

OLY ARTS

Issue No. 19 | June 2019

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June 15

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June 21

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June 25



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Cover: Pride attendees raise their hands in joy, 2016

OLY ARTS ISSUE No. 19

June 2019

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CAPITOL CITY PRESS



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Rocky Horror Picture Show



Raising a Glass

to Life's Misfits

By Karen Lunde

Comedian Drew Carey said, “Oh, you hate your job? ... There’s a support group for that. It’s called everybody, and they meet regularly at the bar.”

Not everyone in *Daphne’s Dive*, a play by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Quiara Alegría Hudes, hates his or her job; but everyone has a story, and those stories are what’ll bring the characters, denizens of a Philadelphia bar, vividly to life when the play arrives at Olympia Little Theatre in early June. It calls for a multicultural, largely Latinx cast. “Obviously, [diverse casting] was a challenge in an area with a relatively small Latinx population,” said director Toni Holm. “This is compounded with Olympia Little Theatre being all-volunteer, which does limit the number of actors who could travel for a role.” Holm recruited in neighboring counties and to non-theatrical groups in an attempt to round out the cast.

The casting difficulty, according to Holm, wasn’t a reason to avoid taking on *Daphne’s Dive*. “If we say we can’t do plays that have a diverse cast because we don’t have enough easy access to an ethnically diverse pool of actors, we all lose some great theater. Instead, if we do more plays with diverse roles, there might be more diverse actors interested in doing theater in our area and more people interested in acting if there are roles available for them.”

Holm says Hudes’s beautiful writing drew her to the play. “Often,” Holm says, “when reading a new play for the first time, you have to re-check who is saying what line, and to really know the characters sometimes you need to see [the play] on its feet. Even at first read, with *Daphne’s Dive* you know which character was speaking because Hudes’s dialog defines them so well. She

has created some very well-drawn, real people in this play and some great roles for actors.”

Holm says *Dive* is entertaining, fun, sad and warm. “It’s essentially about family: the family we’re born with, the family we choose and the family that we love, and who love and support us no matter what. Plus,” she adds, “you get to spend the evening in a great bar — with no hangover!”

WHAT

Daphne’s Dive

WHEN

7:25 p.m. Thursdays - Saturdays;

1:55 p.m. Sundays, June 7-23

Special benefit performance for Puerto Rico at 7:55 p.m. Thursday, June 13.

WHERE

Olympia Little Theatre,
1925 Miller Ave. NE, Olympia

HOW MUCH

\$9-\$15

LEARN MORE

360-786-9484

olympialittletheater.org



Thereby Hangs a Tale

By Christian Carvajal



Lacey will soon have its own theatrical troupe. Artistic director Kevin McManus explains.

“Seven of my closest friends and I gathered together to form a theater company,” McManus said. “We got ourselves a little 501(c)(3) license and are heading toward a three-production, inaugural season.” That fledgling company is Goldfinch Productions. “It’s exciting and a bit intimidating,” he added, “but we’re equipped to handle it.”

Audiences may recognize McManus from roles in such shows as *Communicating Doors* at Olympia Little Theatre, but he’s also made his mark as a director. He helmed *Shrek the Musical* for Standing Room Only in Yelm and *Blithe Spirit* at Evergreen Playhouse in Centralia. He’ll direct Goldfinch’s first show, Shakespeare’s pastoral comedy *As You Like It*, this summer. After a debut at Yelm Prairie Days Festival, he’ll stage the show at Olympia’s LBA and Sunrise Parks in July.

As You Like It is the story of Celia and Rosalind, nobles born to fraternal dukes but hiding in the forest of Arden. When Rosalind’s crush, Orlando, also escapes to the woods, Rosalind commences flirting with him — a seduction complicated by her disguise as a boy. In Arden, it seems, gender and identity are fluid. “All the world’s a stage,” the character Jacques observes, “and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts.”

Goldfinch’s rendition stars Amanda Kemp (*The Winter’s Tale*) as Rosalind, Laura Miller (*Clockwork*) as Celia and Jalen Penn as Orlando. Jacques is played by Andrea Weston-Smart, the dukes by Miro Bouchakian and Ed Thorpe. Thorpe, a Goldfinch board member, says the play has “passionate characters from all walks of life, [with] women as the central focus. We believe audiences will respond to shows that are partly a reflection of themselves in dynamic situations. We also hope to produce shows from local playwrights about life in the South Sound.”

WHAT
As You Like It

HOW MUCH
Free

WHEN
2 p.m. Sunday, June 30

LEARN MORE
goldfinchproductions.com
360-999-0412

WHERE
Yelm City Park,
115 Mosman Ave. SE, Yelm

New Orca Books Cooperative Welcomes Readers

By Ned Hayes

In February, the Washington Post reviewed the state of the American bookstore and discovered two key, distinguishing characteristics that are keeping bookstores afloat. “How do indie bookstores compete with Amazon?” said the Post’s headline. “Personality — and a sense of community.”

Orca Books has been a bookstore with personality for 27 years, and now in order to continue to thrive, the store is fully embracing community. Orca Books is moving from a privately owned store to a community cooperative. Community supporters will be able to take partial ownership of the bookstore as paid members of the new Orca Books cooperative.

Cooperative ownership for bookstores is a well-proven model. Nationally known bookstores that have gone to cooperative community ownership include Buffalo Street Books in Ithaca, New York and

House of Books in Billings, Montana, Bluestockings in New York City and of course the Northwest’s own Left Bank Books in Seattle. “It seems like community ownership and involvement is the answer for a lot of bookstores facing competition with industry giants,” explained store staffer Devin Anderson.

Past Orca Books owner Linda Berensten will become a member of the cooperative, along with existing staff members. “My wish is for Orca to continue, and for me to still be a part of it,” said Berensten. “But I’m looking forward to having more time to read, travel and be a grandma.”

Orca’s patrons have already stepped up to support the new co-op model. “People have been so supportive,” said Anderson. “It is very heartwarming to see how happy people are to support us, and how excited they are to become member-owners of one of their favorite places.”

Funds raised during the formation of the cooperative will be used to pay off debt, create operating capital and transfer the bookstore and all of its books from the current owner to the cooperative. Member benefits that will exist will include daily discounts, access to members-only sales and voting rights. Members may also participate in book selection and event creation at the bookstore. There will be seats available on the board as well, for members to be directly involved and represented in decision making.

“We hope that with more events, more staff, more sideline items like journals and art supplies, and more books, we’ll see the bookstore financially stabilize and grow. We want Orca Books to stay open and help keep Olympia reading for many years to come,” said Anderson. **O**

WHAT

Orca Books Cooperative

HOW MUCH

Prices vary

WHEN

10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Monday-Saturday;

10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Sundays

LEARN MORE

orcabooks.com/co-op

360-352-0123

WHERE

509 Fourth Ave. E, Olympia



CapitalCityPride.net

2019 **pride** Olympia

STONEWALL



1969 - 2019

SUNDAY • JUNE 23

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 Aug 30 - 8pm Performance
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18	19	20	21	22 8pm	23 8pm	24
25	26	27	28	29 8pm	30 8pm	31 8pm

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Capital City Pride Commemorates the Stonewall Riots

By Alec Clayton



Capital City Pride will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots this summer with a parade from the Capitol steps to Heritage Park. The festivities include drag performances, food vendors, informational booths from area businesses and social organizations, music and speeches. Some 15,000 people are expected. The Stonewall Riots are acknowledged as the birth of the modern gay rights movement, and this summer there will be parades throughout the world to commemorate the riots that began June 28, 1969.

Most gays and lesbians were deeply closeted in 1969. Nowhere was it safe to come out. The term transgender was in almost no one's vocabulary. The only transgender person most Americans had ever heard of was Christine Jorgenson, an army veteran notorious for her sex-reassignment surgery in 1951. The few gay bars in operation in major cities were subject to constant police raids. Patrons were arrested, beaten and publicly outed. After midnight on June 28, drag queens in The Stonewall Inn on New York City's Christopher Street decided they weren't going to take it anymore. The bar was raided, patrons were handcuffed and crowds gathered. When a policeman hit a woman on the head, the crowds erupted into violence, and that set off days and nights of rioting.

Exactly one year later, gay organizations in New York organized Christopher Street Liberation Day, which saw an estimated 1,000 to 2,000 activists march from Christopher Street to Central Park. There they held a "gay-in." The event became known as the first Pride Parade. Others were held the same day in Boston, Dallas, Los Angeles and other cities in the United States and Europe. A similar parade in Chicago was held one day earlier.

Olympia's Capital City Pride movement came into being in 1991. Anna Schlecht, one of the founders and a leader in Pride ever since, said, "It was a three-way collaboration between Evergreen activists including Victoria Marinelli-Stuart; the late Tod Streater, who died shortly thereafter of AIDS; Esther Howard and others — community-based folks associated with Spectrum including Sidney Evans, Richard Pimental and others. It started at Marathon Park, wound all through downtown."

Evans said, "Michael Murphy and myself drove all over Seattle, Tacoma and Olympia plastering fliers all over, inviting others to come attend. I am very proud to have been a part of it, along with all of those that helped out. People marched with bags over their heads to hide their identity at that time."

Marinelli-Stuart recalled, "I remember what a profound deal it was when we got down there and saw this huge contingent from Tacoma had showed up, bless their brilliant, queer hearts. Such rapid work on the ground, when a great lot of us scarcely knew one another."

Cameron Combs, selected for this year's activist of the year award, said he missed the first year but was there in 1992. "There weren't crowds gathered along Capitol Way to cheer us on as there are today," he said, "and just a few people waited at Sylvester Park to watch over the booths and other items awaiting our arrival. The folks waiting at the park cheered us on as we approached. There wasn't a huge number of us marching, either, maybe a hundred to a couple hundred those first years. Some folks marched in groups with banners; the rest of us just marched as unaffiliated members of the community, carrying 'Stand Proud Olympia' signs. I remember the big apprehension for me was being so visible — no way to hide in the crowd. I always wondered if a coworker would see me as they walked by on the sidewalk heading to a restaurant or store. From the looks on people's faces, they were completely unaware anything like this was happening in Olympia, much less that day. I remember the haters, too, the so-called Christians who came expressly to call us sinners and tell us we were going to hell. We chanted louder to drown them out. I remember the camaraderie, the feeling of community we had. We were few but we were mighty. We did not let the haters shut us down and we did not hide our faces, though our neighbors and bosses might see us and learn something about us they hadn't known. We were not without fear. We knew what we were doing was potentially risky, and we did it anyway because we felt it was important for our community to see us." 0



Upper left photo source: David Carter, Stonewall: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution, St. Martin's Press, 2004, ISBN 0-312-34269-1, S. 43.

Pride Activist of the Year:

Cameron Combs



By Alec Clayton

This year's Capital City Pride award for activist of the year goes to Cameron Combs, activist, trans man, writer and president of the Pizza Klatch board of directors.


Combs grew up in Thurston County and went to Tumwater schools. "I know firsthand," says Combs, "what it's like to be an LGBTQ+ youth in school without any support from teachers, staff or administration." He marched in the second Pride march in Olympia in 1992 and worked on *Sound Out*, a monthly, newsprint magazine for the LGBTQ+ community in the Olympia area. "We did a bit of everything," he says, "and engaged a lot of volunteers from the community. I coached writers in journalistic practice, edited and proofread, sold ad space, made connections with community groups, did layout, drove the proofs to our printer and did distribution. In the four or five years I was involved in *Sound Out*, my commitment to the LGBTQ+ community solidified."

He became a facilitator for Pizza Klatch, an LGBTQ+ youth support group, in 2010. Pizza Klatch meets in area schools at lunch to offer pizza, support and discussion with adult facilitators. It also offers professional training to school administrators and staff aimed at increasing awareness and improving safety for LGBTQ+ students. Starting with three schools when Combs first joined as facilitator, Pizza Klatch now meets in a dozen schools from Lacey, Olympia and Tumwater to Tenino and Yelm. Combs joined the board of directors in 2016 and became board president in January of this year.

Concurrent with the early part of his work with Pizza Klatch, Combs began exploring his own gender identity. He says this made it easier to empathize with some of the young people. "Through this exploration," he says, "I pulled together the threads of a lifelong journey through various gender and sexual identities. And that is the subject of an essay I wrote for *Nonbinary: Memoirs in Gender* and

Identity (Columbia University Press, April 2019): working my way from baby butch lesbian through my politically active dyke years, to more and more masculine-identified butch, to transmasculine and, at age 50, to nonbinary transgender. Going through puberty the first time was rough. Opting to go through it again at that age was bizarre and well worth it."

Combs says his parents modeled civic involvement and the importance of community through their work with church committees and groups like Rotary. Since being selected for the activist award, he says he's been thinking about what activism means. "What it means to me," he decided, "is that root word, 'act.' For me, an activist is someone who sees injustice, sees someone being wronged or someone who needs help and does something to correct the wrong, to give support."

This award will be presented to Combs during the Pride celebration in Heritage Park. 



2019 CAPITAL CITY PRIDE **EVENT SCHEDULE**

SUN. JUNE 23

11:00 AM.....DJ AARON FURY — DANCE MUSIC

11:30 AM.....DRAG STAR SHOWCASE — DRAG/DANCE MUSIC

PRIDE PARADE AT NOON FROM STATE CAPITOL TO HERITAGE PARK

(VIEWING STAND: LEGION WAY & CAPITOL WAY)

PRIDE FESTIVAL 1–6PM HERITAGE PARK

1:00 PMKIM ARCHER BAND — RHYTHM & BLUES

2:00 PMWELCOME & PRIDE DAY AWARDS — MARSHA P. JOHNSON & SYLVIA RIVERA (STONEWALL VETERANS)

2:15 PMJAKETTES — DRAG PERFORMANCES

2:30 PMCARAVAN OF GLAM — SPECTACLE-DRAG

3:30 PMPARADE MARSHAL AWARD — JACQUE DENNEE, LGBT ELDER

3:45 PMFREE RANGE DRAG

4:00 PMPRIDE DAY ACTIVIST AWARD — CAMERON COMBS (PIZZA KLATCH)

4:15 PMTERRONCÉ, GIGI, SELENA — DRAG PERFORMANCES

4:30 PMEL SANCHEZ — COMEDY

5:00 PMTHE BRIDGE — RAP PERFORMANCE

5:30 PMCLOSING

Capital City Pride Parade Route

1 p.m. Sunday, June 23



START

TO WEST SIDE

14TH AVE TUNNEL

7TH AVE

8TH AVE

9TH AVE

10TH AVE

UNION AVE

11TH AVE

STATE AVE

4TH AVE

5TH AVE

LEGION WAY

PLUM ST

A AVE

URSTON

OLYMPIA

PILOT WAY

WATER ST

AMIRIA ST

WASHINGTON ST

FRANKLIN ST

ADAMS ST

JEFFERSON ST

CHERRY ST

CHERRY ST

Proud to Lead

OLY ARTS Interviews Pride Parade Grand Marshal Jacque Dennee-Lee

By Molly Gilmore



With her bright smile and warm personality, Jacque Dennee-Lee — who'll serve as marshal of the Capital City Pride Parade on June 23 — helped many in Olympia find comfort with LGBTQ+ people. Dennee-Lee (whose first name is pronounced "Jackie") worked from the early 1980s to 2010 as a bus driver with Intercity Transit, one of many out lesbian drivers at the time.

"She was a very likeable, warm person and never hid who she was, and as a result, she was the first lesbian that a heck of a lot of people ever knew," said Pride organizer Anna Schlecht, who nominated Dennee-Lee as marshal. "She was the touchstone for a lot of people who were not yet out to themselves or their families. For most of the 1980s, she was the person who helped people realize, 'I can be gay, and I can have a job. I can have a home. I can be liked. I can see my future.'"

"I've always been out about my identity since I've been in Olympia," said Dennee-Lee, who moved here in the late '70s and worked at the Rainbow Restaurant, a gathering place for the LGBTQ community, before taking the job at Intercity Transit. "Driving a bus, everybody could see you, and you could see everybody, so you would wave and blow kisses, that kind of thing. I got close to a lot of my passengers who were quite aware of my orientation."

When she and then-partner Jamie Lee were expecting a child — Lydia Dennee-Lee, now 22 — passengers brought gifts. All three were stalwart supporters of Capital City Pride, with Lydia growing up as a regular at marches and demonstrations and Lee starting the festival's popular children's activity area. Jacque was also a labor activist, working with the Amalgamated Transit Union during her years as a driver. Lydia, who's graduating this month from Fairhaven College in Bellingham, is devoted to working for social and environmental change and credits her two moms with inspiring her activism, Jacque said.

When she found out she'd been chosen as parade marshal, Jacque Dennee-Lee was both honored and terrified. "I really don't like to have the focus on me," she said. But she's thrilled both her daughter and former partner will ride with her in a vintage convertible, sharing the spotlight as they've shared a dedication to pride over the years. **0**

WHAT

Capital City Pride Parade

WHEN

Noon - 1 p.m. Sunday, June 23

WHERE

Heritage Park, Fifth Avenue at Water St., Olympia

HOW MUCH

Free

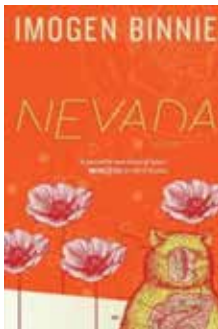
LEARN MORE

capitalcitypride.net

TAKE A NOTE...

Add these recommended titles to your Pride reading list.

Sponsored by Orca Books.



NEVADA

Imogen Binnie

Binnie tells the darkly comedic story of a young trans woman who's trying to stay true to her punk values while working retail in New York City. When the world she carefully built for herself begins to unravel, she sets out on a journey that will change her forever.



KINGS, QUEENS, AND IN-BETWEENS

Tanya Boteju

After a bewildering encounter at her small town's annual summer festival, 17-year-old, biracial, queer Nima plunges into the world of drag, where she explores questions of acceptance, identity, love and self-expression.



PLEASURE ACTIVISM

Adrienne Maree Brown

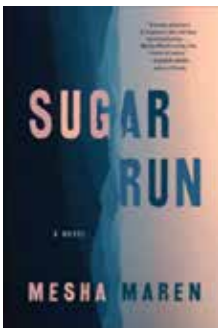
Forget self-denial. The visionary author of Emergent Strategy says politics should be an erotic, resounding "yes," not another deadening "no."



THE FIFTH SEASON - (BROKEN EARTH #1)

N.K. Jemisin

Jemisin creates a stunningly original world plagued by natural disasters and influenced by humans with the ability to manipulate seismic energy.



SUGAR RUN

Mesha Maren

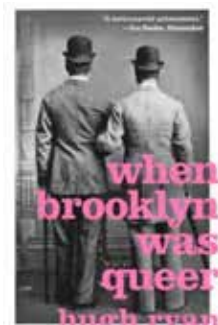
Jodi McCarty, recently released after 18 years in prison, meets Miranda, a troubled young mother. Together they head toward what they hope will be a fresh start in a new home.



BODYMAP

Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha

Bodymap meditates on survival and what it means to be a queer woman of color in North America by documenting moments of body legacy and resistance.



WHEN BROOKLYN WAS QUEER

Hugh Ryan

Learn the untold story of Brooklyn's vibrant queer history from the mid-1850s to the present.



CRUSH

Richard Siken

Crush won the 2004 Yale Younger Poets competition, North America's oldest annual literary prize for poetry. Local poet Frances Gregory, a bestseller, recommends this powerful collection of verses driven by love and obsession.



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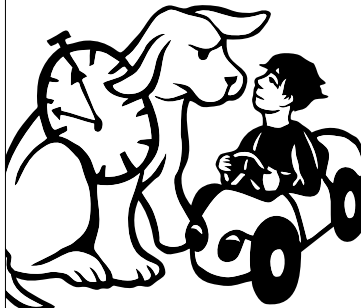
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Directed by Claribel Gross

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S I G N A G E | P R I N T | M A I L

Capital City Pride Parade:

Steps Toward Progress

By Christian Carvajal

Back in 1991, the population of Olympia was seven-tenths of what it is now, and stunning social paradigm shifts remained over the visible horizon. Legal, same-sex marriage in Washington State was a generation away — yet the town was already demonstrating its support of what came to be known as the LGBTQ+ community. That was the year Olympia launched Capital City Pride, the first festival of its kind in any Northwestern community this small. Each year now, the Sunday parade entertains and inspires some 15,000 spectators.

Capital City Pride commemorates the rebellion at Stonewall Inn that galvanized the LGBTQ+ rights movement. “This year in particular, being the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riot,” notes Gina Thompson, parade coordinator since 2015, “it’s an important year to focus on not only the achievements, but the roots and recognizing where we came from. And that happens to be our theme for 2019: It’s ‘Remember Our Roots.’”

Thompson expects at least 70 organizations to participate in this year’s parade. She loves the event’s small-town, homespun feel, adding, “It’s family-friendly. It’s just a really unique place to come and be a part of the community.”

Capital City Pride is overseen and fiscally supported by Olympia Rainbow Center. “My goal,” says Thompson, “is to create a space of visibility and community where all queer folks can be seen and feel safe.” 0

WHAT

Capital City Pride Parade

HOW MUCH

Free

WHERE

Viewing stand, Sylvester Park, Legion Way and Capitol Way, Olympia

LEARN MORE

olyarts.com/pride
capitalcitypride.net

WHEN

Noon Sunday, June 23





Empowering Olympia's Queer Youth

By Jonah Barrett

Growing up LGBTQ+ can be a challenge. Queer youth face a number of difficulties, like developing straight crushes, teachers using the wrong pronouns and at times not being accepted by their families. It's a tough journey, but it isn't all gloom and doom. Two major nonprofit organizations are helping LGBTQ+ youth get a leg up on their lives, and it's making a big difference.

Stonewall Youth began in 1991 as an LGBTQ+ youth support group and became a nonprofit in 1993. Paying homage to the original Stonewall Riots of 1969, the organization provides such services as advocacy, community outreach, education, queer dances and weekly drop-in support groups throughout Thurston County. The organization is still going strong, servicing up to 35 youth in a week, averaging 400 young people a year.

"The most important thing Stonewall Youth works to do," said Jax Mercogliano, development director for the organization, "is put power into the hands of youth. LGBTQ youth know best what LGBTQ youth need. We organize

“Everyday the youth teach us things we've We're still learning, and I hope we alw



**WHAT**

Stonewall Youth

WHEN

18-to-24-year-old night, 4 p.m. first and third Mondays;
 Queer-trans people of color night, 4 p.m. second and fourth Mondays;
 Support group sessions 3 and 5 p.m. Wednesdays;
 4 p.m. Fridays

WHERE

112 State Ave. NE, Olympia

HOW MUCH

Free

LEARN MORE

360-888-4273 (text preferred)
stonewallyouth.org

never heard of.
 ways will be.”



our space so that it is by and for youth. Within our organizational structure we also make sure that our decisions and processes are youth-led and adult-supported.”

Pizza Klatch is a nonprofit organization that brings LGBTQ+ support groups to schools throughout Thurston County. Queer or allied youth that feel isolated can drop in during lunch hour and discuss the struggles and successes they’re experiencing, often through a process of talking about their highs and lows of the week while munching on pizza. It’s a safe space that functions as a sanctuary amidst the chaos that is high school.

Yet Pizza Klatch didn’t start as “Pizza Klatch.” Originally it functioned as an unnamed, informal, after-school support group for queer and allied youth at North Thurston High in 2007. The organizers were soon confronted with new challenges, as a few of the students had been outed for attending and were sent to conversion therapy out of state. A decision was made to change meetings to lunchtime to shield youth from the suspicion of homophobic family members. “We decided we had to use

more stealth,” founder Lynn Grotzky said. “We had to come up with an innocuous name. We realized pizza was easy. Most youth loved pizza. And ‘klatch’ is a Yiddish term; it really means to connect, to schmooze.”

Since then, Pizza Klatch has expanded to 15 schools in Thurston County, helping an average of 422 students in 2019 alone. That’s a big jump from 2018’s average of 311, with the organization adding three more schools in a year. It’s come to the point at which Pizza Klatch doesn’t even approach schools; schools approach it. The increased need for this program demands further expansion. Pizza Klatch plans to move its headquarters to a two-story building downtown this summer, with an open house in August to celebrate the new space.

“Every day the youth teach us things that we’ve never heard of,” said Pizza Klatch’s executive director, Rosalinda Noriega. “We’re still learning, and I hope that we always will be learning. But at the core of it, we all just need acceptance and understanding, and I think that ultimately that is what Pizza Klatch is trying to do.” 0

One Time, One Night

Legendary band Los Lobos announces special performance in Olympia

By Melinda Minton

Los Lobos (Spanish for “The Wolves”) has a distinctive sound that borrows from boleros, corrido, Mexican folk music, mariachi, norteenos music from northern Mexico, polka, rock and roll, Tex-Mex cumbia and zydeco with nuances in between.

Los Lobos had humble beginnings in East Los Angeles in 1973, playing for parties, weddings and other events that came its way. It had the freedom to explore and play various types of music. Though its genre of choice was Mexican folk with origins in the music brought by European settlers before the Mexican Revolutionary War, that gave way to diverse elements that inform the sound of Los Lobos today. *Sí Se Puede!* (1976) was the charity-album debut of “Los Lobos and the Salas Brothers of Tierra.” Proceeds from that album went to the United Farm Workers of America. With that, the band was officially off and running. In 1984, the band dropped its second album, *How Will the Wolf Survive?* Its title and title song were inspired by a National Geographic article entitled “Where Can the Wolf Survive,” which band members related to their own struggle to gain success in the U.S. while maintaining their Mexican roots.

Since then, the band has enjoyed sharing the stage with such artists as Bob Dylan, The Grateful Dead, The Sex Pistols and U2. It gained international stardom in 1987, when a cover version of Ritchie Valens’ “La Bamba” topped the charts in the UK, the U.S. and several other countries. In 2011, the group was awarded a Latin Grammy lifetime-achievement award. In 2015, it was nominated for induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In 2018, it was inducted into the Austin City Limits Hall of Fame.

“The success was great,” says Berlin, “but it left us wondering what to do. Did we want to take the conventional route or take our own path?” It seemed natural and necessary that the group remain true to its core when making musical decisions, gently growing its artistic path and brand of music. Thus, the band’s marriage of minds and music continued to flourish.

In 1995, Los Lobos, along with veteran guitarist and singer Lalo Guerrero, released the bestselling, prestigious record *Papa’s Dream* on Music for Little People Records. The band also scored the film *Desperado*. A track from that album, “Mariachi Suite,” won a Grammy for best pop-instrumental performance and stands as Los Lobos’ most recent Grammy award winner. The band also won Grammys for best Mexican-American performance in 1983 and 1989, for the song “Anselma” and album *La Pistola y el Corazón*, respectively.

Fast forward to today. After its many awards and honors, Los Lobos is about to release new music. “We plan to do a Christmas album,” says Berlin, who also works as a music producer. When asked about the group’s longstanding history and secrets to success, Berlin adds, “The culture of the group was there at the beginning stages of the band. Everyone had a family, and touring for years at a time was out of the question. When we aren’t working together or touring, we stay out of each other’s way.” **0**

WHAT

An Evening With Los Lobos — 45th-Anniversary Show

WHERE

The Washington Center for the Performing Arts,
512 Washington St. SE, Olympia

WHEN

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 1

HOW MUCH

\$38-\$102

LEARN MORE

360-753-8586
washingtoncenter.org





Sharon Stearnes and the

Wonderful Wurlitzer!

By Karen Lunde

Back in the mid-1920s, the Liberty Theatre, a vaudeville house, contained a Wurlitzer 2/9 theater pipe organ. After a renovation in 1948, the Liberty became the Olympic Theater. In the 1980s, it was completely rebuilt and evolved into The Washington Center for the Performing Arts. Throughout the building's evolution, the mighty Wurlitzer has remained. The organ is now considered one of the Northwest's premier instruments.

Although the Andy Crow Wurlitzer (named for its late, primary caretaker and champion) has been moved, stored and even extensively damaged in the 2001 Nisqually earthquake, it's still lovingly cared for by The Washington Center. The facility's board of directors established an endowment for the organ's maintenance and preservation in 1999.

In June, organist Sharon Stearnes will take the Wurlitzer out for a spin in a free, family-friendly concert. Stearnes has sat at the organ's massive console numerous times. "I believe my first concert at The Washington Center was January of

2016," she said. "I play one or two free concerts a year there." Stearnes has had the opportunity to play a dedication concert. She also played a memorial service for Andy Crow, "a mentor of mine as a newbie to theater organs in my early days of performing," she said. "It's not every day that you need to intersperse bird tweets, train whistles and ahooga horns into your music, so he was a huge help with that."

Stearnes began playing the organ when she was in fourth grade and her parents bought the family a little Hammond organ for Christmas. "I was the youngest of six kids, so I didn't get to play it often," she said. "When my older siblings finally got bored with it, I hopped on the bench and never got off." She describes herself as an "organ nerd" who spent hours each day playing. At age 19, she started performing at Tacoma Pizza and Pipes. A year later, she became the organist for the Seattle Mariners and the Bellevue and Seattle Pizza and Pipes restaurants.

Stearnes says she prefers to keep her concerts free-form. She likes to "judge

the audience," she says, "and get a feel for whether they're more of the Led Zeppelin type or the Bach type." There's something for everyone at her shows. "I always do a little of everything," she said: "old, new, classical, show tunes, Disney ... and definitely sing-alongs." 0

WHAT

Wonderful Wurlitzer

WHEN

7 p.m. Thursday, June 6

WHERE

The Washington Center for the Performing Arts,
512 Washington St. SE, Olympia

HOW MUCH

Free

LEARN MORE

360-753-8586
washingtoncenter.org

Science Fiction Double Feature

By Noah Shachar

Some movies win Academy Awards, are nearly forgotten and hardly spoken about again. Some movies are simply boring, while others are entertaining or insightful. But a few movies ignite themselves in a blazing pyre to emerge as a phoenix from smoldering ashes ever livelier, more passionate and mesmerizingly intriguing — growing and reshaping below sternly browed marquee and ghostly, glowing neon tubes in midnight theaters around the world. Of those films, dubbed cult classics, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* is the cult classic. Starting as a musical stage production, then adapted for the screen, initially flopping at the box office but achieving a whole new level of success through midnight screenings for over four decades, the film is the longest-running theatrical release in movie history. On June 15, it returns to Olympia Film Society for another midnight screening.

A *Rocky Horror* screening isn't a traditional movie screening. There's no dark hush over the audience; in fact, it's the opposite. It's loud and lively from the seats up to the screen. There's dancing, singing and yelling, lingerie and props and, arguably, the best part, a cast of actors at the front who shadow the discourse onscreen: a shadow cast. This screening features the talents of the Dungeons and Dragonflies Shadow Cast. OLY ARTS spoke with Josh "Magical Minion" Wood, the president of Dungeons and Dragonflies, about the upcoming performance and the *Rocky Horror* experience.



"As far as *Rocky Horror* goes," Wood explained, "I have been acting in and performing it for near 17 years." First seeing the film at age six on television and attending his first screening in 2002, Wood said he "immediately wanted to join in the insanity and fun of the live show." Having almost two decades of experience acting in and now training others for the live performance, Wood said, "I can probably cite a million different stories of things not going as planned, especially involving tech." Of course, that's true for any live show, but his favorite story involves "an act of nature that threw things off." On a temperate summer night turned torrential downpour, "a large bathtub's worth of water [dropped] on our Rocky. He didn't move, he didn't break character, he took it like a champ," Wood recounted. It's moments like these that show the liveliness in each screening and performance. *Rocky Horror* is never the

same event. It's a constantly changing, magical experience when the witching hour comes. Wood continued, "Everyone said despite the rain it was the most fun they ever had doing *Rocky Horror*. I had never been more proud of my performers."

Amidst the live-action performances, singing and pelvic thrusting, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* achieves what few other films could. Come storm or trouble, Wood says, "It couldn't stop the level of fun, energy and interactive spirit that has kept *Rocky Horror* the longest-running midnight-cult-film experience for over 45 years." It's an experience that can't be read, can't be watched but must be lived. **0**

WHAT

Rocky Horror Picture Show, featuring Dungeons and Dragonflies Shadow Cast

WHEN

Midnight Saturday/Sunday, June 15/16

WHERE

Capitol Theater, 206 Fifth Ave. SE, Olympia

HOW MUCH

\$7-\$10

LEARN MORE

olympiafilmsociety.org
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