

YOUR LGBTQIA+ GUIDE TO

Key West



Q MAGAZINE

**Volume 20 Issue 5
May 2025**



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YOUR LGBTQIA+ GUIDE TO

Key West



Q MAGAZINE

Volume 20 - Issue 5

May 2025



Welcome To Paradise!

As we enter May, we reflect
on all those that made the
ultimate sacrifice.

It seems members of our
community that made that
same sacrifice are being
erased from history.

We can't let them be
forgotten. Remember
those LGBTQIA brave
soldiers that are no
longer with us.

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MONROE COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Stephanie Wise

LEZ GO OUT



T

The legendary history and stories of Key West are an indisputable draw to the island from many many people, myself included. I love recreations and time period dramas like Gentlemen Jack (you know you watched it), Ammonite (Kate = swoon) and Xena. What?! You KNOW they were lovers. Anyway, in Key West you have everything from wreckers who salvaged treasure right off the coast and rescued wet maidens and grave robbers moving the bodies of beautiful women into their homes (yes, really), to famous gay playwrights and hand-made but deeply possessed children's dolls. Today I'll focus on the doll because, well, it's a hand-made possessed doll!

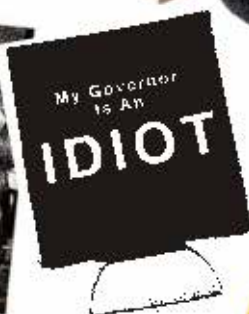
One night when the Husbutch and I wanted to play tourist, we hopped on the Key West Ghosts and Gravestones Trolley Tour with a host dressed in historical costume and learned the dark and interesting secrets that Key West artfully hides in plain sight. For example, you would never know while walking down Duval street, cocktail in hand, that at the intersection with Caroline St on the southwest corner there is a house, no - mansion, that people still claim to see Dr. Porter walking the balcony at night pondering remedies for Key West's ill and diseased desperate to save them. Or, that the top floor of the Oldest House Museum has scared so many people that it is off limits to almost all. People often say that the temperature drops suddenly and the voices of the little children who succumbed to their sickness in that house are heard up there.

One of the island's most loved inhabitants still actively haunts a popular tourist stop to this day.. Robert The Doll.

Story goes that Robert was a most beloved Doll by a young boy who lived on Eaton St. The home known as The Artists House is now a bed and breakfast for those who are brave enough. You can even rent the room that the young boy shared with his beloved doll, Robert. Robert was actually the original name of the little boy who loved his doll so much that he gave it his first name and, for the rest of his life, went by his middle name. The doll was went everywhere with the boy. The possessed part happened because the boys nanny was treated so poorly that she cursed the doll that she had made for the boy and it promptly began to wreak havoc on the household locking servants in closets and people even said they heard a second voice when the boy was alone playing with Robert. There so much more.. you've got to take the tour!!

Robert now resides full time at the Fort East Martello Museum close to the airport. This 1800's brick fortress showcases a glass box where Robert lives and greets visitors daily... from a safe distance. There's one famous rule when visiting Robert, don't take his picture without permission. Many have made the mistake of poo-pooing this single rule and regretted it. Every year letters are written to Robert asking for his forgiveness for taking his picture without permission highlighting the trauma that their life has undergone since being at the museum. Say what you will, but these people swear on their lives that Robert cursed them and beg for the curse to be lifted and profess desperate apology. I'm certainly not taking his picture without permission. Heck, maybe even with it.

The stories and legends of these island are many and colorful so Lez Go Out and feel those little hairs on the back of our necks stand up a bit while saying a gentle hello, to Robert The Doll. Who doesn't love a good ghost story... or a scorned woman who can cast a good curse.



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BEACH READS

LGBT Book Reviews by *Terri Schlichenmeyer*



"MAKE SURE YOU DIE SCREAMING" BY ZEE CARLSTROM

c.2025, Flatiron Books | \$26.99 | 224 pages



Sometimes, you just want to shut the door and forget what's on the other side.

You could just wipe it from your memory, like it didn't occur. Or create an alternate universe where bad things never happen to you and where, as in the new novel **"Make Sure You Die Screaming"** by Zee Carlstromn, you can pretend not to care.

Their mother called them "Holden," but they'd stopped using that name and they hadn't decided what to use now. What do you call an alcoholic, queer, pessimistic former ad executive who's also "The

World's First Honest White Man," although they no longer identify as a man? It's a conundrum that they'll have to figure out soon because a cop's been following them almost since they left Chicago with Yivi, their psychic new best friend.

Until yesterday, they'd been sleeping on a futon in some lady's basement, drinking whatever Yivi mixed, and trying not to think about Jenny. They killed Jenny, they're sure of it. And that's one reason why it's prudent to freak out about the cop.

The other reason is that the car they're driving was stolen from their ex-boyfriend who probably doesn't know it's gone yet.

This road trip wasn't exactly well-planned. Their mother called, saying they were needed in Arkansas to find their father, who'd gone missing

so, against their better judgment, they packed as much alcohol as Yivi could find and headed south. Their dad had always been unique, a cruel man, abusive, intractable; he suffered from PTSD, and probably another half-dozen acronyms, the doctors were never sure. They didn't want to find him, but their mother called...

It was probably for the best; Yivi claimed that a drug dealer was chasing her, and leaving Chicago seemed like a good thing.

They wanted a drink more than anything. Except maybe not more than they wanted to escape thoughts of their old life, of Jenny and her death. And the more miles that passed, the closer they came to the end of the road.

If you think there's a real possibility that "Make Sure You Die Screaming" might run off the rails a time or three, you're right. It's really out there, but not always in a bad way. Reading it, in fact, is like squatting down in a wet, stinky alley just after the trash collector has come: it's filthy, dank, and profanity-filled. Then again, it's also absurd and dark and philosophical, highly enjoyable but also satisfying and a little disturbing; Palahniuk-like but less metaphoric.

That's a stew that works and author Zee Carlstrom stirs it well, with characters who are sardonic and witty while fighting the feeling that they're unredeemable losers – which they're not, and that becomes obvious.

You'll see that all the way to one of the weirdest endings ever.

Readers who can withstand this book's utter confusion by remembering that chaos is half the point will enjoy taking the road trip inside "Make Sure You Die Screaming."

Just buckle up tight. Then shut the door, and read.

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MEET A QUEEN

Entertainer interviews by *Donald Deihl*



Introducing Donna Walker (She/ Her) aka Sasha Coxxx (She/ Her)! Sasha came to life in 2016 here in Key West at the legendary 801 Cabaret and has been performing under that name for the last 15 years with the Haus Of Sushii!

"My name comes from Sasha Fierce (Beyonce) and because I love Courtney Cox (lol)."

Sasha loves to perform and her go to artists include Beyonce (of course!), Britney Spears, Lady Gaga, and singing her own music live!

Speaking of performing her own music, Donna's latest album "Universe's Favorite Daughter" dropped on all streaming platforms on April 1st! Check it out!



What do you consider your biggest accomplishment as a performer?

"Performing for the Real House Wives of Orange County, appearing in the movie The Beach Bum with Jonah Hill, and also appearing in Tardy For The Party"

What's your catch phrase?

"Oh Geri!"

Have you held any titles during your time here in Key West?


"Miss Mardi Gras 2017 and Miss Pride 2017"


What is your favorite song to perform on the stage?

"The live version of Irreplaceable by Beyonce or one of my original songs."



MEET A QUEEN

 DonnaWalkerTV

 DonnaWalkerTV

 DonnaDTV



Your new album dropped recently. What sounds and influences went into the making of the record?

"A mixture of hip-hop, pop, and rock. I was influenced by Nicki Minaj, Doechii, Foxy Brown, Remy Ma, Lil Kim, Trina, and City Girls."

If you could have a dream remix for the album, who would you want to feature?

"Nicki Minaj and Lady Gaga produced by Timbaland."

Give me a song suggestion for someone who may have never heard you before.

"The first song people should listen to is Little Black Heart. It's about healing and loving on yourself."



Many artists say they learn a lot about themselves during the writing process. What would you say you learned about yourself?

"What I've learned about myself while making this album is to keep loving on me! Pour into my own cup before others. 'Lion's Mane' and 'Zodiac' are personal tracks to me because they were written during a dark time in my life I overcame."

Do you have any dedications for the album?

"I dedicate this album to the universe, my family, myself, and these ex's of mine I turned into lessons! Stay true to who you are. Don't allow people to dim your light and SHINE SHINE SHINE!"

Catch Sasha Coxxx performing nightly at the 801 Cabaret!

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MY BIG GAY LIFE

Brad Locke



When I travel around the country, I've noticed that more and more of the pharmacy chains (like CVS, Walgreens, etc.) have really taken their theft prevention tactics to an impossible level. Now, I didn't raise hell when they moved the Sudafed and such behind the pharmacy counter and starting making you show your license just to suppress a cough. I watched "Breaking Bad," I've driven through Northern Florida, I get it. And, I still wasn't complaining when they put the most expensive items (like men's razors and grooming supplies) in lock up. I've lived and worked in Hollywood long enough to know that the high-profile "products" always have extra security. Hair styling products are the Harry Styles of aisle 3. But, now, they've locked up everything but the Reese's peanut butter cups. And, I'm not entirely certain that they haven't locked those up because they know fat people (such as myself) will simply tip the whole aisle over whilst pawing at the plastic enclosure like a bear breaking into the fridge of an Airbnb.

I've accepted a lot about this final season of "America: The Never-ending Super-Sized Mini-Series." I accept the world for what it is, warts and wars and all, and know that the best most of us can hope for is to find exceptions to the rule of unjust laws. Or, to search for tips and tricks on how to trick Capitalism at its own game. So, I don't argue with CVS when they say from one side of their mouth, "we're a business and any amount of theft could bankrupt us." While, out of the other side of their mouth, they send me so many coupons and cash-off offers that, when I recently had a "grand total" of \$86 of items... I only paid \$29 once I entered my rewards number. You can't tell me a kid stealing lipstick is gonna sink your ship when you give me 80% off everything every time I come in.

But now you've gone and locked up the body wash like Johnson & Johnson exposed their Johnson at a playground. You can't even buy bar soap, like ye olde-school Irish Spring or Dial bar soap. The kind of soap only straight widowers in their 70s still buy. You can't pick that up without getting the pharmacy prison guards to unshackle it.

At this point, I think if CVS is going to put us through more security than TSA does, they too should have to create some sort of "Pre-Check" program. Because I have TSA Pre-Check AND Global Entry. Customs & Border Patrol have literally certified that I am a low-risk, responsible person. So, does CVS think I'm going to use the Flonase in a terrorist act?!

And even going there, as I do, in the middle of a "work" day to avoid the crowds, doesn't work. I was in the men's shaving section and it took 17 minutes (I know because I timed it) to find someone who could unlock the case. When the sweet, but exhausted, young man did so, he politely asked, "What do you need?" To which I replied, "Well, at this point I need to know if a Mach 3 can cut vertically because I feel like I've wasted half my life in this store."

To which he replied, "YOU feel like you wasted half your life here?! Wanna switch places?"

Touché, sir. Touché.

Brad Loekle's latest comedy special & album, "Brash Boys Club" is available on Amazon, AppleTV, iTunes, and other platforms. He was a semi-finalist on NBC's "Last Comic Standing". He can be seen every week on TruTV's "World's Dumbest", has written for Joan Rivers on E! "Fashion Police" & tours internationally. His book, "My Big Gay Life" is available on Amazon. For all this and more, check out: www.bradloekle.com

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- 2 **A&B** - 700 Front St
- 3 **Alexander's Guest House** - 1118 Fleming St
- 4 **Alonzo's** - 700 Front St
- 5 **Aqua** - 711 Duval St
- 6 **Back Bar** - 711 Duval St
- 7 **Belmare** - 700 Front St
- 8 **Big Cheezies** - 404 Southard St
- 9 **Birdcage Cabaret** - 504 Angela St
- 10 **Bourbon** - 724 Duval St
- 11 **Equator Resort** - 822 Fleming St
- 12 **Graffiti** - 721 Duval St
- 13 **In Touch With You** - 706A Duval St
- 14 **Island House** - 1129 Fleming St
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WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAY

801

Drag Shows at 9 PM and 11 PM

Aqua

*Aqua Idol at 6 PM
Drag Show at 9 PM*

Back Bar

Monday Night Football at 8 PM

Birdcage Cabaret

Pub Style Trivia at 6 PM

Bourbon

*Bria singing live at 8 PM
Dancers on the bar starting at 10 PM*



TUESDAY

801

Drag Shows at 9 PM and 11 PM

Aqua

Drag Show at 9 PM

Back Bar

Movie Night at 8 PM

Birdcage Cabaret

Cabaret Show at 8 PM

Bourbon

*Bria singing live at 8 PM
Dancers on the bar starting at 10 PM*

La Te Da

Randy Roberts Live at 9 PM

WEDNESDAY

801

Drag Shows at 9 PM and 11 PM

Aqua

Drag Shows at 7 PM and 9 PM

Back Bar

*Watson Wednesday at 3 PM
Service Industry Night at 6 PM*

Birdcage Cabaret

*René Breslin singing live at 5:30 PM
Western Wednesdays at 9 PM*

Bourbon

*Bria singing live at 8 PM
Dancers on the bar starting at 10 PM*

Island House

Hot Naked Pool Party starting at 5 PM

THURSDAY

801

Drag Shows at 9 PM and 11 PM

Aqua

Drag Shows at 7 PM and 9 PM

Birdcage Cabaret

Cabaret Show at 8 PM

Throwback Thursdays at 10 PM

Bourbon

Jeff Moss singing live at 8 PM

Dancers on the bar starting at 10 PM

La Te Da

Randy Roberts Live at 9 PM

FRIDAY

801

Drag Shows at 9 PM and 11 PM

Aqua

Happy Hour with Bria at 3 PM

Drag Shows at 7 PM and 9 PM

Karaoke at 11 PM

Back Bar

RuPaul Viewing Party at 8 PM

Birdcage Cabaret

Cabaret Show at 8 PM

Late Night Dance Party at 11 PM

Bourbon

Jeff Moss singing live at 8 PM

Dancers on the bar starting at 10 PM

Boys Night Out starting at 10 PM

Saloon 1

Cock Shock contest at Midnight

SATURDAY

801

Drag Shows at 5, 9, & 11 PM

Aqua

Live Singer at 1 PM

Drag Shows at 7 PM and 9 PM

Karaoke at 11 PM

Birdcage Cabaret

Cabaret Show at 8 PM

Dance Party at 10 PM

Bourbon

Naked Pool Party at Noon

Jeff Moss singing live at 8 PM

Dancers on the bar starting at 10 PM

La Te Da

Randy Roberts Live at 9 PM

SUNDAY

801

Karaoke starting at 4 PM

Drag Shows at 9 PM and 11 PM

Aqua

Drag Shows at 7 PM and 9 PM

Back Bar

Hot Dog Church at 3 PM

Sunday Night Football at 8 PM

Birdcage Cabaret

Kingdom at 7 PM

BirdDrop Open Mic Night at 8:30 PM

Bourbon

After Tea 7 PM - 10 PM

Jeff Moss singing live at 8 PM

Dancers on the bar starting at 10 PM

Island House

Hot Naked Pool Party starting at Noon

LOCATIONS

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Aqua - 711 Duval Street

Back Bar - 711 Duval Street

Birdcage - 504 Angela St

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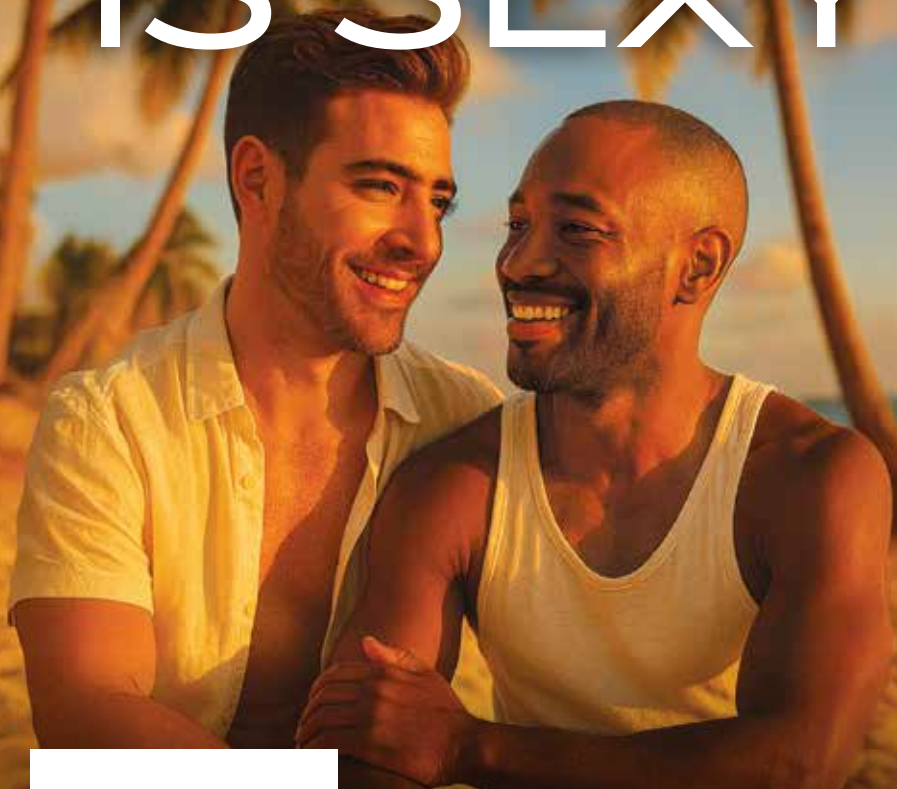
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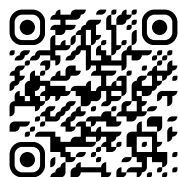
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Dear Nana,

My straight neighbors are really loud in bed. And, let's just say they have a very active sex life. It normally doesn't bother me, but sometimes I need to go to bed early for work and I'm suddenly woken up by the banging and moans from the other side of the wall. What can I do? Can I do anything? Do I have the right to say something to them?

Do you have the right to say something? Sure. You have the legal right to say whatever you want in this country. But does that mean you are "in the right" to say something to them? Probably not. Also, and I feel like we're living in times where we should all be reminded of this more often: when people say whatever the fuck they want to, they should expect a response. And depending on the size of the man next door, who is plowing his gal like she's a Vermont driveway, I'd be cautious about playing the role of the shushing librarian. Remember, it's not a hate crime to slap a sissy when she deserves it. If I were you, I'd just get some ear plugs or download the Calm app. Imagine if they came to you and said they don't want to hear you getting ham-slammed by your Grindr tricks after 9pm? You'd probably feel pretty targeted as a neighbor, right? Well, just because they're straight doesn't mean they don't have feelings too. Sure, they have fewer of them and farther apart... but they feel, none the less. So put a (butt) plug in it, Mary. You may be on the wrong side of the wall, but you're also on the wrong side of this argument.

Dear Nana,

I like trying new beauty and self-care tips and tricks. I find a lot of them on TikTok and Instagram. I've recently been trying the one that my favorite beauty influencer said is a beauty trick that women have been using for centuries: beef tallow as moisturizer. I tried a few commercially made ones that have beef tallow in them but then I thought I'd save money and be more effective by just buying tallow and using that. I have noticed that I sometimes have pimples more than I used to and if I used too much the smell isn't great. Is this really something people used "back in the day?" Or am I being scammed?

We'll start with the obvious: you're not only easily scammed; you are a snake oil salesman's wet dream. Are you really shocked that you're breaking out now that you're covering your face with the melted ass of a cow? This is Ren Faire nonsense at it's finest. Now, do animal and vegetable fats and oils have a place in beauty products? Sure. Italian and Greek nonas have been rubbing olive oil on their hands and lips and in their hair for centuries. But that's also because, for centuries, they were working with these ingredients all day, every day, to feed themselves and the whole village. How far back do you want to take your beauty regimen? During Queen Elizabeth I's time, people used to use ash to blacken their teeth because "black teeth" were all the rage. Get a grip... and get thee to a CVS to rejoin the modern world. Otherwise, when summer comes, your face is going to smell like BBQ ever time you go outside.

DO YOU HAVE PROBLEMS? OF COURSE YOU DO! WHY NOT LET NANA HELP YOU?!

Send your questions to: nana@keywestgayrag.com

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WHORE--SCOPES

AQUARIUS JAN 20 - FEB 18

You want the authority of a king with the accountability of a toddler.

PISCES FEB 19 - MAR 20

Drag queens have heels bigger than your dick.

ARIES MAR 21 - APR 19

When you walk into a room, everyone gets mood poisoning.

TAURUS APR 20 - MAY 20

If a headache was a person, it would be you.

GEMINI MAY 21 - JUN 20

When people tell you to be a bigger person, they didn't mean literally.

CANCER JUN 21 - JUL 22

It's great that you eat bananas but you should really chew them.

LEO JUL 23 - AUG 22

You're like a newspaper. There's a new issue every day.

VIRGO AUG 23 - SEP 22

You give people peace and serenity, when you leave the room.

LIBRA SEP 23 - OCT 22

If you plan on stripping, you better cut a coin slot in your G-string.

SCORPIO OCT 23 - NOV 21

Better delete your 23 and me profile before someone finds out you're 35% Oreos.

SAGITTARIUS NOV 22 - DEC 21

Of all the fat people I know, you're 3 of them.

CAPRICORN DEC 22 - JAN 19

If you're gonna point fingers, get a manicure.



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