketball player and notable Grateful Dead superfan Bill Walton died last week.

Walton always said he was "The luckiest guy in the world," but it turns out we were all pretty dang lucky to have him in the world.

The Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office is asking local businesses to share access to their security cameras with the hopes of building a real time crime center.

Let's not pretend to be surprised since APD's been watching us all for years.

The Wu-Tang Clan album that sold for millions of dollars will be publicly heard for the first time in Australia.

Guard ya throat, mate!



A state law requiring political campaigns to disclose the use of AI in ads went into effect last week.

*Now voters can finally know if they're being wooed by a charming candidate or a smooth-talking algorithm with a knack for voter manipulation! *Produced by AI

The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County are launching a "Summer of Non-Violence" program.

Bold strategy, let's see how that works out for them.

North Korea has been sending waste-filled bags, by way of balloons, into South Korea.

"North Korean Waste Balloons, huh?" said kids everywhere trying to come up with a name for their new punk band.

School is officially done for the summer.

With kids' focus on things besides class projects, now's the time to finally ask them what "skibbity" means.

The Albuquerque Police Department is looking to bring back some retired officers.

It's still unclear if Ley Hot will be provided.



Truehold Arrives in Albuquerque as Home Equity Hits New Highs

Exciting news for Albuquerque homeowners: Truehold, the nation's leading provider of residential sale-leasebacks, has arrived. With the real estate market on the rise, now is an excellent time to explore how Truehold's approach can help you unlock your home equity debt-free while staying in the home you love.

Rising Home Values in Albuquerque

Home prices have surged in Albuquerque, reflecting a national trend of increasing property values. According to [Rocket Homes](#), the median home sold price in Albuquerque was \$335,623 in April 2024, up 6.1% from last year—homeowners have built up significant wealth in their properties. Accessing this equity, however, can be challenging, especially with traditional options like reverse mortgages, cash-out refinancing, and HELOCs often resulting in substantial debt and financial burdens.

Introducing Truehold's Sale-Leaseback

Truehold offers a solution that allows you to unlock your home's value without these downsides. A residential sale-leaseback with Truehold involves two straightforward transactions: selling your home and entering a lease agreement to stay in it as a renter. This model provides immediate access to your home equity in cash, free from the constraints of debt and rising interest rates.

By renting back your home, you can continue to live in your familiar environment, surrounded by your community, without homeownership responsibilities like major home repairs, property taxes, and insurance.

Why Choose a Sale-Leaseback?

A sale-leaseback with Truehold offers numerous benefits for different life situations:

- **New Construction and Moving:** Fund new construction or purchase a new home as a cash buyer, all while remaining in your current home until you're ready to move.
- **Financial Challenges:** Quickly unlock your equity to manage unexpected expenses like medical bills or job loss without uprooting your life.
- **Protection from Market Volatility:** Secure the value of your home while it's high, safeguarding your wealth from potential market downturns.
- **Financial Opportunities:** Convert your home equity into funds for new business ventures, investments, or education without incurring debt.
- **Retirement:** Use your home equity to enjoy your retirement with travel, leisure, and financial security.
- **Aging at Home:** Cover medical expenses and home care while staying in the home you love, free from the burdens of homeownership.
- **Caregiving for Adult Parents:** Relieve the stress of managing home repairs for aging parents, allowing them to live comfortably in their home.

Truehold: Your Partner in Home Equity

Truehold's trusted process is simple and transparent. A Truehold Advisor will guide you through the process, helping you determine if a sale-leaseback is right for you. You'll receive an offer on your home within 24 hours and access your equity in less than 30 days.

Jeremie, a Truehold resident, reported: "Truehold delivered everything as promised. Smooth, efficient process. Very transparent about everything! I was able to cash out the equity in my home and have the freedom to remain in my home and move when we are ready!"

Join the Truehold Community

Truehold has already unlocked over \$200 million in home equity for homeowners across 13 other markets. Now, Albuquerque residents can benefit from this innovative solution, maintaining their cherished lifestyles while achieving financial flexibility. To learn more about how Truehold can help you unlock your home equity without moving or taking on debt, visit truehold.com or call 1-844-TRUEHOLD.

This content created and paid for by the sponsor



PrideFest 2024

Pride Month continues all throughout June with celebrations, parties and events for the LGBTQ+ community across New Mexico. Albuquerque's pride hits its peak this Saturday, June 8, however with the **Pride Parade** starting at **10 a.m.** in **Nob Hill**. That's followed by the **48th Annual PrideFest** event at **Balloon Fiesta Park (5000 Balloon Fiesta Parkway NE)**. From **2 to 8 p.m.** you and your fellow revelers can indulge in music, exhibitors, food, live entertainment, drag shows, dancing and educational events. The night even culminates with an after-dark balloon glow! General admission (18+) is **\$25**. **Under 18 years of age is free**. Go to eventbrite.com/e/albuquerque-pridefest-2024-tickets-865839909477 to secure your tickets in advance. It's gonna be a party!

THURSDAY, JUNE 6

Art

Happy Arte Hour \$0-\$5 6-8 pm
National Hispanic Cultural Center
1701 4th Street Southwest

Community

Victorian Girls Summer Tea Camp
\$250 1-4 pm Escape in Time 1100
San Mateo Blvd NE, Unit 21

Discussion / Lecture

Nerd Nite #4: The Stories We Tell
10 pm-12 am Green Jeans Food Hall
3600 Cutler Ave. NE

Drink

Cocktails, Mocktails, & Good Vibes
\$55 6:30-9:30 pm Farm & Table 8917
4th St NW

Exhibit

Making a World of Difference: Stories
About Global Health Traveling
Exhibit 8 am-5 pm UNM Health
Sciences Library & Informatics
Center North Campus, Building 234,
2400 Marble NE

Pueblo Baseball: Stitching Our
Community Together 9 am-5 pm
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401
12th Street NW

Reflective Presence: The Art of Jesse
Littlebird & Jonathan Loretto 9 am-5
pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
2401 12th Street NW

Festival

Albuquerque Pride Presents Kids Fest
4-8 pm Orpheum Community Hub
500 2nd Street Southwest

Food

Empanada & Spirits Pairing \$30 5-9
pm Tractor Brewing Wells Park 1800
Fourth St. NW

Miscellaneous

Pride Memorial Candlelight Vigil 7-9
pm Morningside Park 300 Aliso Ave.
NE

Music

Bailamos: Latin Night 9 pm-1 am
Oak & IVY 3109 Central Avenue
Northeast

Big Treble 6-8 pm Town & Ranch
1318 Fourth St. NW

Bueno Fest '24 \$15-\$20 6 pm-1:30 am
Launchpad 618 Central Ave SW

EZRAKH Album Release \$8 7-11 pm
Sister 407 Central Ave. NW

Karaoke w/ Swords Entertainment
7:30-11:30 pm Lizard Tail Brewing
9800 Montgomery Blvd NE STE 7

Mineral Hill 6-9 pm Rio Bravo
Brewing Company 1912 Second St
NW

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Fri June 7 6:30 / Sat June 8 4:00, 7:00

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER (1992)

Friday June 7 10:30pm

Breakup body horror: KILL YOUR LOVER

Saturday June 8 10:30pm

2024 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL
INDIGENOUS SHORT FILM TOUR

Sat-Sun June 8-9 1:00pm

Women's medical rights: BIRTHING JUSTICE

Monday June 10 5:30, 8:00

Don Hertzfeldt's animated classic IT'S SUCH
A BEAUTIFUL DAY plus his new short ME

Tue-Thu June 11-13 4:30, 6:30

Hit arthouse thriller RUN LOLA RUN (1999)

Tue-Thu June 11-13 8:30

3405 Central Ave NE 255-1848

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[EVENTS.]

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Submit to our online calendar and you may even see your event in print!

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NEW MEXICO GAY MEN'S CHORUS

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Friday, June 21, 7:30pm

Lensic Performing Arts Center,
Santa Fe

Saturday, June 22, 7:30pm

Sunday, June 23, 3:00pm

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Songwriter Showcase f/ Keith Burnstein, Burying Caesar and Tom Andes 6-9 pm Canteen Brewhouse 2381 Aztec Road Northeast

Taking Back Thursdays: Monthly Emo Night w/ DJ Fishbowl 8-11:30 pm Tractor Brewing Nob Hill 118 Tulane SE

Performance

The Seven: Uninvited Guests \$20-\$40 7-9 pm FUSION 700-708 First St. NW

FRIDAY, JUNE 7

Art

ABQ Artwalk 5-9 pm Downtown Albuquerque

Artists Reception: On the Rise – Works by Artists in Early and Mid-Career 6-8:30 pm Gallery with a Cause located inside the New Mexico Cancer Center 4901 Lang Ave. NE

Art Openings

Convergence x Crossroads Street Art From the Southwest Opening Reception 5-7 pm National Hispanic Cultural Center 1701 4th Street Southwest

Ella: A Father/Daughter Art Show Featuring Works by Ava & Rene Palomares 6-8 pm El Chante: Casa De Cultura 804 Park Ave SW

Comedy

An Evening of Comedy with Hari Kondabolu \$27 7 pm The Historic Lobo Theater - Lounge & Event Venue 3013 Central Ave NE

Carlos Ballarta \$30-\$40 7-8:30 pm and 9:30-11 pm Quezada's Comedy Club at Santa Ana Star 54 Jemez Canyon Dam Road, Santa Ana Pueblo

First Fridays Comedy Contest 7-9 pm Tractor Brewing Wells Park 1800 Fourth St. NW

The Show - Live Comedy Improv \$10-\$12 8-9 pm The Box Performance Space 114 Gold Ave SW

Community

Victorian Girls Summer Tea Camp \$250 1-4 pm Escape in Time 1100 San Mateo Blvd NE, Unit 21

Dance

Casa Flamenca The Best Tablao Shows \$40 8-9:30 pm Casa Flamenca 401 Rio Grande Boulevard NW

Cellicion Traditional Dance Group (Zuni Pueblo) 2-3 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Friday Night Square Dancing \$8-\$9 7-9 pm Albuquerque Square Dance Center 4915 Hawkins St NE

Drink

All the Mini Things Cocktail Flight Party \$12 5-10 pm Tractor Brewing Nob Hill 118 Tulane SE

Festival

Albuquerque Pride Presents She+Fest 4-8 pm Orpheum Community Hub 500 2nd Street Southwest

PrideFest Pre-Fest 5-8 pm Balloon Fiesta Park 5000 Balloon Fiesta Pkwy NE

San Felipe de Neri Church Fiestas 6-10 pm Old Town Albuquerque 2005 N. Plaza St. NW Albuquerque

Music

Chatter Late Works: Old Granddad #4 \$15 9 pm Chatter 912 3rd St NW

Christopher Paul Stelling \$15 8-11 pm FUSION 700-708 First St. NW

First Fridays w/ DJ Flo Fader 8-11 pm Tractor Brewing Nob Hill 118 Tulane SE

Leftover Soul \$5 8 pm-12 am Sister 407 Central Ave. NW

Live Music In The Lobo Lounge Featuring Melissa Rios 5 pm The Historic Lobo Theater - Lounge & Event Venue 3013 Central Ave NE

Red Hot Chili Peppers: Unlimited Love Tour 7-10 pm Isleta Amphitheater 5601 University Blvd SE (Formerly Hard Rock Casino Albuquerque Presents the Pavilion)

Salsa Under the Stars ft. Mickey Cruz \$17-\$20 7-10 pm Albuquerque Museum 2000 Mountain Road NW

Seth Hoffman 6-9 pm Albuquerque Distilling 5001 Central Ave NE Suite A5

The Mango Cakes \$10 8-11 pm Launchpad 618 Central Ave SW

Performance

Kinky Boots \$25-\$28 7:30-9:30 pm Musical Theatre Southwest 6320B Domingo NE

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Luna & Poesia Presents Pride Month
7-9 pm Flock of Moons Brewing
Company 111 Harvard Dr. SE

New Mexico Shakespeare Festival
6:45-10 pm New Mexico Veterans
Memorial 1100 Louisiana Blvd SE
#5009

Ol' Dirty Rio Grande Valley \$10-\$15
7-9 pm The ABQ Collective 1321
Eubank Boulevard Northeast

The Outsider \$10-\$24 7:30-10 pm
Adobe Theater 9813 4th St NW

The Seven: Uninvited Guests \$20-
\$40 7-9 pm FUSION 700-708 First
St. NW

Dry Heat Second Saturdays Open
Mic 7-8:30 pm The Box Performance
Space 114 Gold Ave SW

Josh Dweh \$20 8-10 pm Tractor
Brewing Wells Park 1800 Fourth St.
NW

Albuquerque Pride Parade 10 am-1
pm Nob Hill From Girard to Carlisle
on Central Avenue

Downtown Growers' Market 8 am-12
pm Robinson Park 810 Copper Ave
NW Albuquerque

Summer at the Marketplace: a patio
pop-up event 9 am-1 pm Poulin
Marketplace 8600 Pan American Fwy
NE

The Blue Show \$10-\$12 8-10 pm The
Box Performance Space 114 Gold Ave
SW

The Little Gym Dance Recital \$12
4-6 pm National Hispanic Cultural
Center 1701 4th Street Southwest

Drink
Pride in Nob Hill 8-1 am Tractor
Brewing Nob Hill 118 Tulane SE

Zero Proof Festival \$25 11 am-11 pm
Bataan Memorial Park 748 Tulane Dr.
NE

Family/Kids
IPCC's Family Story Time: Stories on
Stone 1-2 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural
Center 2401 12th Street NW

Festival
A Juneteenth Celebration f/ DaJerney
8 am-8 pm Open Space Visitor
Center (Westside) 6500 Coors Blvd
NW

Foxy Festival Pride Party \$25 7 pm
JUNO brewery + cafe + art 1501 First
St. NW

PrideFest 2024 \$25-\$50 2-8 pm
Balloon Fiesta Park 5000 Balloon
Fiesta Pkwy NE

San Felipe de Neri Church Fiestas 11
am-10 pm Old Town Albuquerque
2005 N. Plaza St. NW Albuquerque

Literature/Poetry
Cindy Sloan Butts Book Signing 1:30-
3:30 pm Treasure House Books &
Gifts 2012 S Plaza St NW A

Miscellaneous
Elite Tuner \$20-\$50 3-8 pm EXPO
New Mexico, Manuel Lujan Jr.
Exhibit Complex 300 San Pedro Dr
NE

Felines & Flowers: Rescue Adoption
Event 11 am-2 pm Osuna Nursery 501
Osuna Rd. NE

Winrock Park Grand Opening 8
am-9 pm Winrock Town Center
2100 Louisiana Blvd. NE #51,
Albuquerque

Music
James McMurtry \$30-\$40 7:30-
10 pm KiMo Theatre 423 Central
Avenue NW

Juicee Frut Pride 2024 f/ Red Light
Cameras \$30 7 pm-12 am Sunshine
Theater 120 Central Ave SW

SATURDAY, JUNE 8

Art Openings
3017 Gallery Exhibition "Open" 4:30-
7 pm Artisan ABQ 3017 Monte Vista
Blvd. NE

Comedy
Carlos Ballarta \$30-\$40 7-8:30,
9:30-11 pm Quezada's Comedy Club
at Santa Ana Star 54 Jemez Canyon
Dam Road, Santa Ana Pueblo

Dance
Casa Flamenca The Best Tablao
Shows \$40 8-9:30 pm Casa Flamenca
401 Rio Grande Boulevard NW

Cellicion Traditional Dance Group
(Zuni Pueblo) 11 am-12, 2-3 pm
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401
12th Street NW



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Prince Birthday Karaoke Tribute
8-10 pm Frank's Famous Chicken
& Waffles 400 Washington Street
Southeast

Silversun Pickups \$35-\$65 8-11 pm
Revel Entertainment Center 4720
Alexander Blvd NE

Stay Dawgs 7-9 pm Tractor Brewing
Nob Hill 118 Tulane SE

Summer Music Saturdays: RJ Perez
1-4 pm Canteen Brewhouse 2381
Aztec Road Northeast

Outdoors

2024 All Out Call Out \$25 4-11 pm
Albuquerque Dragway Dragway Rd
SE

Performance

Ahlmaa's AAA Cabaret \$10 9:30-11
pm The Box Performance Space 114
Gold Ave SW

Kinky Boots \$25-\$28 7:30-9:30 pm
Musical Theatre Southwest 6320B
Domingo NE

New Mexico Shakespeare Festival
6:45-10 pm New Mexico Veterans
Memorial 1100 Louisiana Blvd SE
#5009

Ol' Dirty Rio Grande Valley \$10-\$15
7-9 pm The ABQ Collective 1321
Eubank Boulevard Northeast

The Outsider \$10-\$24 7:30-10 pm
Adobe Theater 9813 4th St NW

The Seven: Uninvited Guests \$20-
\$40 2-4 pm and 7-9 pm FUSION
700-708 First St. NW

Sports

Gloves On, Grudges Gone \$40-\$200
5-8 pm Isleta Resort & Casino 11000
Broadway Blvd SE

New Mexico United vs. Hartford
Athletic FC \$19-\$47 7-10 pm Isotopes
Park

Class / Workshop

Ayurvedic Yoga in the Park \$6-\$15
8:30-9:30 am Wildflower Park San
Mateo & Eagle Rock NE

Dance

Casa Flamenca The Best Tablao
Shows \$40 7-8:30 pm Casa Flamenca
401 Rio Grande Boulevard NW

Post-Pride Sunday Funday with Eight
DJs 2-10 pm JUNO brewery + cafe +
art 1501 First St. NW

Festival

San Felipe de Neri Church Fiestas
10 am-8 pm Old Town Albuquerque
2005 N. Plaza St. NW Albuquerque

Food

ABQ Live's 3rd Annual Crawfish
Boil \$80 1-6 pm Rio Bravo Brewing
Company 1912 Second St NW

Health & Wellness

Couples Yoga \$20-\$30 11:30
am-12:30 pm Rio Bravo Brewing
Company 1912 Second St NW

Markets

Rail Yard Market: STEAM Day 10
am-2 pm Albuquerque Rail Yards
722 3rd St SW

Music

Connor's Heart Foundation
Presents a Night of Music in
Albuquerque \$15-\$25 6-11:30 pm
Launchpad 618 Central Ave SW

Lonn Calanca Band 4-7 pm
Canteen Brewhouse 2381 Aztec
Road Northeast

Secret Earth \$10 7:30-11 pm Ren's
Den 900 Fourth St. SW

Sunday Jazz Jam 5-7:30 pm
Flatiron Bites & Brews 6001 San
Mateo Blvd NE

Music - Classical

Music of Spain: The Art of
Zarzuela 5:30 pm St. Michael and
All Angels Episcopal Church 601
Montano NW, 87107

Performance

Drag Brunch - Pride Edition \$20-
\$110 11 am-2 pm Craft Republic
- Albuquerque 4301 The Lane at
25 NE

Kinky Boots \$25-\$28 2-4 pm
Musical Theatre Southwest 6320B
Domingo NE

New Mexico Shakespeare Festival
6:45-10 pm New Mexico Veterans
Memorial 1100 Louisiana Blvd SE
#5009

Find more events at
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SUNDAY, JUNE 9

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We're Here! We're Queer! You're Used to It!

Acceptance rises in Albuquerque while gay bars decline

Sidewinders is one of two gay hangouts that are holding on in the Duke City. (Roberto E. Rosales / The Paper.)

By Damon Scott, The Paper.

Pride marches began 54 years ago in response to a riot that took place because police were brutalizing New York City's gay community at the Stonewall Inn gay bar. Why? Because they had the audacity to gather there.

It was a time in America when gays were constantly under attack and same-sex sexual activity was illegal. But gay liberation has come a long way in the decades since Stonewall, and while it hasn't been fully realized by all, society's views and attitudes have changed and many laws have been reformed for the better.

Pride week in Albuquerque is a great example: Participation

in events is not a hard sell and Burqueños of all stripes look forward to it. The annual parade and expo attracts scores of sweaty people across the gender and identity spectrums who are ready to party, celebrate and collect all manner of rainbow-colored swag.

But when it's time to cool off from the hot June sun in a Duke City gay bar, you'll be hard pressed to find the haunts and dives that once dotted the landscape. It's a bit disorienting for the city's LGBTQ+ community.

"From the EQNM standpoint, and as a leader and activist in the queer community, the decrease of queer spaces and gay bars is a negative and a positive," Marshall

Martinez, the executive director of Equality New Mexico, tells *The Paper*.

The positive, he says, is that gays no longer have to be in a queer space to feel safe.

"When I became old enough to go to bars, Downtown was not a safe place — the clubs were not safe before Effex [Night Club]," Martinez, who's lived in Albuquerque for 23 years, says. "The reality now is that a lot of the queer folks I know that go out on a regular basis feel safe going to the Library [Bar & Grill]. That's a plus. Society is more accepting."

He says it's a shame, however, that gay bar options are down to two — the Albuquerque Social Club and Sidewinders — in a

metro area not far from reaching a population of one million. Martinez says he's seen data from the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce that shows having a considerable number of gay bars, which Albuquerque once had, doesn't adversely saturate the market, it energizes it.

"I know that anecdotally, too — all the gay bars were busy when they were all here," he says.

Martinez recalls that the former Albuquerque Mining Co. (better known as AMC), Pulse/Blu, Foxes Booze & Cruise and the District, once combined with Effex (now considered gay-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



Sidewinders, also known as S4200, is located at 4200 Central Ave. SE. (Roberto E. Rosales / The Paper.)



The Albuquerque Social Club is located at 4021 Central Ave. NE. (Roberto E. Rosales / The Paper.)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

friendly but more mainstream), Sidewinders and the Social Club to be busy on the same nights.

“There used to be lines to get in,” he says.

It’s generational, too

The Social Club and Sidewinders have also become more mainstream and diverse.

Josh Garcia says the crowds at the Social Club are increasingly mixed and inclusive. He’s worked there since 2014 and has lived in Albuquerque since 2005. Garcia is the club’s lead bartender who also performs in drag and emcees shows as Kobaine Eriks.

“Since the pandemic it’s definitely changed,” Garcia, 40, says. “When I was in my early 20s, I used to think it was where you would either go if you were a drag performer, or if you were a more mature older gay.”

New generations have come, he says — groups that are more tolerant and less cliquish.

“The younger people don’t like that at all. If you’re kind of standoffish to a certain type of person, they’ll call you out on racism or misogyny or transphobia,” Garcia says. “These younger LGBTQ people know what they want and know who they are. If you don’t like it, then that’s cool, but just have fun.”

Adrien Lawyer is part of the generation that had more options to gather with likeminded peers at bars and clubs. He admits that he has some mixed feelings about the current environment.

“I’m among a group of folks that are older and sometimes we have a hard time letting things change,” Lawyer, director of the



A group rehearses for an upcoming show at the Albuquerque Social Club. (Roberto E. Rosales / The Paper.)

Transgender Resource Center of New Mexico, says. “In the queer communities, we went through so many hardships, it brought us together, but young people don’t go through the challenges or hurts sometimes.”

But Lawyer, 53, says gay liberation is about just that — removing the roadblocks, stereotypes and prejudices.

“What’s the movement about if it’s not about being accepted? It’s hard because movement folks say this is the goal, but when we get to it we’re kind of mad. I think it’s a trauma response,” he says.

Meanwhile, EQNM’s Martinez says he’s noticed the shift among his young staff who range in age from 18 to 23.

“They grew up in a generation where there were safer places. They don’t care about exclusive

places as much, while I still do,” Martinez says. “I still don’t go to bars that aren’t exclusively queer, or if I do, it’s for 45 minutes. Those of us that grew up in a time when being queer wasn’t accepted, we might never feel totally safe. We have fought really hard to have accepting spaces.”

Not ready to let go

Like many other U.S. cities, the pandemic threw Albuquerque’s economy and its small businesses into a tailspin. The Social Club and Sidewinders were no exception, but the city’s gay community and its allies stepped up to make sure the damage wasn’t permanent.

During the statewide pandemic shutdown, the Social Club racked up about \$65,000 in debt and it looked like it would

be forced to close its doors for good. To survive, it organized live streamed drag shows and other programming, including a Zoom Sunday brunch, rummage sales and other fundraisers.

“I think the pandemic brought together a community who wasn’t ready to let go of a cornerstone, a big pillar like the Social Club,” Garcia says. “Without that place, I would be really lost because I have so many friends now. That’s what kept me wanting to perform and help keep that place open.”

Martinez agrees: “The reality is I don’t think a community would have come together to raise \$65,000 in 90 days if there wasn’t a strong desire for spaces that are committedly safe,” he says.

Sidewinders owners Michael Burdick and his husband Renator Estacio said they’ve also started to emerge on the other side of the pandemic’s effects. To keep business going during the shutdown, they used their savings to open a kitchen — a requirement to be classified as a restaurant so they could do takeout orders.

Burdick says he made just enough money to stay afloat.

“We’re still pulling out of it, but are at a point where the bills are being paid on time,” he says. “I was quite surprised that we had a regular group of 20 to 30 people who would order at least once a week. It was a really good feeling to have those people supporting us.”

Burdick says Sidewinders is now regularly full or close to full on the weekends.

For more information about Albuquerque Pride events, go to abqpride.com.



Josh Garcia is the lead bartender at the Albuquerque Social Club. (Roberto E. Rosales / The Paper.)

Wanderlust

"Where the hell is he living now?"



By Sebastian Fortino, The Paper.

Today, as I write this, I celebrate my 45th birthday. People have told me birthdays, after a certain age, are nothing special. "Just another day to me," people say. "Why would I want to be reminded I'm another year older?" friends ponder. I think the answer is simple: To celebrate you lived another year, to wonder about what's next.

This past December I surprised my Great-Aunt Rita on her 98th birthday. The dining room table was festooned with flowers. You might think a spread of at least half-a-dozen bouquets would be on the sideboard. But, at my great-aunt's house that piece of furniture is equally but more solemnly festooned with statues of the saints. A 3-foot-high St. Jude, the patron of hopeless

causes, stands at center.

My aunt was happy to see me. An emotion not expressed by most of my relatives upon discovering my presence. "You, you remembered my birthday," she said. "You came to see me!"

My aunt, at nearly a century old, was not only happy to have a surprise guest, but was welcoming two more people to the home she shares with her daughter. She donned a party hat. She refused prosecco and wine...at first. Clearly, to her another turn around the sun is truly something to celebrate. Capriciousness be damned!

I was asked to write about being a gay guy from Philadelphia moving to Aztec, New Mexico. I start off with my birthday because once again, after many moves, it's my first birthday living in a new city.

Well, I can't say "city" given the prairie dogs in the lot down the road. So, "living in a new experience."

What support do I find here, my editor asked. After all, the change from bustling city scenes to vast desert mesas is abrupt. The support comes from my fiance Jewell, whom I followed here, his sister, whom we moved in with and his mother, who has a pottery studio where I glaze

some of her projects. As a high school lad, I fancied a career as a painter. So rediscovering the use of brush and colors has been very uplifting and — that word again — supportive. I find support in sitting on the porch with my love, just looking at the garden we are bringing to life. I find support in the charming and shocked questions I am asked in my retail job by customers about my move. "What made you come out here?"

"How's a guy from one of the country's biggest cities end up here?"

"Well, what do you think of," he motioned to the outside, "of it?"

The desert I assume he meant, not the parking lot.

I find support in their curiosity. While I deeply care about where I live and always move to places which I feel a connection or an attraction to, I know it's up to me to make it work — not just to be happy with my surroundings but to embrace my circumstances.

I've moved many times. It's hard to say where my wanderlust actually began. You would think after my parents uprooted

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me from an idyllic suburban upbringing at the tender age of 8 to “move over the bridge”, as Philadelphians and New Jersians call it, that I would want to hold onto a semblance of permanence as much as possible.

But, no. I was teased at school — the bullies were just as meanly amused that my parents were older as they were that I am deaf in my left ear. Of course that kids “knew” I was gay before I knew did not make me feel welcome at school. At an early age, I didn’t long to go over Judy Garland’s rainbow. No, I longed for Europe and New York.

High school was much better. I am almost ashamed, but really thrilled, to say I am in a group text with two friends from those days in which we chat almost every damn day. I then went to college in Manhattan. Two hours away from Philly, it was close enough but a world away. New York would be my home. That would be my permanent home. Then came graduation in May 2001. Then the towers fell on Sept. 11. I struggled to stay, but it no longer felt like home. There was too much of the ghost of “old New York” versus the suburbanization of Manhattan. Too many of my friends were forced out because of high rents or a lack of the jobs to support them.

Ultimately, I was off to Miami. My ex-husband fell in love with

Oregon and a decade ago he put me on a flight to Portland to set up housekeeping for us in the Rose City. The pandemic hit and Portland no longer seemed to hold a rosy future. Much to my old friends’ communal shock, we — meaning my fiance Jewell and I — boarded a flight back east to Philly.

That was five years ago.

Then of course, there are the friends. The friends scattered about the country. None of them seemed surprised I decided to move again. Their lack of surprise was equal to my coming out — no surprise at all.

“I knew you’d find a reason to make it the next best place for you to live,” Paul, my friend, college classmate and former publisher and editor exclaimed in another group chat with college-era friends. This is how he answers the question, “Where the hell is he living now?”

For the physical connection of support, there are Pride celebrations in Albuquerque. We may go and find that support by making new LGBTQ+ friends. But for the moment, with the rocky landscape off in the distance, which happily reminds me of Cézanne’s paintings of the South of France, and the icy breezes off of the La Plata Mountains, I can say support comes in the shape of new adventures. Support comes from the excited curiosity of not knowing what lies ahead.

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Ask a Sex Educator

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Learning About Lube

Question: I've never bought lube before. Partners of mine from the past either didn't need it or already had it. Last time I went to the drugstore I stopped in the lube section but immediately got overwhelmed by the options.

Is there a big difference between all the brands out there or are they pretty much all the same? I feel like I should have learned this at some point growing up but now I'm an adult and feel too embarrassed to ask a partner or friend. Thanks! -Anonymous

Answer: Hey, no need to feel embarrassed, there's lots of different lubes on the market and it's hard to know what the right choice is when you have so many options.

Stevie They/Them

Regardless of whether you or your partner need it, a good personal lubricant enhances your experience, making it even more pleasurable in most cases.

Everybody can benefit from finding the right lube for them, but there isn't any one-size-fits-all option. I'll give you the rundown on lube basics here and if you want more personalized suggestions you can come into Self Serve and talk to a sex educator about what lube would work best for you.

Personal lubricants come in 3 categories based on their main ingredient: Water, Silicone, and Oil.

- Water-based lubes are the most versatile; they are latex (condoms, dental dams, etc.) safe, toy (silicone, plastic, jelly rubber) safe, and come in a variety of viscosities, consistencies, colors, and flavors! Water-based lubes, however, are not long-lasting and most often will need to be reapplied or rehydrated after prolonged use. Brands I recommend: Sutil, Sliquid, Wicked Simply
- Silicone-based lubes are great for anyone who wants a hypoallergenic option (make sure it is glycerin free) because many brands only have one or two liquid silicone ingredients and little to no fillers. It is also the longest-lasting personal lubricant option; it will stay put until you clean it up, so clean-up is a must! Silicone lube is latex (condoms, dental dams, etc.) safe but not safe on all toys. Use silicone lube on plastic, metal or glass toys but avoid using it with softer toy materials like silicone, jelly rubber, or CyberSkin. Brands I recommend: Uberlube, Sliquid
- Oil-based lubes are the most moisturizing and skin-nourishing option making them perfect for anyone with dry, damaged, thin, and/or sensitive skin due to allergies, hormones, radiation, medication, etc. Not to be confused with a jar of coconut oil from your pantry, oil-based personal lubricants will often have ultra-refined and filtered versions of the oils you use to cook, making them safe for sexual use. However, oil will break down latex, so it should never be used as a personal lubricant when using latex safer-sex barriers (condoms, dental dams, etc.). Brands I recommend: Foria, The Butters

No matter what lube you choose, avoid these common fillers that can be irritating to the skin, mucous membranes, and ph balance: glycerin, propylene glycol, petrolatum, nonoxynol-9, and parabens.

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By Elise Kaplan, The Paper.

The line for bagels on Saturday mornings at the Downtown Growers' Market winds its way through the grass, cutting through the open area between booths. The queue hums with questions: "Have you tried them before?" and "What's your favorite kind?"

A little more than three years into their endeavor, Bobby Nolan and Nicholas Fitzgerald have built quite a following for **Sunday Bagels** — which can be found most weekends at either the growers' market (810 Copper Ave. NW) or Gravity Bound Brewing Company (816 3rd St. NW).

Bagel varieties rotate each week and include favorites like fermented honey garlic, black sesame harissa (a spicy chili pepper paste), lemon blueberry and a green chile cheese bagel that is crusted over with delightfully crunchy baked cheddar. Customers can also choose from a bevy of spreads like spring veggie (made with locally-grown produce from other market vendors), hot smoked salmon with dill and lemon, and smoked trout salad. The menu also includes open-faced sandwiches — cold smoked salmon with arugula, chive cream cheese and spicy pickled red onion, say, or blueberry jam with ricotta and olive oil.

Nolan and Fitzgerald began making bagels at home in the fall of 2020. It was a hobby born of their prior restaurant experience, longtime friendship and pandemic malaise.

The first batches consisted of 18 bagels made for friends and family.

Early Risers

Sunday Bagels has tapped into Burque's hunger for fresh bagels



Bobby Nolan, of Sunday Bagels, prepares bagels at a commissary kitchen Thursday afternoon for the Downtown Growers' Market. (Roberto E. Rosales / The Paper.)

One recent week, they made more than 1,100 — and sold out to the grower's market crowd by 11 a.m.

Both Fitzgerald and Nolan grew up on the East Coast — in Vermont and Florida respectively — where bagel shops were plentiful. Fitzgerald fondly recalls the shop in his small hometown that he would visit about once a week. (This author also grew up on the East Coast and is also nostalgic for a weekend bagel tradition).

"We didn't realize at the time, I think, that it was almost like a trigger food — like it kind of excited people in a different way," Nolan tells *The Paper*. "There was a *New Yorker* article a couple of weeks ago about the

bagel renaissance. We weren't aiming for a renaissance, but we definitely wanted to put our twist on a bagel."

For Sunday Bagels, the twist involves straying from the traditional New York style bagel found in countless Jewish delis. They have adopted both the Montreal tradition of boiling the bagel with honey — except they use agave to accommodate vegans — and the California style which incorporates sourdough.

Now they're making bialys too — similar to a bagel but instead of a hole there's a slight depression in which they heap leek confit and caramelized onion or roasted spring onion and tarragon.

It takes about six "bakes," one a week, to perfect a bagel flavor, Fitzgerald says. The exception was the lemon blueberry which he said was perfect from the outset.

Then there have been some flubs, including a grapefruit variation of their popular orange julius bagel that was so bitter they had to spit it out and a Caribbean-inspired habanero curry bagel that just didn't quite work.

"Avocado bagel — it sounded great but...not good," Fitzgerald says. "It was weird, kind of like Play-Doh. And then it just didn't taste like avocado. It tasted really off."

These days the dough for Saturday morning's bagels gets started at a commissary kitchen in Wells Park on Tuesdays when they make a levain — a preferment — 16 hours before

they mix it into the dough.

To bake more than a thousand bagels in time for the market at 8 a.m. Fitzgerald says he gets to work around 1:30 a.m.

"Usually we're done at 3 p.m.," he says. "So it's kind of a graveyard shift — a modified graveyard shift."

Last summer, the two announced on Instagram that they have a brick and mortar location in the works.

The shop, a white brick building on Central, west of Downtown, is still very much unfinished. The plan is to install equipment, including a bagel shaping machine, and modify the existing ovens to increase production by four or five times. There will be a display counter and a dining room where customers can sit and eat.

As for when it will all be up and running, Nolan and Fitzgerald say it's still up in the air.

"At the end of the day, this is a project we've put a lot of work into and we want to continue down the same path," Fitzgerald says. "It might take us longer to open but there's a lot of integrity and hard work that's come with it and we just want to do what's comfortable and feels right for us."



Nicholas Fitzgerald takes bagels out of the oven at the commissary kitchen for Sunday Bagels. (Roberto E. Rosales / The Paper.)

To see the weekly menu and pop-up events, follow Sunday Bagels on Instagram @sunday_abq



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Happy Hour Comes For Weed

More people smoke weed daily than drink booze



(Source: Ralf Roletschek at Wikimedia Commons)

By Josh Lee, The Paper.

For the first time ever recorded, more Americans are using cannabis more than alcohol on a daily basis. This new behavior could have a cascading effect that leads to big cultural and political changes. But in spite of this new shift, marijuana prohibition is still chugging along, making criminals out of a large swath of the population.

A new study published in the journal *Addiction* analyzed national surveys taken between 1979 and 2022. The review included 27 surveys and more than 1.6 million participants. According to the surveys, an estimated 17.7 million people used weed daily in 2022. In comparison, 14.7 million used alcohol daily or near-daily.

Study author Jonathan Caulkins, a cannabis policy researcher at Carnegie Mellon University, tells *The Paper* that the legalization of cannabis in many states may have something to do with the trend.

“The work shows that the prevalence and intensity of cannabis use has changed enormously over time, and in ways that mirror changes in policy,” he says.

He also points out that there’s more to the data than a simple

recording of an uptick in weed use.

“If one focuses only on changes in prevalence — meaning the number of users — one will miss the even greater changes in intensity of use,” he says.

There are still more alcohol drinkers in the country compared to marijuana users, but Caulkins says weed is used more intensely by potheads than alcohol is used by drinkers. According to the data, 40% of weed users in 2022 are using daily or near-daily.

The study examined long-term trends for the U.S. as a whole, instead of comparing trends between states. Caulkins looked at days of use, not just prevalence, and drew comparisons with alcohol, using data from the U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health and its predecessor, the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse.

Caulkins compared rates of use in four “milepost” years: 1979 (when the first data became available), 1992 (the end of the Reagan-Bush era), 2008 (the year before the Department of Justice stopped prosecuting state-legal weed companies), and 2022 (the year for the most recent data available).

He found that weed use in

that time dipped the furthest in 1992 with fewer than a million people using the drug regularly. There was a small increase leading up to 2008 before an explosion of use leading up to 2022. In that time, the per capita rate of reporting past-year-use increased by 120%, and per capita days of use increased by 218%.

What happened was U.S. Deputy Attorney General David Ogden released a memo in 2009 that directed federal prosecutors in states that had legalized medical cannabis to leave patients and providers alone as long as they are in compliance with state laws. This signaled a new age for state medical cannabis policies and programs began to pop up all over the country for the next few years.

From 1992 to 2022, the per capita rate of daily or near-daily weed use increased 15-fold. The 1992 survey found 10 times as many regular alcohol users as marijuana users (839 million compared to 0.9 million).

The surveys also revealed that while far more people drink alcohol than use weed, high-frequency drinking has become far less common. In 2022, the average drinker reported drinking alcohol 4 to 5 days in the previous month. The average cannabis user reported using weed 15 to 16 days in the

previous month. In 2022, prior-month cannabis consumers were almost four times as likely to report daily or near-daily use than drinkers (42% versus 11%) and 7.4 times more likely to report daily use (28% versus 3.8%).

Caulkins didn’t attempt to look for causal effects, but noted that frequency of marijuana use coincided with state and federal policies. When restrictions are in place, people use less cannabis. When policies are more liberal, people use more. He notes that the relationship isn’t clear and policy changes could be the result of cultural changes rather than the other way around.

Interestingly, it seems fewer teens are using weed on average, and the drug is being consumed at larger rates by older people. According to Caulkins, 35 to 49-year-olds use more weed than 26 to 34-year-olds, who in turn use more weed than 18-25-year-olds. Although people 50-and-over use less than most of the younger demographics, they still use more than those under 25. Apparently, weed has become an old person’s drug.

Caulkins says THC potency has also risen steeply in recent years. Up until the end of the 20th century, the average potency of seized cannabis was never higher than 5% THC. Now, it’s easy to find 20 to 25% THC at just about every New Mexico dispensary.

According to Caulkins, today’s daily users average more than 300 milligrams per day, an amount much higher than is used in typical medical cannabis studies.

The ultimate effects of this huge increase in the intensity of weed use are still nebulous and probably won’t be clear until researchers have enough time to analyze all of the changes. If cannabis use is a response to policies, then we’ll likely see its use increase only if incremental policy reforms continue. But if the policy changes are the result of increased acceptance and usage among the population, then we might see broader reforms enacted to appease a weed-hungry populace.

But it’s the cultural effects that will likely be the most interesting to watch unfold over the next few years. Many people are beginning to experience the world through the altered perceptions influenced by THC. How will it change the way people act and relate to one another? How will it affect the way we interact? Get ready for an interesting time in American history.



New York's Top Weed Official Resigns

By Josh Lee, The Paper.

The executive director of New York's Office of Cannabis Management, Chris Alexander, resigned following a highly publicized struggle with Gov. Kathy Hochul.

According to the *Times Union*, Hochul announced in May that Alexander was asked to step down following a review of the state's recreational marijuana program rollout. Alexander was expected to stay in his position until the end of September to allow the state to find a replacement, but last week he turned in a resignation letter, saying he will be leaving the first week of June.

New York has approved 132 dispensaries statewide despite having legalized marijuana in 2021. Alexander's critics say that's because he failed to successfully roll out the state's program by missing deadlines and making missteps that resulted in lawsuits.

New York has also struggled

with a proliferation of unlicensed cannabis shops posing as legitimate dispensaries since the drug was legalized. Critics blame Alexander for the Office of Cannabis Management's failure to enforce regulations.

Hochul publicly thanked Alexander for his time at the helm of the state's cannabis program.

Delaware Expands Medical Qualifications

A new law in Delaware has expanded qualifications for enrollment in the state's medical cannabis program and could change how other states set up their policies going forward.

The new law will allow doctors to recommend medical cannabis for any medical condition that they see fit. The current list of qualifying conditions will be removed from law. It will also allow individuals over the age of 65 to determine



whether they need medical cannabis treatment without the aid of a doctor or medical expert.

The law also extends the expiration period for medical cannabis card holders from one year to three years, while giving terminally ill patients the option of getting a card that never expires.

Meanwhile, another bill was passed by the Delaware House in March and is currently making its way through the state Senate. The bill would protect banks and credit unions from state interference if they choose to work with marijuana businesses.

Texas Hemp Association Pushes Back On Bans

A Texas hemp trade association is telling state lawmakers that

proposed bans on hemp-derived intoxicants will damage the industry and harm workers.

According to a news release from the Texas Hemp Business Council, the group's founding member, Lukas Gilkey, said bans like these will "negatively impact an industry that has an \$8 billion economic impact, pays \$1.6 billion in annual wages, and supports more than 50,000 workers."

The council says hemp-derived cannabinoids offer an alternative to opioids and the illicit cannabis market. As part of its "Don't Mess with Hemp" campaign, members of the group presented their case at a public hearing before the Texas Senate Committee on State Affairs, calling for the state to leave the hemp industry alone.

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Ask the Experts: Upgrading Your Swamp Cooler to Cool A/C For Hotter Summers

Sponsored by Kidzz Mechanical

It is the time of year when many Albuquerque homeowners begin the arduous task of opening up their swamp cooler and wondering if this is the year they should finally convert to A/C.

To learn what the process really looks like, and how new financing options help homeowners manage, we asked Chad Redford, CEO at Kidzz Mechanical, an Albuquerque-based HVAC firm with more than 200 5-Star reviews on Google about today's conversion process.

Chad, a lot of homes around Albuquerque were built with swamp coolers, but those don't seem to work as well as they used to. Why is that?

The biggest issue with swamp coolers in our climate is that 10 or 20 years ago our monsoon season occurred in late August/early September. Now in recent years we get our monsoon season in early/mid July.

When the rains come the relative humidity increases from our usual 5-10% humidity to 25-35% relative humidity. When the relative humidity increases to over 20% a swamp cooler

only has the ability to change the temperature or air by 6-7°.

This change in climate has encouraged many people to convert to refrigerated air so that they have the ability to stay comfortable during the hottest days of the year.

And, we all know that swamp coolers can lower inside temperatures by up to 20-degrees. On our hottest days, inside temps can still be unbearable. The National Weather Service shows us that ABQ is seeing more high temperature days each year.

How long does it take to upgrade or install a new air conditioner?

In most cases we can install a new air conditioning system in one day.

Many people think they can't afford an upgrade, but you have lots of reviews online from customers who did. What financing is available now?

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rate plans that accommodate their budget. Wells Fargo offers many different options based on your credit.

• If I'm not ready for an upgrade yet, do you handle smaller jobs like opening my swamp cooler?

If you're not ready to upgrade your system yet, we have some of the best service technicians in the state. Sometimes your system just needs a tune up and some maintenance to get it operating

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

Week of June 5

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ARIES (March 21-April 19): What potentials should you strive to ripen as the expansive planet Jupiter glides through your astrological House of Connection, Communication, and Education in the coming months? I'll offer my intuitions. On the downside, there may be risks of talking carelessly, forging superficial links, and learning inessential lessons. On the plus side, you will generate good luck and abundant vitality if you use language artfully, seek out the finest teachings, and connect with quality people and institutions. In the most favorable prognosis I can imagine, you will become smarter and wiser. Your knack for avoiding boredom and finding fascination will be at a peak.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Since 1969, Taurus singer-songwriter Willie Nelson has played his favorite guitar in over 10,000 shows. His name for it is Trigger. Willie doesn't hold onto it simply for nostalgic reasons. He says it has the greatest tone he has ever heard in a guitar. Though bruised and scratched, it gets a yearly check-up and repair. Nelson regards it as an extension of himself, like a part of his body. Is there anything like Trigger in your life, Taurus? Now is a good time to give it extra care and attention. The same is true for all your valuable belongings and accessories. Give them big doses of love.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Off the coast of West Africa is an imaginary place called Null Island. A weather buoy is permanently moored there. Geographers have nicknamed it "Soul Buoy." It's the one location on Earth where zero degrees latitude intersects with zero degrees longitude. Since it's at sea level, its elevation is zero, too. I regard this spot as a fun metaphor for the current state of your destiny, Gemini. You are at a triple zero point, with your innocence almost fully restored. The horizons are wide, the potentials are expansive, and you are as open and free as it's possible for you to be.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): When I worked as a janitor at India Joze restaurant in Santa Cruz, California, I did the best I could. But I was unskilled in the janitorial arts. I couldn't fix broken machines and I lacked expertise about effective cleaning agents. Plus, I was lazy. Who could blame me? I wasn't doing my life's work. I had no love for my job. Is there an even remotely comparable situation in your life, Cancerian? Are you involved with tasks that neither thrill you nor provide you with useful education? The coming months will be an excellent time to wean yourself from these activities.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): I foresee two possible approaches for you in the coming months. Either will probably work, so it's up to you to decide which feels most fun and interesting. In the first option, you will pursue the rewards you treasure by creating your own rules as you outfox the system's standard way of doing things. In the second alternative, you will aim for success by mostly playing within the rules of the system except for some ethical scheming and maneuvering that outflank the system's rules. My advice is to choose one or the other, and not try to do both.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Please note that during the next 12 months, I may seem a bit pushy in my dealings with you. I will encourage you to redefine and enhance your ambitions. I will exhort you to dream bigger. There may come times when you wish I wouldn't dare you to be so bold. I will understand, then, if you refrain from regularly reading my horoscopes. Maybe you are comfortable with your current type of success and don't want my cheerleading. But if you would welcome an ally like me—an amiable motivator and sympathetic booster—I will be glad to help you strive for new heights of accomplishment.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Three months after Rachel Denning bore her fourth child, she and her husband sold everything they owned and embarked on a nomadic life.

They have been roaming ever since, adding three more kids along the way. She says they have become addicted to "the personal transformation that travel extracts." She loves how wandering free "causes you to be uncomfortable, to step out of the familiar and into the unknown. It compels you to see with new eyes and to consider things you had never been aware of. It removes preconceptions, biases, and small-mindedness." If you were ever going to flirt with Rachel Denning's approach, Libra, the next 12 months would be a favorable time. Could you approximate the same healing growth without globetrotting journeys? Probably. Homework: Ask your imagination to show you appealing ways to expand.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Among the Europeans who first settled in South America were Jews who had been forcibly converted to Christianity by Portuguese and Spanish persecutions. Centuries later, some families resolved to reclaim their Jewish heritage. They led a movement called *la sangre llama*—a Spanish phrase meaning "the blood is calling." I invite you to be inspired by this retrieval, Scorpio. The coming months will be an excellent time to commune with aspects of your past that have been neglected or forgotten. Your ancestors may have messages for you. Go in search of missing information about your origins.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): If you simply let the natural flow take you where it will in the coming weeks, you would become a magnet for both degenerative and creative influences. Fortunately, you are reading this oracle, which will help ensure the natural flow won't lead you toward degenerative influences. With this timely oracle, I am advising you to monitor and suppress any unconscious attractions you might have for bewildering risks and seemingly interesting possibilities that are actually dead ends. Don't flirt with decadent glamour or fake beauty, dear Sagittarius! Instead, make yourself fully available for only the best resources that will uplift and inspire you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Capricorn politician Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is campaigning to be US President. But oops: He recently confessed that a parasitic worm once ate a portion of his brain, damaging his memory and cognitive skills. "The worm is dead now," he assured us, as if that were a good reason to vote for him. Why am I bringing this up? Like most of us, you have secrets that if revealed might wreck at least a bit of mayhem. As tempting as it might be to share them with the world—perhaps in an effort to feel free of their burden—it's best to keep them hidden for now. Kennedy's brain worm is in that category. Don't be like him in the coming weeks. Keep your reputation and public image strong. Show your best facets to the world.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): The English and French word "amateur" comes from *amatus*, the past participle of the Latin word *amare*, which means "to love." According to one definition, an amateur is "someone who pursues sports, studies, or other activities purely for pleasure instead of for financial gain or professional advancement." In accordance with astrological omens, I encourage you to make this a featured theme in the coming months. On a regular basis, seek out experiences simply because they make you feel good. Engage in lots of playtime. At least part-time, specialize in fun and games.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Good news, Pisces: In the coming weeks, one of your flaws will mysteriously become less flawed. It will lose some of its power to undermine you. If you engage in focused meditation about it, you could rob it of even more of its obstructive force. More good news: You will have an enhanced capacity to distinguish between skillful pretending and earthy authenticity. No one can trick you or fool you. Can you handle even more good news? You will have a skillful knack for finding imperfect but effective solutions to problems that have no perfect solution.

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

1 Hustle

5 Mountain goat feature

10 Western chum

14 What's more

15 "Lou Grant" star

16 Skin softener

17 Heart of the matter

18 Voyager 2, e.g.

20 Per item

22 Ambitious one

23 Oscar Madison, e.g.

24 Reacts to yeast

25 Back, on board

27 Fable finale

29 Tiny openings

33 Twinings product

34 Hurt badly

35 Southwestern flour

36 Cord for an ID card

38 Improvises

39 Approach the summit

40 Work by Irving Berlin

41 LAX posting

42 "Bed" or "home" ending

43 Words to live by

44 Bottom line

45 Puzzle with pictures

47 Baseball great Ty

49 Wagon train group

52 Brunch staple

55 Great respect

57 Rich deposit

58 One of the Lennons

59 Skiing surface

60 Stadium level

61 Crooned a tune

62 Bivouac shelters

63 Bad sign

DOWN

1 "Roots", for one

2 Paper holder

3 Aid

4 "Psycho" setting

5 Certain wall trim

6 Medium claim

7 Parties, to pirates

8 Shrink back in fear

9 Stuff on the bottom

10 Music for two or more

11 Very much

12 Hotel amenity

13 Game animal

19 Illegal voyeur

21 Take by force

25 One of the Titans

26 Big spread

28 Free (of)

30 Boxer nick-named Slapsie Maxie

31 Select group

32 Tuned to, as a dial

35 Woodsy adornments

37 Deep longing

38 Captured the gold

40 Studio time

43 Franklin, for one

46 Admirer of Beauty

48 Handsome, in Rome

49 Gridiron "Hail Mary"

50 It may be half-baked

51 Neighbor of Yemen

53 Border

54 Prom attendee

56 Pick, with "for"

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