

YOUR LGBTQIA+ GUIDE TO

Key West



Q MAGAZINE

Volume 20 Issue 6
June 2025


NINA
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WEST

ASK NANA



BRAD LOEKLE



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YOUR LGBTQIA+ GUIDE TO

Key West



Q MAGAZINE

Volume 20 - Issue 6

June 2025

Welcome To Key West Pride!

Our cover features Nina West (or as we call her, Nina Key West), Ru-Paul's "America's Sweetheart."

She'll be headlining the
Pride Street Fair on
Saturday, June 28 at
8:30PM and can be seen
Sunday, June 29 at The
Birdcage Cabaret at
9:00PM.

Enjoy!

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Stephanie Wise

LEZ
GO
OUT



P

Pride. My favorite definition of the word as found in the Oxford Dictionary is "Consciousness of one's own dignity." The idea that one is proud of themselves for what makes them who they are. Nothing about that is threatening or harmful to anyone, in any way. It is happiness. So, why does this word, this declaration of self-love incite so much hate and fear?

Pride started as a riot, a fight to simply exist and in 2025 the fight to be proud has reached a pinnacle of importance in the USA, as the political climate attempts to make the letters in our rainbow family cease to exist. They want to take their pride and make us hide again. So, this year it is essential that we be more proud and visible than ever before.

Our history is not widely taught. Even people in the LGBTQ community are lacking in education about our intense history and why Pride is actually important - hell, it's critical - so I'm going to hold a little class on why Pride is important here in Key West and in every single town around the world. Gather 'round all. It's story time.

Pride celebrations around the United States of America need us this year. They need us to show up in large numbers to show the world that we are still here and will not be stripped of our pride or right to exist. Pride is important because it fosters self-respect, identity, and community—especially for marginalized groups like us. For LGBTQ+ people, Pride is a celebration of visibility, dignity, and resistance against discrimination and oppression. It honors the struggles that led to greater rights and acceptance while promoting solidarity and ongoing advocacy for equality. Historically, Pride traces back to the Stonewall Riots of 1969 in New York City, a pivotal moment in the LGBTQ+ rights movement. After years of police raids and legal discrimination, the riots marked a shift toward open resistance and activism. In 1970, the first Pride marches were held to commemorate Stonewall, establishing Pride as both a celebration and a protest. Culturally, Pride events have grown into global expressions of LGBTQ+ identity, resilience, and unity. They challenge stigma by making queer lives visible and affirming. Pride also honors the diversity within the LGBTQ+ community—across races, genders, abilities, and more—and continues to push for rights where they're still denied and where they are being threatened or stripped away, even in 2025.

In the United States, Pride has played a crucial role in advancing LGBTQ+ rights and visibility, both socially and politically. Here are a few key examples:

1. Stonewall and the Birth of Pride (1969–1970)

After the police raid at the Stonewall Inn in NYC in June 1969, LGBTQ+ people fought back, sparking days of protest.

The following year, the first Pride marches were held in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, turning personal resistance into public activism.

These events helped transform a hidden, criminalized identity into a movement for civil rights.

2. AIDS Activism and Pride in the 1980s–1990s

During the AIDS crisis, Pride became a space for mourning, protest, and survival.

Groups like ACT UP used Pride events to demand government action and public awareness.

Pride helped destigmatize HIV/AIDS and mobilized a generation of LGBTQ+ activists.

3. Legal Milestones and Cultural Shifts

Pride has been a platform to rally around major political issues:

Repealing “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (2010)

Striking down the Defense of Marriage Act (2013)

Legalizing same-sex marriage nationwide (Obergefell v. Hodges, 2015)

These wins were supported by decades of visibility, organizing, and cultural normalization that Pride helped foster.

4. Modern Pride as Intersectional and Diverse

In recent years, many Pride events in the U.S. have grown more inclusive of trans people, people of color, immigrants, and disabled LGBTQ+ individuals.

Movements like Black Lives Matter have intersected with Pride to highlight racial justice within queer communities.

Pride in the U.S. is not just a celebration—it’s a living reflection of how LGBTQ+ rights have advanced through courage, protest, and unity, and a reminder of the work still ahead.

When I was 15 in the early 2000’s, I went to my first PrideFest in my hometown filled with gays and lesbians openly holding hands, laughing with one another, elder gays wearing matching rings and haircuts and being freely openly gay with no fear of harassment. It was the very first time I saw people like me just existing in a public place. It was freeing. I was empowered to be myself and the feelings of uncertainty and fear of isolation melted away. I was proud, for the very first time, to be who I was conscious of being. A young lesbian.

Key West has long been an LGBTQ safe haven, where we are celebrated; a critical feature woven into the fabric of the community, making it a destination for ALL people. We throw the parties that people travel from across the world to attend. We make the colors, music, plays, architecture, entertainment, local government and community based philanthropy thrive here on this beautiful island at the southernmost tip of the United States. We are proud to be who we are and no administration today, or any time, in the future can erase us. Show up to your Pride Celebrations and remind them who we are! We’re proud. We love boldly and openly what makes us who we are. Pride in Key West runs from June 22-29 with dozens of events all over the island that dazzle and delight. So Lez Go Out and be visible, loud, cause good trouble and show our Pride so loud that they desperately want to join our party, rather than fear it. See you in the parade. The Husbutch and I will be there to hold the flag with you, now and always. Proudly.



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AQUAPLEX

JUNE

JUNE 3

MICHAEL DEAN AS CHER
BIRDCAGE CABARET

JUNE 6/7

SUE NAMI JOINS AQUANETTES
AQUAPLEX

JUNE 8

MR&MISS AQUA ROYALTY PAGEANT
BIRDCAGE CABARET

JUNE 11/13/14/15

COCO MONTRESE OF RPDR W/ LAWANDA JACKSON
BIRDCAGE CABARET

JUNE 12/13/14

BITTER BETTY - BOULETTE BROS. DRAGULA
AQUAPLEX

FRIDAY JUNE 13

I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SLAY QUEEN
HORROR SHOW W/BEATRIX DIXIE
AQUAPLEX

JUNE 22

PRIDE OPENER "STILL RISING"
AQUAPLEX

JUNE 23

REAL MEN DO DRAG BENEFIT SHOW
AQUAPLEX

JUNE 24

TUTU TUESDAY HAPPY HOUR
AQUAPLEX

JUNE 25/26/27

HONEY DAVENPORT - RPDR
AQUAPLEX



LAWANDA JACKSON



COCO MONTRESE



NINA WEST



BITTER BETTY



MICHAEL DEAN



SUE NAMI



BEATRIX DIXIE



MISS BOUVÉE



JENNIFER MCCLAIN



HONEY DAVENPORT

JUNE 26

MISS BOUVÉE / PLEXXX
BIRDCAGE CABARET

JUNE 27

BOOZY BELTERS / PLEXXX
BIRDCAGE CABARET

JUNE 28

PRIDE MAINSTAGE W/ NINA WEST
PRIDE STAGE

JUNE 29

NINA WEST
BIRDCAGE CABARET



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CHRISTOPHER PETERSON
ROLLY VILLAVARDE
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BEACH READS

LGBT Book Reviews by *Terri Schlichenmeyer*



"WHEN THE HARVEST COMES" BY DENNE MICHELE NORRIS

c.2025, Random House | **\$28.00** | 304 pages



Happy is the bride the sun shines on.

Of all the cliches that exist about weddings, that's the one that seems to make you smile the most. Just invoking good weather and bright sunshine feels like a cosmic blessing on the newlyweds and their future. It's a happy omen for bride and groom or, as in the new book "When the Harvest Comes" by Denne Michele Norris, for groom and groom.

Davis Freeman never thought he could love or be loved like this.

He was wildly, wholeheartedly, mind-and-soul smitten with Everett Caldwell, and life was everything that Davis ever wanted. He was a successful symphony musician in New York. They had an apartment they enjoyed and friends they cherished. Now it was their wedding day, a day Davis had planned with the man he adored, the details almost down to the stitches in their attire. He'd even purchased a gorgeous wedding gown that he'd never risk wearing.

He knew that Everett's family loved him a lot, but Davis didn't dare tickle the fates with a white dress on their big day. Everett's dad, just like Davis's own father, had considerable reservations about his son marrying another man – although Everett's father seemed to have come to terms with his son's bisexuality. Davis's father, whom Davis called the Reverend, never would. Years ago, father and son had a falling-out that destroyed any chance of peace between Davis and his dad; in fact, the door slammed shut to any reconciliation.

But Davis tried not to think about that. Not on his wedding day. Not, unbeknownst to him, as the Reverend was rushing toward the wedding venue, uninvited but not unrepentant. Not when there was an accident and the Reverend was killed, miles away and during the nuptials.

Davis didn't know that, of course, as he was marrying the love of his life. Neither did Everett, who had familial problems of his own, including homophobic family members who tried (but failed) to pretend otherwise.

Happy is the groom the sun shines on. But when the storm comes, it can be impossible to remain sunny.

What can be said about "When the Harvest Comes"? It's a romance with a bit of ghost-pepper-like heat that's not there for the mere sake of titillation. It's filled with drama, intrigue, hate, characters you want to just slap, and some in bad need of a hug.

In short, this book is quite stunning.

Author Denne Michele Norris offers a love story that's everything you want in this genre, including partners you genuinely want to get to know, in situations that are real. This is done by putting readers inside the characters' minds, letting Davis and Everett themselves explain why they acted as they did, mistakes and all. Don't be surprised if you have to read the last few pages twice to best enjoy how things end. You won't be sorry.

If you want a complicated, boy-meets-boy, family-mess kind of book with occasional heat, "When the Harvest Comes" is your book. Truly, this novel shines.

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PRIDE

MONDAY
JUNE 23
8PM

'DIVE-IN' MOVIE NIGHT "BROS"

Join the boys of Island House for a clothing-optional "dive-in" screening of the movie **BROS** poolside! Prime Rib Dinner special from 5pm till it's gone!



WEDNESDAY
JUNE 25
5 - 8PM

A HARD GAY'S NIGHT

Nighttime naked pool party! After work, and before bed, comes Island House! \$20 donation benefits *Womankind*. Includes 3 free *Stoli* cocktails, gourmet appetizers and resort access until 4am.

Stoli



Womankind

FRIDAY
JUNE 27
12 - 5PM

SAUSAGE FEST POOL PARTY

The title says it all!



SUNDAY
JUNE 29
12 - 4PM

HOT NAKED SUNDAY POOL PARTY

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MY **BIG** GAY LIFE

Brad Locke



DEEP BREATHS

I know, for a lot of us, the dystopian bingo card for America is getting pretty dark and pretty wild. Eggs now cost more than OnlyFans subscriptions. Men in vans are just snatching adults off the streets. Adults! It used to just be children. With a promise of candy or a puppy in the back. And, that was horrible too. But so are children. And we had to thin the herd somehow?! (Oh, if you're offended by the cavalier way I treat children in my comedy, I look forward to you attaching your completed foster parent application to your email complaint for me.)

None of us thought these first 100 days of Mein Trumpf would be a cake walk, but you know what none of us saw coming?! RFK Jr. deciding that poppers were public enemy number one! And Double Scorpio poppers, no less?! They're easily in my top three domestically available poppers. I don't have time to fly to Berlin and smuggle a couple hundred bottles of poppers back here in my caboose! We need to make America Amyl Again!

I'm sorry to get so worked up, but what do they expect bottoms to do now?! Just stop having sex with very well-endowed tops? Is this a direct attack on the fisting community... who's to know?

And, I'm just going to say the quiet part out very loud. Every Kennedy since Rosemary has done poppers and been just fine. Well, she wasn't... but that surely wasn't the poppers. It's not like JFK had just leaned out the window of the car to do a big hit of Jungle Juice when BLAM! How on Earth, did RFK Jr. decide he needed to wage a war on our happiness? What the hell is that worm that's in his brain telling him?

Also, not for nothing, it's the height of hypocrisy that a man who looks and sounds like RFK Jr... is against poppers. Are you kidding me?! Look at that face, which can only be described as "medium-rare." And he claims that his voice, stuck in perpetual puberty, is some exotic condition? I call bullshit. At every press conference, that man looks and sounds like he's just had a poppers gas mask on for two hours straight while being suspended from a wall at DC Eagle.

Someone please go tell Cheryl Hines to curb her husband's enthusiasm for ruining a good, gay time. We all expected to get fucked by this current administration. But we were, also, really counting on the poppers to help us get through it.

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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OF NEW
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JUNE 26

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FRIDAY, ALL DAY

JUNE 27

POOL PARTY

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SATURDAY,

JUNE 28

NOON - 5PM

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PARTY!**

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SATURDAY, 10PM

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SUNDAY, 5PM

JUNE 29

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JULY 3-6

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ROLLINS



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MOSS



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YOUR LGBTQIA+ GUIDE TO

Key West



Q MAGAZINE

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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 **Birdcage Cabaret** - 504 Angela St
- 9 **Bourbon** - 724 Duval St
- 10 **Graffiti** - 721 Duval St
- 11 **In Touch With You** - 706A Duval St
- 12 **Island House** - 1129 Fleming St
- 13 **KW Gay & Lesbian Visitor Center** - 808 Duval St
- 14 **La Te Da** - 1125 Duval St
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PRIDE 2025

JUNE 22ND - 29TH

FOLLOW US



WEDNESDAY
JUNE 25TH
6PM - 9PM



MISS PRIDE 2025
PAGEANT



THURSDAY
JUNE 26TH
6PM - 9PM

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STARS OF KEY WEST

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FRIDAY
JUNE 27TH
9PM - 4AM



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WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAY

801

Drag Shows at 9 PM and 11 PM

Aqua

Trivia at 4 PM

Drag Show at 8:30 PM

Back Bar

Monday Night Football at 8 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 8:30 PM

Back Bar

Movie Night at 8 PM

Birdcage Cabaret

Cabaret Show at 7 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

Bingo at 6 PM

Drag Show at 8:30 PM

Back Bar

Watson Wednesday at 3 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 Show at 8:30 PM

Birdcage Cabaret

Cabaret Show at 7 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

SATURDAY

801

Drag Shows at 5, 9, & 11 PM

Aqua

Drag Shows at 8:30 PM

Karaoke at 11 PM

Birdcage Cabaret

Cabaret Show at 7 PM

PleXXX Naughty Dance 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

FRIDAY

801

Drag Shows at 9 PM and 11 PM

Aqua

Drag Show at 8:30 PM

Karaoke at 11 PM

Back Bar

RuPaul Viewing Party at 8 PM

Birdcage Cabaret

Cabaret Show at 8 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

SUNDAY

801

Karaoke starting at 4 PM

Drag Shows at 9 PM and 11 PM

Aqua

Drag Show at 8:30 PM

Back Bar

Hot Dog Church at 3 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

801 - 801 Duval Street

Aqua - 711 Duval Street

Back Bar - 711 Duval Street

Birdcage - 504 Angela St

Bourbon - 724 Duval Street

Island House - 1129 Fleming St

La Te Da - 1125 Duval St

Saloon 1 - 504 Petronia St

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ASK NANA

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Dear Nana,

Florida gets a little too humid for me in the dead of summer. How do you handle the humidity at your age?

Well, lets start with a hearty “kiss my knee-level tits” for that “at your age” addendum. You don’t see me commenting on your weight or height or anything else. Though, from your writing, you sound chubby and low to the ground. But we can agree that summer in Florida can be... a lot. At least in the Keys there is the chance for a breeze. (Damnit, I hate it when I rhyme. When women my age start rhyming, we suddenly wake up in a maximum-security nursing home!) But, even with a breeze, air-soup is air-soup. If you can afford to simply air condition your home to the level of a walk-in refrigerator, then congrats! But, for the rest of us, it’s just the age-old tricks of summer living. You should keep the shades down during the day, not just to keep out the heat but also because who wants to look outside anymore? Have you seen “outside” lately? It’s a mess! Put on an old Bette Davis movie and sit in a cool, dark place and wait for it to drop below 90 again. I also find hydrating helpful. Putting ice in your rosé is an excellent way to get your water, and your fruit all in one! I’m also a huge fan of being naked AT MY AGE in the heat. A wonderful thing happens when you make it past 80: you stop caring about what other people think all together. You just get to be you. A bunch of not-so-wonderful things happen too. For instance, I tripped on my vagina the other day. But I got a new hip out of it!

Dear Nana,

What your favorite place you've ever been in all your life?

I suppose this is where I should say, "Key West!" Though it is a place I adore, I do miss when Ernest used to get drunk and mad and try to shoot my cat for meowing at the moon. He never did get my cat, if you're wondering. He was an absolutely shitty shot... except for that ONE time. I'd like to think I haven't been to my favorite place on Earth yet. Because I try to keep going new places when I can. When I was younger, it was far off cities and lands that didn't yet have a McDonald's or a Starbucks. But, now, I try to find the joy in



discovering a new restaurant, a new drink, a new book... there are a lot of places one can explore even while sitting still in a chair in a cafe. But, also... bed. I'm an old woman and I absolutely love being in bed. I love it so much I even go there alone sometimes!

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

I don't know who told you to be yourself, but they were wrong.

PISCES FEB 19 - MAR 20

It's pride month and I've seen you naked. You have nothing to be proud of.

ARIES MAR 21 - APR 19

Summer is here. Time to shed those 10 pounds of winter weight.... and the 60 pounds from previous years.

TAURUS APR 20 - MAY 20

A good hat will protect your head from the sun, and hide that receding hairline.

GEMINI MAY 21 - JUN 20

Congratulations, your IQ test came back negative.

CANCER JUN 21 - JUL 22

No, the Keto diet does not mean you can eat 6 pounds of bacon a day.

LEO JUL 23 - AUG 22

Look in the mirror and you'll see you need to change... your hair, your diet, your personality.....

VIRGO AUG 23 - SEP 22

Go weigh yourself at the grocery store and see how many times that needle can spin around.

LIBRA SEP 23 - OCT 22

With all of that sputtering and noise, you got some bad gas.... and you don't even have a car!

SCORPIO OCT 23 - NOV 21

You must be dyslexic. Your Grindr profile says 6'5" and 193. More like 5'6" and 391!

SAGITTARIUS NOV 22 - DEC 21

After people meet you, they beg for amnesia.

CAPRICORN DEC 22 - JAN 19

You make quite an impression.... on your mattress, fat ass!



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