WEEKLY FREE

alibi

ILLUSTRATION BY MADELINE MACKENZIE

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Stay In Your Lane

Dear Editor,
We have had 10 crashes with ART buses in less than three weeks since the inception of the buses. [Editor’s note: The crash tally is now 11.] In each instance the driver who crashed into an ART bus was clearly at fault as evidenced by reports and videos. This is absolutely ridiculous on the part of the drivers who cause these 100-percent avoidable accidents. We have had the designated ART bus lanes for more than a year although the service started only on Nov. 30, 2019. Don’t you think that would have been enough time for drivers to understand that they should stay out of the designated bus lanes? Are these drivers dumb enough to think that they can overpower a multi-ton ART bus? I don’t think the police should wait until Jan. 1 to start ticketing and fining these offenders. They should start the process now. I also believe that, in addition to any charges brought against the offending drivers, they should also be held liable for the damage caused to the ART buses as a result of the collisions they caused.

Srimi Visan PhD, LCSW (retired), UNM

Feedback Your Head

Dear Editor,
Can we not see it?
Opinionated news befouls all citizens, twisting reality with “facts” that are not facts. The tortured logic is presented as gospel truth in emotional messages that destroy our confidence in each other and the institutions our fathers, their fathers and their fathers before them built to protect us from such abuse.

Studies have shown that opinionated news, both liberal and conservative, is saturated with inaccuracies and blatant falsehoods. That, coupled with the fact that 80 percent of the news we give to support candidates is no longer used to support them but [instead] to trash opponents, eats at the heart of The People’s ability to self-govern.

If there is no difference between fact and fiction, there can be no democracy. But 2 + 2 does = 4 and we know it, so why behave like monkeys on a rope?
We are organized and managed through every dollar spent on messaging that moves us emotionally instead of intellectually.

We are learning to hate each other. How could we, in the birthplace of democracy and freedom, be so willingly led to the slaughter by such shameless political preaching when the remedy sits right before us, patiently waiting to hear us say “enough” and begin to fight back?
It does not have to be this way—and cannot be this way if our experiment in self-governance is to continue its success!

At votesmart.org, the tools are there for The People to regain control and take charge. It is right there in front of us all, reality is there for the taking by anyone with the will. Both the technology and the data exist to put reality back in play.

Every essential fact about candidates for the presidency, the Congress, governorships and even state legislatures can be captured: every biographical detail, every public record, every vote, every issue position stated, every public statement and even every independent review by every conceivable special interest is gathered and easily searchable by any citizen.

We only need the will to be the boss, use the technology currently available and make the facts easily available to any citizen, right-wing or left.

We are the employers and our job is simply to do what was intended: Ignore the self-serving nonsense and take charge, just the way anyone would hiring for any lesser position than those applying to run our lives.  

Richard Kimball
Vote Smart President

Letters should be sent with the writer’s name, address and daytime phone number via email to letters@alibi.com. They can also be faxed to (505) 346-0660. Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and may be published in any medium; we regret that owing to the volume of correspondence we cannot reply to every letter. Word count limit for letters is 300 words.
Dateline: New Jersey

A family received a special holiday note this year that criticized their Christmas lights display for not being festive enough. Courier Post reports that the Beatty family found the note on their front doorstep on Christmas Eve. The note carried a header proclaiming the “2019 S&V Awards.” The note said it was evaluating the family’s “Christmas efforts” and was signed by the “S&V Panel.” It is unclear what the abbreviation stands for. “To review,” they wrote, “you have received this notice because of Christmas Violation(s) committed against the S&V Panel.”

According to the writers, the Beattys were being chastised for their “lack of neat, organized and/or classy Christmas lighting and for displaying “light shows, projectors, star lights and/or any other fake and lazy Christmas decorations.” The family was instructed to “reflect on your flaws this offseason and correct them for next year.”

Along with the note, a box of white lights had also been left by the panel. “It was the rudest and most ignorant award from my neighbors,” said Angela Beatty. “I’ve had an awful year, so getting this letter hit a nerve.” She said the family was recently involved in a car accident, suffered the loss of a pet and has been caring for an ailing relative. Beatty said she was too depressed to decorate this year.

Dateline: Spain

A Spanish TV reporter quit her job live on air after mistakenly thinking she’d won a lottery jackpot. According to My News, Natalia Escudero, a reporter for public broadcaster RTVE in Spain, screamed and jumped up and down while on live television after she was announced the winner of the Spanish lottery. “I’m not coming to work tomorrow!” she repeatedly yelled into the camera. The Spanish lottery is one of the largest in the world. This year’s total prize pot equaled €2.24 billion. Escudero’s celebrating was cut short, however, when she realized that she hadn’t won the entire jackpot. A number of other winners were also announced, and it was revealed that she had only won about €5,000 ($5,539). Escudero apologized for her initial reaction on Twitter. She said she hadn’t meant to mislead viewers and that she’d been going through a “difficult” time. It’s unclear if she is still employed at RTVE.

Dateline: United Kingdom

A British company has developed slanted toilets to discourage workers from taking long restroom breaks. According to The Guardian, startup company StandardToilet estimates that nearly £4 billion is lost every year in England due to employees using the restroom. The company is now offering a toilet seat that forces users to sit at a 13 degree angle—the optimal angle to cause discomfort without also causing lasting pain. According to Standard Toilet, employees spend an average of 10 minutes on the toilet every day. They claim that their product can reduce that time by 25 percent. The toilets cost £150 to £500 ($196 to $654).

Compiled by Joshua Lee. Email your weird news to josh@alibi.com.
Las Vegas Mayor Charged

New Mexico’s attorney general has charged the mayor of a troubled city with six felony bribery and abuse of power counts following an investigation that began in 2018.

Las Vegas Optic reports that Las Vegas Mayor Tonita Gurule-Giron is accused of bid-rigging, fraud and abuse of power. Last year, the attorney general’s office raided Gurule-Giron’s home, city hall and the home of Marvin Salazar, the owner of Gemini Construction.

Police said Salazar was Gurule-Giron’s boyfriend and accused the pair of conspiring to rig city bids in favor of Salazar’s company.

The mayor allegedly used her position to award a hardwood flooring contract to Gemini Construction in 2016 even though it had been underbid by Price’s Furnishings. A note was reportedly written at the bottom of the bid, claiming that Price’s did not do hardwood flooring.

Gurule-Giron was also accused of asking the former public works manager for Las Vegas to reveal the cost of a construction project before the bid had been awarded—presumably to gain an advantage in bidding. When she was told that it would violate the procurement code, she reportedly responded: “I am the chief operating executive officer of the city, and I was elected to know everything.”

She also made a $10,000 emergency purchase order for a water leak that City Hall officials say was unnecessary.

An arraignment for Gurule-Giron is scheduled in the courtroom of Abigail Aragon at 9 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 6, 2020.

NM Gas Co. Proposes Rate Hike

Last week, the New Mexico Gas Company filed a rate increase request with the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission that would add up to a 4.2 percent gas bill increase.

According to the Santa Fe New Mexican, the proposal would raise the average 50-therm monthly residential bill would increase about $1.71 if the proposed $13.23 million rate increase is approved by the PRC. An increase in the residential customer access fee from $11.65 to $12.70 was also proposed.

The gas company is reportedly requesting the rate increase to cover capital investments from September 2017 through 2021, including a new $50 million mainline from Bernalillo to Santa Fe, the purchase of an $11.2 million headquarters building and constructing a $15 million pipeline south of Carlsbad.

A PRC decision is expected by next fall with implementation in 2021.

Gladstone Wind Farm Leased

An Illinois-based company that develops wind farms won a bid for thousands of acres of New Mexico state trust land.

The Associated Press reports that potential bidders for the 7,636 acres of state land were given weeks to apply with a November deadline. PNE USA Inc. won the bid, and the lease was approved and signed by Land Commissioner Stephanie Garcia Richard last week.

The lease is expected to be worth $18.6 million in rental payments to the state over 20 years, with an option to extend the lease for another 10 years. The company plans to build two wind farms on the property.

Crime

Crime in this city is bad but it’s been worse and it is getting better. The city police in this city were on the wrong track, thanks to former Mayor Berry and insider culture police chief Gorden Eden. No doubt about it though: The previous chief, a Marty Chavez appointee named Ray Schultz, contributed massively to the problem as well. When Schultz unceremoniously left the force in 2005—just as attention from the DOJ grew to workable proportions—Mayor Berry told the press that the chief wasn’t really “running away.”

That situation has been somewhat ameliorated—not only by a Department of Justice investigation and settlement agreement but by the election of a progressive municipal government intent on raising officer numbers and reinstituting community policing—while recognizing the importance of a respected police force and working on the underlying problems that cause crime.

Blaming the mayor for a problem that he inherited—and making his reelection in two years contingent on solving that deeply rooted issue—is a position that can only be adhered to while the important historical facts are withheld.

The New DOJ

Though we are in agreement that lowering the crime rate in Burque is a priority that must continue to be addressed—possibly for the next decade—we are duly concerned about US Attorney General William P. Barr’s recent entrada into the foray.

Barr recently spoke at a press conference here and sent one of his agents here a couple weeks ago for yet another press conference. Barr characterized our city’s crime problem as “stubbornly high.” He also said the local police force was “very weak,” borrowing liberally from Trump’s palette to paint this town in near-apocalyptic tones.

Neither representatives from the Keller administration or the city police were available for what was essentially a photo op advertising what amounts to a heavier federal, state and county law enforcement presence in the city and county. At the time and even now, it’s not clear if the City of Albuquerque has or will coordinate community policing efforts with the aforementioned agencies. It’s also important to note that such draconian responses to crime have had, at best, mixed results (see data on the past summer’s deployment of state cops here in Burque).

Okay. During the State Police surge of May 2019, many citizens complained that traffic stops and police conduct were not being handled properly. Citizens with medical marijuana cards were arrested for possession, racial profiling accusations arose in the International District and so on and so forth. Afterward, data showed that 52 percent of the criminal cases generated by the increased patrols have now been dismissed.

Most importantly, we must reiterate that all this is coming down from an attorney general who many see as a puppet of Trump. Playing to the base fears of his base in a city already fully fearful of crime is boilerplate Trump. It is possible that this political theater is well-timed agitprop.

Finding Solutions

And now for the criticism. First, the Keller administration should continue to promote community policing as it quickly builds the ranks of new and highly trained patrol officers. These two efforts, in tandem, may signal to the feds that our city is serious about crime.

The city should work with federal, state and county law enforcement to guarantee that non-local agencies are following the reforms instituted by—wait for it—the US Department of Justice itself. You know, simple stuff like not engaging in high-speed chases on city streets crowded with innocent citizens. Of course that also includes making certain that all local and county officers are outfitted with lapel cameras.

Law enforcement should be a community-positive, readily recognizable, mutually coordinated series of events. It should be fair and not seem like a form of punishment to be meted out to a community desperate to be absolved of the damage done by the cumulative effects of poor governance. It should not be an opportunity for political grandstanding, especially for those who are beholden to Trump or are potential political opponents of the current municipal administration.

Believe us when we say that us citizens would appreciate that, Mr. Mayor. Oh, and, rock on while you’re at it.
White Sands Forever
A monument becomes a park

You may now use the phrase White Sands National Park to refer to a relatively small and totally awesome portion of the stark desert landscape south of here.

As of Dec. 20, White Sands National Monument has a new name and a new function. It’s a national park now, nestled within the expansive and forbidding Tularosa Basin in Southern New Mexico where the United States Department of Defense has established the US Army’s White Sands Missile Range and Holloman Air Force Base, places as remote and formidable as any in The Land of Enchantment.

The redesignation of this bit of federal land offers better outdoor recreation opportunities for New Mexicans and visitors to our state who want to experience one of the the Earth’s true geologic treasures. It also provides for more environmental protection and stewardship of the area—preventing some oil and gas exploration within its boundaries, for example—which was unavailable under its previous “monument” designation.

The new designation also came with a land swap between the National Park Service and the Department of the Army which will allow both parties better access to the area as well as the chance to improve cross-departmental relationships and citizen outreach, too.

The Law
Last week, Weekly Alibi sat in on a press call with US Senator Martin Heinrich and US Representative Xochitl Torres Small. They were on the phone to talk about the new national park and the effects it will have on the citizens of The Land of Enchantment.

In brief, the new designation comes as part of the ratification of the Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 (S. 1790). This legislation contained many amendments, 648 to be exact. Some made it and some didn’t. For instance, Senators couldn’t agree on US Senator Tom Udall’s amendment concerning use of force in Iran and so that provision didn’t make it into law.

On the other hand, US Senator Martin Heinrich’s amendment, calling for the redesignation of White Sands National Monument as a National Park—and related matters—did make it into the final version of $1,790, which President Trump signed into law two weeks ago.

But before we get into the nuts and bolts of that good old governance thing, here’s a brief look at an area of the state—and in particular, a National Park—that should be essential visiting for New Mexicans, one and all.

The Sands of Time
• Those white sand dunes, all 275 square miles of them, are made of pure gypsum crystals. That field of gypsum is the largest of its kind on Earth and the National Park only covers the southern tip of the entire white field. The area was not explored by Europeans until the middle of the 19th century.
• The town of Alamogordo—or “fat cottonwood” in Spanish—is nearby. In the 1930s a businessman from the New Mexico town that now sports a giant pistachio on the road between Downtown and Tularosa convinced the federal government to make that land into a monument under the US Antiquities Act.
• The new national park is still surrounded by some of the mightiest military operations in the nation; White Sands Missile Range and Holloman Air Force Base are significant contributors to our state’s economy. In early July 1945, the Feds claimed the area surrounding the monument as White Sands Proving Ground. In the hot middle of that same July, just a week later—at the northern edge of the proving grounds—the first atomic device was detonated. If you plan your trip right, you can experience both sites—The Trinity Site and White Sands National Park—on the same day.
• The park is amazingly beautiful, starkly bright during the day and filled with rare creatures and geologic formations and, yes, it’s sometimes dangerous. In summertime, the lack of shade and the reflection of the gypsum crystals in the New Mexico sunlight can be deadly. A French couple died while hiking the Alkali Flat Trail in August 2015; even more recently, a German tourist died in June while trying to traverse the same naturally sublime yet unforgiving environment.

The Call
The call heralding the change in status for one of our state’s great legacies took place on the day the legislation was presented to the executive branch. Since the White Sands Measure was included in a very important funding bill, everyone present was confident that the whole scheme would be signed into law the following day. It was and by way of documentation and debriefing, here is what our New Mexico delegation had to say about a long overdue change to our environmental culture.

Due to technical difficulties Weekly Alibi didn’t jump on the line until 2 minutes into the press conference. US Senator Martin Heinrich was already waxing poetic about this important legislative and environmental victory, telling those on the line about the potential economic benefits the state will reap because of the redesignation.

“Increased visitation at White Sands National Park would certainly also be a major boost for the local economy in places like Alamogordo, Otero County broadly and all of Southern New Mexico. In fact a recent study by Headwaters Economics found that making White Sands a national park could potentially attract as many as 100,000 additional visitors per year and contribute as much as $7.5 million in additional tourism spending in the area. We will certainly be working hard with our partners at the state and local level to realize those numbers.”

The Park is already managed by the federal government. The United States Park Service oversees the administration of both National Parks and Monuments across the United States. Heinrich reiterated, signaling that the present upkeep and management of White Sands will not be disrupted by the change and, in fact, will make for easier citizen engagement, including “resource protection, education and visitor services.”

Besides providing citizens and visitors with the rare opportunity to experience and recreate with nature in all its vast and terrifying glory, Heinrich told reporters that the site has deeper meaning, too. “White Sands also holds world-renowned geologically, biologically and historically significant resources. We now know that there is evidence that humans have lived there, around this dune field, as far back as 11,700 years ago. Scientists also discover new species of animals and plants at White Sands every single year, many of which are unique to the local ecosystem.”

The reason Heinrich says the measure was passed through the ratification of this year’s Defense Authorization Bill has to do with the military units surrounding the National Park. They’ll find their mission accessibility and manifestations enhanced because of the new law, the Senator added.

“Existing agreements that protect the military’s use of critical airspace and testing grounds near White Sands Missile Range, Holloman Air Force Base and Fort Bliss will remain in place.”

Heinrich’s amendment to the Defense Authorization Act also included a land exchange between the US Army and the National Park Service. Negotiations on that exchange have been ongoing since the 1970s, Heinrich reminded listeners, before describing his solution to the issue. He called the land exchange a win-win for both parties as it will give the military “new capabilities at the range, simplify management [of the area], [and] ensure certain resources are better protected while providing new opportunities for visitors to the Park.”

Heinrich concluded by pointing to his success on the matter of White Sands as part of his work with US Representative Xochitl Torres Small, who sponsored the House version of the White Sands Amendment. He said her commitment, in league with the sustained efforts of local community leaders like Alamogordo Mayor Richard Boss and Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce Director Carrie Hamblin, ensured that the move to make White Sands a National Park would succeed this year.

Congresswoman Torres Small was no less affirmative in her remarks to the press, referring to White Sands National Park as a “national treasure” and recalling recent data that determined that, for the past few years, White Sands has had more visitors than any other NPS-administered site in New Mexico, with about 500,000 entrants per year. In 2017, those entrants spent over $30 million in the surrounding towns and cities and 98 percent of them were non-local, she added.

Torres Small’s most important statement—and indeed the overarching theme of the movement to make White Sands a park—came near the end of her time at the microphone, when she said, “This is how we can grow and continue to support our state’s economy through conservation.”

JANUARY 2-8, 2020 WEEKLY ALIBI [7]
Head First into 2020
An interview with Judson Frondorf

Judson Frondorf is something of a reluctant sage. That is to say that it is not a role he has sought, but as we enter what will undoubtedly be a turbulent new decade, he has a grounding perspective that reminds us of what making art can be about. Prolific in what was once seen as underground art in the ’80s and ’90s, Frondorf stepped back for a while, placing his artistic life in a part-time role. Now retired from a job at APS, he is back at it full time with renewed passion and a part in a group show opening this Friday at Matrix Fine Art in Nob Hill. Weekly Alibi sat down with Frondorf to talk about what’s old, what’s new and what he has in store for his new show. The following is an edited version of that conversation.

You’ve been around a while. What’s new?
Judson Frondorf: Albuquerque is consistently interesting and always has been. I’ve never been bored here. Whether it’s some kind of little political issue or some interesting art opening or good bands coming to town. I wish there were more venues. I wish there’d be more experimental underground stuff going on. There was a lot more of that going on in the ’80s and ’90s. Now I might, because of my age, be out of touch with what university students are doing, but perusing the galleries and calendars and the Alibi for free while watching Texans and New Yorkers reach for their wallets. For more information on this free, all-ages event, see iaia.edu/mocna.

The matching question would be what’s old?
What’s old is the politics of art and art galleries. There seems to be a kind of stature or levels of people that get any kind of notice or shows. It was hard for us to get this show at the Matrix. We’re not landscape artists. We’re not portrait artists per se. We’re not that kind of sellable stuff. It’s got kind of a heritage stain over it where they just want it to be. Territorial looking adobe pottery because that makes money and that sells and you can put it in a gift shop. The politics of the gallery world in New Mexico is old. I wish it would get younger.

What don’t the kids get these days?
In school they don’t get a liberal arts education. The art departments in high schools have to really fight for everything they want. The concept of liberal arts is seen to be a waste of time, at least by the upper echelons in New Mexico education. The kids are missing out on a broad, deep education because it’s so much about college prep these days. It’s a shame.

Freedom’s just another word for nothing left to lose?
It’s true.
Tell me about the show.
It’s 10 artists. The name of the show is 100 Fingers.
Everybody’s kept all their digits over the years?

Otherwise it would have been 99 Fingers. I’ve clipped my thumb several times on a circular saw, but I still got it. Most of us, not all of us, but most of us met in the late ‘80s. Some of us were in art school. Some of us were just part of what we called the underground arts scene here: comic artists, zine artists, musicians, performance artists. Mark Woody, who put all this stuff together, said, let’s do a show based on the premise of collaborative paintings as a problem, as a project. So, 10 artists did six collaborative paintings with two or more artists (working) on each painting. We’re all putting in an individual work (as well). I was given a canvas with three rough grids. I picked whatever grid I wanted, did whatever image I wanted to do. There was no theme in terms of content. I did my little illustration and then I gave it to the second artist. They either used what I put in there as an inspiration or they ignored it completely. If you’re the third person, you (are) going to either make it a cohesive whole or completely absent from whatever that content is. In the end, it is pretty interesting.

It’s like that campfire story game. Or what we called exquisite corpse.
In 1969, the fledgling Albuquerque Museum hired photographer Walter McDonald to take pictures of Albuquerque. The idea was simply to photograph the people and the place in the candid style of a street photographer to create an archive that could be displayed with slide projectors within an exhibit at the museum (then located at the Sunport). It was a plum assignment for a photographer with broad parameters and a small budget. It was the kind of photography assignment that inadvertently documents while not being actual documentary photography. The project eventually included a few other photographers and continued until 1972 when it was apparently caught in the undertow of the museum politics of the time. Such is the fate of many a good idea.

What we (the people of Albuquerque) get out of the deal 50 years later is an archive of several thousand slides that make up this body of work. They are full of life in a bustling, colorful time in our history. Incorporated into an exhibit that includes maps, clothing and other pieces from the museum’s archive, they tell a story about who we were. Fifty years later, and well into the 21st century, we are a very different people inhabiting a changed city. Or maybe we are aren’t. That is the great thing about this archive; it is an opportunity to have that debate (with pictures to bolster your case) and that is where the fun really starts.

Albuquerque Museum is putting these photographs online and they want the public to help figure out who is in them. You can go to albuquerque.emuseum.com and look through the ever-expanding collection. Browse through with your abuela (or uncle, mom or really old neighbor), learn a bit about what life was like 50 years ago and see if you see someone you know. If you do, let the museum know with an email (to abqmuseum@cabq.gov). They are hoping to put names with faces. It is a declarative opportunity to be part of our collective history: an opportunity that people 50 years ago didn’t even know they had.
**Weekly Specials**

**BY DAN PENNINGTON**

**New Year, Existential Me?**

“New Year, new me!” seemingly every #basicb on Instagram will be posting next week. Maybe that’s true. Who are we if not continually evolving creatures, our cells shifting and re-growing on a perpetual basis? Is the “me” of one minute ago the same “me” in this current moment? Physically and mentally, we are constantly exposed to change, as uncomfortable as it may be. We look to the new year to change ourselves, as if a specific date in the never-ending march of time can be the ignition for a fire that burns away the bad, leaving only the good. These are the questions, the theories and the ideas I leave you to ponder whilst hunting out new events and planning out your week ahead. Be the new you! If you aren’t already, that is.

**Ketogenic, Not Generic**

The new year means you’re digging out all your past weight loss goals, giving it another shot this year. Maybe that diet is keto, the buzzword of 2019. Yes, it may be the only diet that requires you to eat bacon, but it comes at the cost of drinking beer or having any sweets. Unless, of course, you attend O’s Cakes and Sweets Boutique (2720 Central Ave. SE Ste. D) Keto Desserts 101 Class on Sunday, Jan. 5. Starting at noon, this $45 class will provide you with not only recipes and knowledge, but also your very own handmade keto-compliant dessert to try. It’s a great way to start your new year by treating yourself to the best part of eating in a way that is compatible with your diet, so to reserve your spot or learn more, visit qcakes.com.

**Binging On Beets**

Maybe you’re taking your diet in the other direction, one of plant-based health and concern. The documentaries have swayed you to the side of veganism, and you’re excited to live a life of guilt-free eating. We’ve got some good news for you! Vulture Forrow Brewing Co. (608 McKnight Ave. NW) will be holding their Plant Based Junk Food event on Saturday, Jan. 4, from noon to 6pm. All the way from the mystical lands of Los Angeles, home of the incredibly healthy, they’ll be bringing their special pop-up shop with a variety of Vegan Crispy Chik’n Sandwiches, Loaded Fries and a very special menu item to be revealed the day of! For more information, call 247-9800 and ask about the pop-up!

**Sweet Treats, Good Eats**

Maybe you said, “To hell with the diet! This is the year I just do me, and me feels like eating sweets all the time!” First off, good on you for making my childhood dream reality. Secondly, may I recommend the Mochi Making New Years Celebration taking place at Japanese Kitchen Sushi Bar (6511 Americas Pkwy. NE) on Saturday, Jan. 4? From noon to 2:30pm, you’ll be part of the sweet elite, learning the traditional art of mochi making, an event that will feature live mochi making, free samples of fresh-made mochi and Japanese Taiko drumming demonstrations from NM Taiko! But all of this is a free event, so you have to do is show up, and you’re in the middle of the action! For more information, call 972-1166 to ask about the event!

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**FOOD | REVIEW**

**by Dan Pennington**

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**Egg and I No More**

**Sunnyside Up inhabits local scene, breaks corporate ties**

It’s no surprise to most people that I earnestly love breakfast. It does present a conundrum though, as I refuse to wake up even a minute earlier than I absolutely must. Even more so, keeping the eye open for new local places to try always presents a tough quest, one of delicately balancing free time, money, open-mindedness and hoping that they aren’t so busy that you end up waiting far too long to get down to munching. Of all these places, one had always caught my eye, out of interest alone. The Egg and I has sat in its home in the Heights for many years now, but inexplicably one day, it was gone and in its place sat Sunnyside Up. A brief look at their website confirmed that they are now their own, local entity, which made them ripe for me to swing by and finally do a review.

What I noticed when I walked in was that it was incredibly busy for a Friday morning at 10am. We’re talking about full-on wait time for a seat, though it was a remarkably short wait (under 3 minutes, I would estimate) all things considered. The point is, few breakfast spots in the city have this level of business on good days so it’s shocking to see on a weekday this late in the breakfast hours. The other thing I noticed was how friendly it was. Maybe it’s just the nature of breakfast in general, but everyone was talking with each other, staff was smiling and chatting with tables even in the midst of busy chaos, and it just felt warm and happy to be in there.

Before I go on, I want to resolve the unspoken question in the room. From my inside source, Amy, who was such a genuine and kind waitress that I would go so far as to recommend you ask for her next time you’re in, ownership of the location went to the local franchise owners as the corporate office declined to come in and add updates to this location compared to the rest of the country. What this means is that now, Sunnyside Up has flexibility and control over every decision they make. They are welcomed into the arms of the city as a local business now, and free to do as they please. Okay, back to the food.

I did their Classic Eggs Benedict ($9.99), the Mexican Skillet ($9.99) and on Amy’s recommendation, the Strawberry Banana Waffle ($10.29). Let’s start with the waffle, because my sweet tooth won out over my savory tooth. A golden Belgian waffle topped with berries, bananas, toasted walnuts, whipped cream and powdered sugar galore, it invoked the childlike joy of that magical fruit combo, along with the cheer down into a sweet and gooey mess. The fruit is clearly fresh cut with no strange frills added, allowing it to be good on the merit of its own existence. With a side of butter and a container of syrup, you’ve got a huge plate that is a childhood dream come true.

The Mexican Skillet was next, with chorizo, refried beans, green chile, tomatoes, onions, ranch potatoes, pepper jack cheese, two eggs, your choice of red or green (or Christmas in my case) and a tortilla. The serving dish it came in was overflowing when it got to me, a molten eruption of different flavors and ingredients with two massive over-medium eggs on top. I quickly shredded the eggs and gave it a good mix, letting everything coalesce into a solitary bowl of happiness. It had the heat I craved, both on the spicy side and the temperature side. Additionally, the chorizo was wonderful and had a bit of a peppery kick to it that added to the flavors in the rest of the dish. The onions still had good crispiness to them, letting the rest of the food have a little more substance and not feeling like one big gooey pile. This was a solid skillet I was disappointed to finish eating.

Finally, I took on the Classic Eggs Benedict. Yes, they do more creative ones with different ingredients, but when you get down to it, there’s a reason classic eggs Benny is still king, and it’s because it’s an unbeatable combination. Two poached eggs on ham atop an English muffin, all topped with a creamy Hollandaise and herbs. It was that creamy, rich, buttery and dreamy Hollandaise sauce that made the dish pop. Yes, the ham was good, and the eggs were cooked correctly, but that sauce. It’s one of those few things in life that are very easy to do wrong and incredibly hard to get just right, yet here, they’ve got it down to near-science. It’s a genuinely amazing breakfast classic, and Sunnyside Up does it genuinely well.

It’s not terribly common to see a national chain convert to local, though arguably it’s not terribly common for that to happen in the opposite direction either. But it does provide an interesting point to look at. The shift happened in September of last year, so we’re officially at a point where they’ve been entirely on their own for nearly 4 months. What will the future bring for them a year from now? Five years? For now, they’ve proved they know what they’re doing and don’t need some big corporate board to help them. They’re one of us now, and we should be thankful that the Heights has more breakfast options to choose from.

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**What was that saying about your eyes being bigger than your stomach?**

**DAN PENNINGTON**

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**Sunnyside Up**

6909 Menaul Blvd. NE
888-3447
sunnysideupabq.com
Hours: Mon-Fri: 6am-2:30pm
Sat-Sun: 7am-2:30pm
Vibe: Friendly breakfast and lunch diner
Alibi Recommends: Any Eggs Benedict on the menu.

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*BY DAN PENNINGTON*
People often ask me how I come up with things to write on a week-to-week basis. Two thousand words is nothing to scoff at, and thinking back to college, it was earnestly a struggle to pull off twice a semester. When it comes to writing for work though, especially in relation to something that is a passion of mine, the words come naturally. You begin to find that when you’re allowed to break the structure of general format papers with expectations of ideas and analysis, you find pages easier to pump out. Add to it that *Weekly Alibi* allows me a lot of freedom in what I write as long as it’s food related and local, and all of the sudden, you get the recipe for success in the form of earnestly fun writing.

Last week, we looked at all the food section had done in the past year, and we touched upon the future a bit, but I wanted to circle back to that idea a little more. Last year, I was finding my footing. Creating a space for us all to exist wherein we had a general idea of the food section and what to expect when reading it. This year, I want to carry that on to the next level.

First off, expect more pieces like “Donut Run.” We tend to pass over reviewing places with narrow menus because it’s a struggle to get enough content out of them, but creating something unique with it allows us more room to do interesting coverage. Secondly, it’s time for Albuquerque’s rebirth. It’s no surprise to anyone that the last 3 to 4 years has been difficult on the city, and projects like ART took a toll on a lot of businesses. But, as any gardener will tell you, sometimes you have to remove the old to make space for the new. What we’re seeing now is a total revitalization of Nob Hill, with new shops popping up everywhere, those empty spaces finally getting the attention they deserve and beginning to expand and build out now. This brings me to my main goal this year.

I want to focus on the city and how we’re going to grow. Look, I’ll be the first to say I was against ART since day one, and in many ways, I still have issues with it on certain levels. But, I also have gone and used it now, and it’s earnestly great! Yes, it’s new and has a perception problem to move past, but at the end of the day, it’s super fun and really useful. No longer will I fear my car getting ticketed in Nob Hill ever again! This year, we’re going to talk about Albuquerque growing to be its best self. This comes with a caveat.

You see, we can sit here all day and talk about all the new wonderful things changing and expanding in the city, but when we get down to brass tacks, none of that means a thing if we don’t engage it. As we speak, we’re watching Nob Hill go through one of the largest growing pains it has ever experienced, with longtime favorites vanishing and a multitude of new places popping up nearly every day. Change is scary. Change is hard to deal with because familiarity is such a comfort to us. Yet when all is said and done, change is also necessary. We must embrace the future of our city and all the shifts it takes in order to continue our growth. So I issue you a New Year’s resolution, should you choose to accept it: Let’s help support these changes, whether it be in Nob Hill, Downtown, the Heights or even the International District. There are people out there right now working to actively make Albuquerque a phenomenal and exciting place to live, but we are the sparks to their catalyst. Nothing happens if we don’t participate in the movement.

In 2020, let’s ride ART and keep our cars out of the bus lane. Let’s take a chance on a wild business concept, even if it feels foreign or strange. Let’s get out there and support the businesses that make our city the most strange and fun place to live in the world. We’re not just green chile and “Breaking Bad,” we’re ingenuity, creativity, passion, boldness and tradition. And 2020 is the year of Albuquerque.
**EVENT HORIZON**

**JANUARY 2-8, 2020**

**FRIDAY JAN 3**

**READY TO LIVE**

Just a few days before the release of his latest hip-hop epic, local rapper and citizen of the world Wake Self died in a tragic automobile accident in Santa Fe, N.M. The work of this visionary community member drew from the deep lessons of life—learned by a man who always looked toward the future and worked tirelessly to improve the lives of listeners and the progress of the people of El Duque—as he created some of the most compelling hip-hop ever to be born in Burque. On Friday, Jan. 3, beginning at 8pm, join the grateful living for a listening party at Sister that celebrates the release of the album titled Ready to Live. This commemorative and celebratory event features Wake Self’s final recording as well as performances by DJ Ohm, DJ Native, Zoology and Awkward Activite. Admission to this 21-plus woke wake for Wake costs $75. SISTER 407 Central Ave NW, 8pm to 1am alibi.com/v/6zp8. (August March)  

**A WALK THROUGH CHAOS**

The first ABQArtwalk of 2020, as well as the first show of the new year at the marvelously eccentric OT Circus, kicks off with Chaotic Order. The exhibition sets into motion on Friday, Jan. 3 at 5pm and features the work of David S. McKee. The small, colorful gallery brings a thematic evening of bedlam to life with mixed media abstract art, nibbles available from The Munchie Truck and coffee served with optional CBD by Tunnel Springs Coffee and Market. While the Artwalk happens monthly, this display is for one night only. As always, this event is free and open to all ages. OT CIRCUS GALLERY 709 Central Ave NW, 5 to 9pm alibi.com/v/6zpq. (Mayo Lua de Frenchie)  

**SATURDAY JAN 4**

**CAKE AND REVELRY**

Start the New Year right. Get your chew on at the Mochi Making New Year’s Celebration. Join in the Japanese New Year tradition of pounding the living daylights out of rice and forming it into delicious cakes this Saturday, Jan. 4 at Japanese Kitchen. Learn about the tradition while watching a live mochi-making demonstration. Enjoy free samples of fresh mochi and see a live Taiko performance featuring traditional Japanese drumming. This all ages experience is free and open to the public. Demonstrations start at noon, so get there early to reserve a table. JAPANESE KITCHEN STEAKHOUSE & SUSHI BAR 6521 Avenida Paseo NE, Noon alibi.com/v/6zpy. (Joshua Lee)  

**FEED ME, SEYMOUR?**

Making junk food out of plant material is the latest rage. Don’t believe us? Just drive on over to Burger King then, and ask about the Impossible Whopper. When you’re done with that, you can check out similar menu offerings at Carl’s Jr. and Del Taco, too. Better yet, visit Bow & Arrow Brewing on Saturday, Jan. 4 from 12pm until 6pm for a crash course on Plant Based Junk Food and vegan comfort food courtesy of an exclusive and very futuristic popup shop straight outta that haven for healthy food and drink, Plant Based Junk Food. This event is open to all ages at BOW & ARROW BREWING 602 McKinnon Ave NW, Noon to 6pm alibi.com/v/6zsb. (August March)  

**MONDAY JAN 6**

**TRIGGER HAPPY**

We hear plenty of the “new year, new you” propaganda, but sometimes we hold onto baggage that just doesn’t serve us. The new year always feels like the perfect time to let go of that extra garbage in our lives. On Saturday, Jan. 4 from 1 to 4pm, The Source hold the Stress and Anxiety Relief Workshop with life coach Meghan Bass-Petti. For $75, receive three hours of intensive preparation to diminish anxiety and recondition the body’s response to stressors. Learn simple strategies to balance emotions, to calm the nervous system when triggered, to experience better sleep, to focus and to cultivate stronger relationships. It’s okay to admit that you can’t let go of things without a little professional assistance. Pre-registration is required. SOURCE 1111 CAROLINE BUD SE, 1 to 4pm alibi.com/v/6ztre. (Mayo Lua de Frenchie)  

**SING!**

Lemme guess: You’re either a tenor, a baritone or a bass! We know you want to sing. And you know you can totes sing and read music. Now here comes the opportunity of a lifetime. The New Mexico Gay Men’s Chorus holds auditions for its totally fab 2020 season on Monday, Jan. 6 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm at the Albuquerque Center for Spiritual Living right here in Burque. The chorus welcomes musicians of all backgrounds, experiences, ages and gender expressions to try out for a spot in one of our state’s most enchanting musical ensembles. For more information or to sign up for an audition slot, visit nmgmc.org/sing. ALBUQUERQUE CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL LIVING 2801 LOUISIANA BUD NE, 6:30 to 8:30pm alibi.com/v/6zt9. (August March)  

Compiled by Ashli Kesali. Submit your events at alibi.com/events.
**Community**

**FRIDAY JAN 3**
**WELLNESS/FITNESS**
SELF SERVE  Sex Magick: Setting Orgasmic Intentions for 2020. With guided meditation, learn to use orgasmic sex magic and ritual to dream big, make intentions specific and practice the art of asking for what you want as a sexual being, and manifest your sex life intentions for 2020. 112 Morningside Dr NE. $25. 7-9pm. 18+. 265-5815. alibi.com/v/6zq0.

**SATURDAY JAN 4**
**LEARN**
CHERI HILLS LIBRARY National Trivia Day: Battle of the Brains. Play by yourself or join a team of up to four people. Study up for questions that run the gamut with first, second and third place winners. Registration required. 6901 Barstow St NE. 3:30-5pm. 857-8321. alibi.com/v/6zaq.

**SUNDAY JAN 5**
**LEARN**
SELF SERVE Open Rope Tying Practice for POCs. A rope enthusiast of color, for persons of color only. Light refreshments are provided. 2065 San Felipe St NW. 11am-4:30pm. ALL-AGES! 247-8931. alibi.com/v/6bgz.

**MONDAY JAN 6**
50/50 COFFEE HOUSE Nerd Night. Nerd out with DDG, Magic the Gathering, Monopoly, Scrabble and more. Bring your own game or use one from the shop. 2122 Central Ave SE. 4-8pm. ALL-AGES! 639-4334. alibi.com/v/6vs3.

**TUESDAY JAN 7**
GREEN JEANS FARMERY The Next Generation: A.M. Munch. A safe, inclusive space for younger kinksters to meet their peers and explore their dark side in a welcoming, accepting environment open to those 18+. 3600 Cutler Ave NE. 6-8pm. 18+. alibi.com/v/6za2.

**KIDS**
ALBUQUERQUE MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY Imagine Storytime. Enjoy stories, songs, movement and music for the youngest museumgoers and families. Inspired by the spirit of “Sesame Street” and the Muppets, each week presents a different theme. 2000 Mountain Rd NW. 2-3pm. 764-6515. alibi.com/v/6hm.

**LEARN**
ALBUQUERQUE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION Impact and Coffee. Nonprofit leaders, volunteers, funders and people finding their place in the community have a cup of coffee, hear about new social profit ventures and innovation in a six-minute presentation format. 624 Tijeras Ave NW. 9-10am. 226-0171. alibi.com/v/6b2p.

**WEDNESDAY JAN 8**
**LEARN**
PALO DURO SENIOR CENTER Composting with Worms. A class presented by Bernalillo County Extension Master Composers open to all ages. Registration required. 5221 Palo Duro Ave NE. 10am-noon. ALL-AGES! 888-8102. alibi.com/v/6ys8.

**PLANFORWHAT?!** New Year, Less Stuff: Tricks to Declutter. Marie’s Only Pino shows five easy principles to help get go of clutter. Learn to make decisions about what is important to keep and what to let go of and take action. 8208 Louisiana Blvd NE. 11:30am-12:30pm. 21+. (805) 550-5005. alibi.com/v/6sgw.

**FRIDAY JAN 3**
**ART**
YUCCA ART GALLERY Open House. Celebrate the wonders of Old Town and meet the featured artists. Light refreshments are provided. 2065 San Felipe St NW. 11am-4:30pm. ALL-AGES! 247-8931. alibi.com/v/6bgz.

**SATURDAY JAN 4**
**WORDS**
ORGANIC BOOKS Joseph Badal Book Signing. The author signs and discusses his new work, Justice, third in his Curtis Chronicles series of international thrillers. 111 Carlisle Blvd SE. 3pm. ALL-AGES! 553-3823. alibi.com/v/6blh.

**THURSDAY JAN 2**
**LEARN**
SOURCE Tarot Book Study: Rachel Pollack’s 78 Degrees of Wisdom 2019 Edition. Join the monthly group and study the depth of tarot. 1111 Carlisle Blvd SE. $10. 6-8:30pm. 18+. 350-7705. alibi.com/v/6p2d.

**FRIDAY JAN 3**
**FILM**
CENTRAL & UNSER LIBRARY Spider-Man: Far From Home. Enjoy a screening of the Marvel film, rated PG-13. 8081 Central Ave NW. 1:30-3:30pm. ALL-AGES! 768-4320. alibi.com/v/6z8e.

**WEDNESDAY JAN 8**
**WORDS**
THIRSTY EYE BREWING COMPANY Thirsty Word. Calling all poets for a monthly open mic hosted by Jim Burbank. Ten poets may sign up for a three-minute reading. 206 Broadway SE. 7-8:30pm. ALL-AGES! 983-9831. alibi.com/v/6z7.

**TRACTOR BREWING CO.** Writing Wednesday. A place for writers to write and get critiques on pages. 117 Tulane Dr SE. 5-8pm. 433-5654. alibi.com/v/6f2a.

**TRACTOR BREWING WELLS PARK Poetry and Beer. The longest running open mic and poetry slam in Albuquerque welcomes all to listen, judge, compete or just read. 1800 Fourth Street NW. 7:30-10pm. 243-6752. alibi.com/v/6zt.

**BUDDHA DANCE TUESDAY**
**MUSIC**
WEDNESDAY JAN 8
TRACTOR BREWING FOUR HILLS James Mcintyre Jazz Trio • jazz • 6pm
TRACTOR BREWING WESTSIDE DJ CelloSello • variety • 6pm
WINE.DIVE Eli Del Puerto • jazz • 8pm • FREE
TRACTOR BREWING WELLS PARK First Fridays Comedy Contest • stand-up comedy • 8pm
TRICKLOCK PERFORMANCE LABORATORY Headliners 955 Comedy Presents Friday Night Fools • stand-up comedy • 9:30pm • $10 • 18+

**SATURDAY JAN 4**
B2BZ BARRIO UP TOWN Shimons’s Free Agents • jazz • 6:30pm • FREE
DIRTY BOURBON Chad Freeman • country • 6pm • $5 • 21+
PONDEROSA BREWING COMPANY Los Radiadores • acoustic folk, rock, blues • 7:30pm • FREE • ALL-AGES!
RED DOOR BREWING COMPANY Halfway Dcent Karaoke • 7pm • FREE • 21+
RED VELVET UNDERGROUND Marie Black • folk • 5pm • 21+
SEARED Dave Friedlander • jazz, bop • 6:30pm • FREE • ALL-AGES!
THIRSTY EYE BREWING COMPANY Kirk Matthews • soul, singer-songwriter • 7pm • FREE • 21+
TRACTOR BREWING CO. MMRVL • variety • 6pm
TRACTOR BREWING FOUR HILLS DJ Valens • beats, grooves • 6pm
TRACTOR BREWING WESTSIDE Anthony Torres • outlaw country • 6pm
WINE.DIVE Hooks and Harps • variety • 7pm • FREE
COMEDY RED VELVET UNDERGROUND Saturday Stand-Up Spectacular • stand-up comedy • 9:30pm • $5 • 18+

**SUNDAY JAN 5**
CANTANE BREWHOUSE Odd Dog • jam band • 4pm • FREE
HIGH AND DRY BREWING Marie Black • folk • 6pm • 21+
HOTEL ALBUQUERQUE Sage Cornelius • variety • 4pm • $20 • ALL-AGES!
O’NEILL’S PUB, Nob Hill SISTER Alexs Garza • chili, Latin, house • 11am • FREE
THIRSTY EYE BREWING COMPANY Greg Johns • acoustic country • 4pm • FREE • ALL-AGES!

**MONDAY JAN 6**
TRACTOR BREWING CO. Old-Time Jam Circle • 7:30pm
RED DOOR BREWING COMPANY OG Monday: A Comedy Open Mic • stand-up comedy • 7:30pm • FREE • 21+
TRACTOR BREWING WESTSIDE ‘Gilmore Girls’ Trivia • 7pm

**TUESDAY JAN 7**
THE BARLEY ROOM Swag Duo and Friends • jazz, blues, Motown • 6pm • FREE • ALL-AGES!
RED DOOR BREWING COMPANY Jam Night • 5pm • Bring Your Own Vinyl • 6pm • FREE • 21+
STEEL BENDER BREWERY Dirty Brown Jug Band • outlaw country, bluegrass • 6pm
THIRSTY EYE BREWING COMPANY Folk Festival Jam • 7pm • FREE

**WEDNESDAY JAN 8**
TRACTOR BREWING CO. Tractor Trivia League: Season 1 • 7pm

Compiled by Ashli Kesali. Submit your events at alibi.com/events.
The Worst of 2019

The year 2019 is officially over, and there are plenty of Americans telling the last 365 days not to let the door hit them in the ass on the way out. In a myriad of ways, 2019 sucked. Now, we can look forward to a fresh new 2020 and all the promise that it brings. But our concerns in this section are not political, economic or social. They're cinematic.

In the last issue of the Alibi, we talked about the best films of 2019. And we had some laudable ones, let's not forget. But now, let us take the opportunity to usher out the previous stinker of a year by rooting through the dumpster that was 2019 and digging out the worst films of the year. Good riddance to bad movies! Here's a rundown of the worst films of 2019.

The cheap sci-fi drama Replicas looks like it fell through a hole from an alternate universe in which Keanu Reeves never made The Matrix and became a failed, direct-to-video star in the mid’90s instead.

The “Matthew McConaughey as a sexy boat captain caught up in murder” thriller Serenity boasts the most far-fetched twist ending of any film of last year (or any year, for that matter).

The Goldfinch proves that even Pulitzer Prize-winning novels can be the subject of lifeless, pointless, wildly self-important art house dramas.

Here's hoping the trend of turning inspirational self-help novels in which dogs talk (and eventually die) into sappy films ends with The Art of Racing in the Rain and A Dog's Journey.

If you loved Miracles From Heaven, the 2016 “true life” Christian drama about a kid who fell into a hollow tree and didn’t die, because Jesus—then you’ll probably still be bored by the “true life” Christian drama about a kid who fell through some ice and didn’t die, because Jesus.

Siri and Alexa already exist to destroy our lives, so a comedy about a self-aware virtual phone assistant that becomes emotionally attached to its socially awkward owner (Adam DeVine, better in small doses) seems kinda redundant. Jexi (the last film to be released by the now-defunct CBS Films) might skate by on its bland cultural insights if it were at all funny. It’s not. Watch 2013’s Her instead. Same premise, much better movie.

Playmobil: The Movie and UglyDolls are 2019’s most exemplary double-feature of unnecessary, D-list, CGI kids’ movies: lazy computer animation, bland stories, a pileup of celebrity voices and an overly obvious moral that comes at kids like a baseball bat.

John Travolta (more or less doing his own thing) plays an action movie star’s biggest (and most mentally disturbed) fan in The Fanatic, a perfectly preposterous disaster written and directed by Limp Bizkit frontman Fred Durst. Like the guy didn’t get enough criticism for his awful music. Easily the worst film of the year, and the only one worth watching for the sheer giggles.

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...and small moments. In A Hidden Life, you can smell the dirt on the characters’ hands and feel their muscles groan at the plow. The hills are alive, not with music this time. It should be noted that Malick makes his own language.

A Hidden Life

Written and directed by Terrence Malick
Starring Matthias Schoenaerts, Michael Nyqvist, August Diehl, Bruno Ganz
Rated PG-13
Opens Friday 1/3.

It is easy to forget that not everyone who lives in a totalitarian regime likes their totalitarian regime. It’s not mass hysteria that takes over the people’s minds in a place overrun by despots and theocracies. People of conscience still retain their values and morals independent of social pressures. How they choose to act given those pressures is the heart of the matter. In this case, it is also the heart of the film A Hidden Life by writer-director Terrence Malick.

A Hidden Life is the story of Franz Jägerstätter (August Diehl) whose pleasant life farming in the hills of Austria is ruined by the demand that he comply with compulsory service to the Third Reich. He finds the insistence that he swear allegiance to Adolf Hitler untenable, refuses and is jailed for his trouble. From there on out, things go poorly for our hero Jägerstätter.

Based on a true story, A Hidden Life is an ambitious film for several reasons, not the least of which is its epic 174-minute length. First, there are Nazis. Films with Nazis are generally not on the rise around the globe. Malick is squarely in a time when authoritarianism is on the rise around the globe. Malick is known for his painterly visions of large landscapes and small moments. In A Hidden Life, you can smell the dirt on the characters’ hands and feel their muscles groan at the plow.

The hills are alive, not with music this time, but with the hard, rewarding life of simple family farming in a community. Malick takes his time establishing what rural life was like for the people of this village and the Jägerstätter family. It makes it just that much more heartbreaking when the Nazis enter the scene to ruin it for everybody, starting with Jägerstätter.

It should be noted that Malick makes fantastic use of language in the film. Flowing between English and German, the language carries the emotion in the angry scenes of both villagers and prison guards. Unless the filmgoer understands German, they are forced to absorb the emotional content and rage of the scenes without the distraction of what precisely is being said. It is a very powerful bit of moviemaking, giving the viewer the time and space to come up with their own words, in their own language.

The message of A Hidden Life is not an uncommon one in film: A man stands up for what he believes in, despite the costs. The private exchange between Jägerstätter and his judge sums up the situation nicely. “Do we have a right to do this?” the judge asks. “Do I have a right not to?” asks Jägerstätter. It is the root of passivity and a question worth repeated consideration in films. Why does one have to participate in others’ actions? Where does our responsibility for the common good end?

Taking on a project of this scale is well within the scope of Malick, who rendered such romantic period pieces as Badlands and Days of Heaven. The romance in A Hidden Life is found in Jägerstätter’s love of life. It is evident, but often overshadowed by the brutality he is put through. It would be a shame to view this film as simply a political statement dropped off on Hollywood’s doorstep as a cautionary tale in a turbulent time without also taking in the nearly three hours of screen time that Malick has laid out as a portrait of a man, a family, a community and a nation dealing with stressors beyond their control. A Hidden Life paints a picture of times that are hard, but reminds us that solace, and even beauty, can be found in our own convictions.
Building the Cannatopia
Creating our future for the cannabis and hemp industry.

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**NEW**

**Beyond Horror: The History and Sub-culture of the Bay Street**

This documentary explores the history of extreme cinema from an academic perspective designed to reach both fans and critics of the genre. With a timeline covering everything from *Last House On The Left* to the controversial August Underground Trilogy, *Beyond Horror* brings together conversations with psychologists, fans and filmmakers to tell the story of some of the most notorious films ever created. 90 minutes. Unrated. (Opens 1/4 at Guild Cinema)

**Varda By Agnés**

The final film from the late, beloved Agnés Varda is a characteristically playful, profound and personal summation of the director’s own brilliant career. At once impish and wise, she acts as our spirit guide on a free-associative tour through her six-decade artistic journey, shedding new light on her films, photography, and recent installation works while offering her one-of-a-kind reflections on everything from filmmaking to feminism to aging. In French with English subtitles. 120 minutes. Unrated. (Opens 1/2 at Guild Cinema)

**What She Said: The Art of Pauline Kael**

This critically acclaimed film tells the story of Pauline Kael—who Roger Ebert referred to as the most influential film critic of the late 20th century—and her turbulent life and work using never-before-seen archival footage, her published writing and personal letters and interviews with friends and foes of her pen. Pauline is voiced by Sarah Jessica Parker, and participants include Quentin Tarantino, Camille Paglia, David O. Russell, Molly Haskell and Francis Ford Coppola. Unrated. 95 minutes. (Opens 1/2 at Guild Cinema)

**Witness at Tornillo**

*Witness at Tornillo* follows 66-year-old Brooklynite Josh Rubin, an activist who has become a fixture of the Families Belong Together protests. He helped draw national attention to the Tornillo facility, long Together protests. He helped draw has become a fixture of the Families Belong Together protests. He helped draw

**STILL PLAYING**

**21 Bridges**

Chadwick Boseman (*Black Panther*) stars in this taut but familiar crime thriller about a young computer technician who has blown the whistle on a dangerous new technology and is marked for assassination. It’s up to the department’s best to save him. 118 minutes. PG-13. [Icon Cinemas Albuquerque, Movies 8, Movies West]

**Black Christmas**

Bob Clark’s 1974 cult classic holiday slasher—about a group of female students stalked by a stranger during Christmas break—gets a feminist reboot thanks to writer/director Sophia Takal. Imogen Poots (*Fright Night, Green Room*) heads the cast. 98 minutes. PG-13. (Century 14 Downtown, Icon Cinemas Albuquerque)

**Bombshell**

Margot Robbie, Charlize Theron and Nicole Kidman star in this ripped-from-life story about “the Heavyside Layer.” (Flix Brewhouse, Icon Cinemas Albuquerque, Rancho Premiere Cinema, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX)

**The Good Liar**

Sir Ian McKellen stars as a heartless elderly con artist who can hardly believe his luck when he meets a wealthy widower (Helen Mirren) online. But our protagonist’s dastardly plan starts to fall apart when he finds himself caring about his mark—who may be significantly less helpless than she appears. There’s a comfortable pleasure in seeing McKellen and Mirren’s first onscreen team-up. But the film’s countless twists and turns are too tame and tidy to elicit many thrills. 109 minutes. R. (Movies 8, Movies West)

**Joker**

After Cesar Romero, Jack Nicholson, Mark Hamill, Heath Ledger and Jared Leto put their stamp on the character, moody method actor Joaquin Phoenix tries DC’s iconic villain on for size. This one swings pretty far afield of the traditional comic book origin stories, but writer-director Todd Phillips (*Old School, The Hangover*) offers a distinctive, Martin Scorsese-esque vision of a failed comic being disenfranchised from society and reinventing himself as an outsized supervillain for the ages. Reviewed in v28 i41. 121 minutes. R. (Century 14 Down-town)

**Jumanji: The Next Level**

Dwayne Johnson, Karen Gillan, Jack Black and Kevin Hart are back as a group of friends transported back into their digital avatars in the magical video game *Jumanji*. This time around, the game is broken, and the quartet find themselves fighting new adversities and navigating different landscapes—from snowy mountains to arid deserts. Awkwafina, Nick Jonas and Danny DeVito are among the new cast members for this go-around. 123 minutes. PG-13. (Century 14 Downtown, Flix Brewhouse, Icon Cinemas Albuquerque, Rancho Premiere Cinema, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX)

**Knives Out**

Filmmaker Rian Johnson (*Brick, Looper, Stars Wars: Episode VIII—The Last Jedi*) takes Agatha Christie-style murder mystery over the top and back again with this giddy fun thriller. Seems that a world-famous mystery writer (Christopher Plummer) has been murdered at his lavish country estate. Now it’s up to a dapper, Southern-fried detective (Daniel Craig) to figure out which of the guy’s quirkily relatives did him in. Chris Evans? Jamie Lee Curtis? Michael Shannon? Don Johnson? Toni Collette? Reviewed in v28 i44. 121 minutes. PG-13. (Century 14 Downtown, High Ridge, Rio Rancho Premiere Cinema, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX)

**The Lighthouse**

From filmmaker Robert Eggers (*The Witch*) comes another moody tale of isolation and (possible) supernatural disor-

**A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood**

Beloved actor Tom Hanks takes on the role of beloved kids’ TV show host Fred Rogers—only to discover that spending time as an adult with the host would have a profound and healing effect on his troubled psyche. Matthew Rhys (“The Americans”) plays our (somewhat more fictionalized) journalist, hounded by a gloomy disposi-

**Cats**

The enduringly popular stage musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber (and based on some weird-ass cat poems by T.S. Eliot) comes to life on the big screen. Idris Elba, Taylor Swift, James Corden, Jennifer Hudson and Jason Derulo are among the actors wearing CGI cat suits and singing to travel to an ancient, autumn-bound forest and discover the origin of Elsa’s mysterious powers—and, you know, save the kingdom. 103 minutes. PG. (Century 14 Downtown, Cottonwood Stadium 16, Flix Brewhouse, Icon Cinemas Albuquerque, Rio Rancho Premiere Cinema, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX)

**Frozen II**

The world really didn’t need the 2000 re-boot of *Charlie’s Angels*. And it probably doesn’t need this one either. But here we are. Kristen Stewart, Naomi Scott and Ella Balinska are our three new international superspy detectives (or whatever Charlie’s Angels are supposed to be). Elizabeth Banks (who also wrote and directed this one!) is our new Bosley. Seems that a young computer technician has blown the whistle on a dangerous new technology and is marked for assassination. It’s up to the Angels to save him. 118 minutes. PG-13. [Icon Cinemas Albuquerque, Movies 8, Movies West]
der. In the late 1800s, a retired timberman (Robert Pattinson) is sent to serve as an apprentice housekeeper on a storm-lashed New England island. There, he meets a mysterious old sea dog (Willem Dafoe). Over the coming weeks, the two descend into a hallucinatory fog of booze, informal magic and some very ominous storm clouds. Shot in a boxy black-and-white frame, the film looks like some long-buried, Poe-inspired film noir. Scorsese clearly devoted filmmaker in the silent era. What exactly happens in this eerie, old-tyme sea shanty is kind of up for debate. But Eggers’ stylized ode to cabin fever is a hypnotizing (and occasionally hilarious) two-hander nonetheless. 109 minutes. R. (Guild Cinema)

**Little Women** (2019)
Indie writer-director Greta Gerwig’s (Lady Bird) take on Little Women draws on the classic novel and its author Louisa May Alcott’s overarching body of work. In Gerwig’s take, Alcott’s alter ego Jo March (Saoirse Ronan) reflects on her fictional life as her sisters Meg, Amy and Beth independently determine the trajectory of their own lives. 135 minutes. PG. (AMC Albuquerque 12, Cottonwood Stadium 16, High Ridge, Icon Cinemas Albuquerque, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX)

**Maleficent: Mistress of Evil**
Angelina Jolie returns as the living embodiment of Disney’s evil queen from Sleeping Beauty. This time around the witchy (but misunderstood) fairy queen’s goddaughter Aurora (Elle Fanning, still a bodystar) of Disney’s evil queen from Sleeping Beauty) is secretly using the imposter beauty but no longer sleeping) is about to be married to the prince. Unfortunately, Aurora’s mother-in-law-to-be (Michelle Pfeiffer) is secretly using the impeding nuptials to divide humans and fairies forever, stranding Maleficent and her otherworldly kin of which she is comprised of. 101 minutes. PG. (AMC Albuquerque 12, Cottonwood Stadium 16, High Ridge, Icon Cinemas Albuquerque, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX)

**Parasite**
The latest film from brilliant South Korean director Bong Joon-Ho (The Host, Mother, Snowpiercer) is a pitch-black, tragicomic thriller about a poor but loving family scraping by in a crowded “semi-basement” apartment on a grubby side street in Seoul. By chance, the family’s intelligent son lands a job tutoring an upper-class teenage girl who lives in a massive modernist mansion. This sudden family fortune sets up the film’s nasty, near-Gothic twists and turns. The Safdie brothers, Josh and Benny, return to their high-stakes bets that could lead to the windfall. The resulting film is a precarious high-wire act, as Howard tries to balance business, family and encroaching adversaries on all sides in relentless pursuit of the ultimate win. 135 minutes. R. (Century 14 Downtown, Cottonwood Stadium 16, High Ridge, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX)

**Uncut Gems**
The Safdie brothers, Josh and Benny, return to their high-stakes bets that could lead to the windfall. The resulting film is a precarious high-wire act, as Howard tries to balance business, family and encroaching adversaries on all sides in relentless pursuit of the ultimate win. 135 minutes. R. (Century 14 Downtown, Cottonwood Stadium 16, High Ridge, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX)

**Zombieland: Double Tap**
Since 2009’s cult hit Zombieland, writers Rhett Reese and Paul Wernick have gone on to pen the popular Deadpool series. Now they reunite with director Ruben Fleischer in this much-anticipated sequel. Zombie apocalypse survivors Columbus, Tallahassee and Little Rock (Jesse Eisenberg, Woody Harrelson, Emma Stone and Abigail Breslin) return, facing off against some frighteningly evolved zombies whose new weapons of mass destructions. 99 minutes. R. (Movies 8, Movies West)

**Queen & Slim**
A young guy on the make (Daniel Kaluuya, Get Out) and a self-serious lawyer (Jodie Turner-Smith, “Nightflyers”) meet on a Tinder date but hit it off horribly. As they retreat to an isolated Oregon motel, a series of events (including a series of events involving people getting bonked on the head, falling on their buttocks or otherwise engaging in the time-honored tradition of pratfalls) will certainly laugh their guts out with this one. (Also poop and fart jokes. So many poop and fart jokes.) 96 minutes. PG. (Movies 8, Movies West)

**SECOND RUN**

**Abominable**
DreamWorks Animation (How to Train Your Dragon, Kung Fu Panda) returns with a cuddly, kid-centric fable about a Shanghai teen who encounters a runaway yeti on the roof of her apartment and vows to return the magical furry fellow to his home atop Mount Everest. 97 minutes. PG. (Movies West)

**The Addams Family**
Charles Addams’ endearingly ghoulish cartoon characters return (appropriately enough) in computer-animated form. The all-star voice cast includes Oscar Isaac (Gomez), Charlize Theron (Morticia), Chloë Grace Moretz (Wednesday), Finn Wolfhard (Pugsley), Nick Kroll (Uncle Fester), Bette Midler (Grandma) and Snoop Dogg (Cousin Itt)—all of whom do right by their characters. If only the dull story weren’t so bogged down in kiddy film morals. 97 minutes. PG. (Movies 8, Movies West)

**Terminator: Dark Fate**
James Cameron returns as producer (but not as director or screenwriter) for this sci-fi sequel, which ignores the last few Terminator films and functions as a direct sequel to 1991’s Terminator 2: Judgment Day. Sequels that the apocalyptic Judgment Day was merely postponed, forcing waiters-turned-asskicker Sarah Connor (Linda Hamilton) to come out of hiding to protect some new target from execution by the hands of killer robots from the future. This time around she’s got help in the form of the latest human/Terminator hybrid (Mackenzie Davis from “Hot and Cold Fire”) and an old frenemy (Arnold Schwarzenegger). 128 minutes. R. (Movies 8)
Adam Ganer
Are Parties There
(Self-released)
This work is totally disturbing but may bring listeners closer to determining the truth about what the music in their lives really represents. Is this nuanced muse just a party time friend with benefits or will the spirit stick around and bring listeners cosmic fulfillment on the comedown? Full of brazen glitchiness, mouthy expressions of noise and a reliance on house music methodologies that say “Spring Break 4eva” in super-masculine and ultra-feminine sonic disguises, this recording ultimately answers our critical questions with hung over tuneage like “Bright Candles That Are On Fire” and “Watching Space On Neptune.” Either you’ll love taking the trip offered here in the afterglow or it will simply and quickly kill you. Who wants to live forever?

Filalete
Seven Princes of Heaven
(Noctivagant)
This one is totally esopkyo, kids. I picked it because I liked the cover art and religious overtones—each of the tracks refers to one of the heavenly angels. You know, Michael and Gabriel and Raphael and their winged friends. Given those classical underpinnings, I listened to this record as if it were—and it really is—a collection of art music compositions, program music to be more specific. In the case of these works, there is indeed a leitmotif expressed for each character whose narrative is played out musically. Here, the identities are electrical, stormy and mostly bereft of linear melody yet memorable for their sonic scope and passion. Dark and complicated, vast musical spaces define each expression of angelic power this way. Enthrancing. Favorite tracks: “Uriel” and “Jegudiel.”

Lone Piño
Nuevas Acoquias, Río Viejito: Traditional Music of Northern New Mexico
(Self-released)
I was destined to listen to this record. A fantastic collection of traditional music from the heart of The Land of Enchantment, this record details the significance of Lone Piño’s work in regional folk music as well as cementing the duo as authorities on the diverse form’s current state of performance and accurate reiteration. The CD version of this record includes cover art and a 10-page booklet by artist Sean Wells featuring sketches of New Mexico elders and musicians who influenced the recording, as well as important historical information that will enrich listeners of this essential iteration of the cultura Nueva Mexicana. It’s all here and it’s all clear, from polkas like “La Julia” to rancheras like “Casa de Adobe.” Vamos a bailar, compadres!

SONIC REDUCER
BY AUGUST MARCH

MUSIC
SHOW UP! by August March

Tomorrow’s the Day
My show’s gonna come

Constant Harmony

“W"hat’s your favorite wintertime jam, August?” I once asked.

“That’s easy,” he replied. It’s that Dylan cover from Sweetheart of the Rodeo by The Byrds. You know the one?

“You Ain’t Going Nowhere,” que no?

“That would be her,” March proclaimed as he proceeded to crank up said tune on his 1998 Mac Mini. “Here you go,” he said as the virtual needle at YouTube dropped, the screen resolved itself and the singing began, all plaintive and proud.

Some of the lyrics went like this:

“Strap yourself/ To the tree with roots/ You ain’t goin’ nowhere/ Whoo-ee ride me high/ Tomorrow’s the day/ My bride’s gonna come/ Oh, oh, are we gonna fly/ Down in the easy chair/ Genghis Khan/ He could not keep/ His kings/ Supplied with sleep/ We’ll climb that hill no matter how steep/ When we come up to it.”

“Hmm, that reminds me of this week’s preview selections,” March concluded. He told me to tell you that if you want to know how that conclusion came to be, then you all should read on; you’ll get it just fine.

Thursday
The upcoming year for rock music in El Burque could be summarized using the musical produce of the bands playing at Launchpad (618 Central Ave. SW) on Thursday, Jan. 2. These are the rock bands at the top of the rockpile residing in the middle of our desert—with a cool but notoriously fickle river flowing nearby. Constant Harmony is a trio that features multi-instrumentalist siblings Sillery making a beautifully thrashed-out noise that speaks to people through intense rhythms and sacred guitar profanities. Manhigh, featuring real rock wizard Gabriel Gambino and legendary local Ray Gutierrez, returns to the limelight after a tragic summer while Shrewd is all that. The Directory features Peri Pakaro, a mostly unsung Burque rock god. All those nice words mean you oughta show up for this one, rockers. 9pm • $5 • 21+

Friday
Oskar Petersen has a band. That band is Crime Lab. Julian Sanchez, Josh Prigge and Jameson Ray complete the quartet. Everyone in town wants to see that band perform live because they funkin’ rock. Last time they had a gig in these parts, the headliner cancelled and everyone from Joey Abbin to that one chick who plays in Prism Bitch—but also used this thing about how we all talk in this town—was severely disappointed. This time, one of Albuquerque’s best rocarral bands, the aforementioned product of the son of the big Ant Farmer Carl Petersen, has a gig at the Moonlight Lounge (120 Central Ave. SW) on Friday, Jan. 3. You should show up just to possibly hear epic tuneage like “People’s Court” or “Tacos with Ed.” Katakak Attack. JJ Lawlins and Side Montero open. 9pm • $5 • 21+.

Saturday
Do you like Talking Heads? How about Zillaphyst? Abin readers voted the latter the Best Electronic Artist in our last edition of the Best of Burque Music Reader’s Choice awards. Tony Orant, Kelly Wilson, Mikey Jaramillo and effects magician Mike Gerdes have created a super-thick sound that’s part psychedelic, part jazz and in sum, one heck of a creative musical vision. As for the former, a group of misfits from the Rhode Island School of Design, we happen to dig their earlier work, ‘’Fear of Music” but get lost and sad by the time Stop Making Sense started making sense in the mid-1980s. In any case, you can catch the latter paying tribute to the former on Saturday, Jan. 4 at Launchpad (618 Central Ave. SW) for a concert titled ABQ Start Making Sense 2020. I’m determined the result is the good thing. 9pm • $8-12 • 21+

Tuesday
If you like your Americana gritty and full of the coarse and chaotic gravy of life, leavened with a load of piquant observations about the state of humankind—sung from the back of a vibrating fantail whilst the sounds of a banjo and mandolin drifts longingly over the whole affair—then have we got news for you. And a band, too. The ensemble is called Dirty Brown Jug Band and the news is that you’ve got something worthwhile to do after all. Check out vocalist and string master Jer Klinger, bassist Justin Roque and drummer Justin Salazar on Tuesday, Jan. 7 at Steel Bender Brewery (8305 Second Street NW). By gum, you’ll climb that hill, winter or no winter! 6pm • Free • 21+.
An Englishman in Albuquerque

Tell me about you and your music, how you came to Albuquerque, all of that. I started out life in England, just outside of London. In Old Windsor to be exact. I formed my first band, Mansion Harlots, with Will Gray. We were a teenage band, we were together for a few years then went our separate ways in the 1990s. I then formed Magic Eight Ball and toured all around Europe. I toured around the world solo, too. And was talking to Will and he mentioned bringing Mansion Harlots back. And that’s what we did. And we recorded the new album in Europe. Then I came over to America, we moved to LA.

Tell me about the music on this album. Tell me about your vision. Well with Mansion Harlots, because we formed in the ‘90s, I thought it would be a really beautiful thing to explore all of those influences that really made us tick as teenagers while bringing our adult perspectives to it, too. And one big influence for us, back then and now, is the band Everclear.

Really? Everclear? Yeah. And what happened was I finished the album, I came back to Albuquerque to finalize all of the release information and I got a phone call the other week—well, an email—saying, ‘We want you to come up to Chico [California] and open up for Art Alexakis of Everclear. So, that’s what I did. Just as this album is coming out, I get to open for one of the key influences of Mansion Harlots. I think that one thing I’ve always loved to do is to combine my influences [like Everclear] with influences from soul music, from Motown Records.

That’s cool. With that alternative rock sound in there, too. There’s some classic rock in there, too; I love Queen and Manic Street Preachers.

That’s a big deal in Brit-pop culture. The lyricist and rhythm guitarist of Manic Street Preachers, Richey Edwards, disappeared and was never heard from again. I went to his hometown. I met James Dean Bradfield [the band’s lead guitarist] a few years ago.

Fascinating. You’re talking about all these diverse British bands but they’re bound together by a real strong rock guitar aesthetic, it’s like an idealized form of rock with jazz and classical influences too, que no? It’s really interesting that you bring that up. If you listen to “A Design for Life,” which is the Manics’ big song, the chords are very jazzy, very unusual. With me it’s everything from metal to soul. But also, I’m a big fan of the melody, infusing the work I do with melody is important. On this record, there are 10 songs written by me and two songs written by Will Gray. It’s melodic, it’s rock but it’s not one type of rock. And I think that’s what the definition of alternative is. When you had hair rock at the end of the ‘80s, that was very cookie-cutter. Grunge and alternative were literally the alternatives to that formula.

Do you feel like that was a shout-out to authenticity in a genre that had become overburdened by pretense? I think so. Compare hair metal at the end of the ‘80s with music by a band like Primus.

I recall that Frizzle Fry really changed the pop music landscape in 1990. It was funky-time rock with an edge. Exactly.

Did those sorts of projects set the stage for what came next, your band for example? When you have a Les Claypool or a Kurt Cobain or a Slash making music, it will certainly knock down the barriers. Is that the sound you’re trying to recreate on your latest record? I think there are flashes of that; flashes of Slashes!

Right on. We’re going to get along fine. What are your plans for your new life in Albuquerque? We’re going to be here for another 14 months. And like I said, I’ll be doing some solo shows in northern California to promote the album, hopefully playing gigs out here in Albuquerque and I’ll be working on a record with my other band, Magic Eight Ball. That’s the plan. The first ever Mansion Harlots video was filmed entirely in Albuquerque by the fantastic local filmmakers Kevin Schulmeister and Jesse Walden at Yo Soy Productions.

How about shows out here? I’ve already been playing quite a bit. I’ve recently played at the Red Velvet Underground. I also played at the ZAmaizing Maze. I did that for Halloween. We just did two KUNM sessions and also Cafe Bella Coffee over in Rio Rancho. I’ve kept quite busy here.

What’s next? The new year then begins with me performing in session for Vintage Radio in Liverpool on Jan. 5 with special guest [and Magic Eight Ball bandmate] Robbie J. Holland. Then I’m back to New Mexico again where I perform at the South Valley Library in Albuquerque on Jan. 25.

If you had to describe what you do to someone who had little experience with rock music or anything remotely related, what you tell them? I would say it’s equidistant between alternative rock and stadium rock. It is melodic. It is mournful and yet joyous. We seized an opportunity and here we are in Albuquerque, ready to rock.

Mansion Harlots: Baz Francis and Will Gray

Tell me about the music of Baz Francis and Will Gray. “Let’s frame this story properly,” said August March in a faux Midlands accent—something you might hear in northern Gloucestershire, except for that indelible New Mexican emphasis on long vowels that he just couldn’t resist.

“Well, this dude Baz Francis is from Windsor and he just moved here with his wife. She’s an academic,” I told March as I tried to picture the places I had lived in those environs—a landscape that, despite the rock music culture, was never quite home—that’s still quite memorable 20 years on.

“Oh, so this is like the Steve Hammond scenario, like the Billy Bellmont thing?” He looked over his Foster Grant sunglasses and sighed. March was referring to a phenomena that seemed to haunt Burque’s rock music scene. A great singer-songwriter, was never quite what he just couldn’t resist.

“Yeah, but he’s in Old Blighty until after the new year.”

“Is it decent, the interview?”

“Oh yeah.”

“Then let’s hear it, people in Burque gotta rock, you know.”

Well, then: We now join our interview with Baz Francis—who fronts Mansion Harlots—already in progress; straight outta Slough and now headed for Burque.

Tell me you’d fare better on this side of the pond. We had a lot going on in LA, but my wife got a teaching position at the University of New Mexico in the Linguistics Department. So she’s brilliant and she told us we need to move to Albuquerque for 18 months. So, I started immersing myself in the local scene. In fact, I was on KUNM the other day.

Like Brandon Kennedy’s show or something like that? It was the Matthew Finch show, actually. A really nice guy, by the way. Anyway, I finished the Mansion Harlots album in America after doing some live shows with the band in Europe late last year. I’ve been commuting back and forth from California all this time.

I know you drove in today from Cali for this interview. Amazing. Yeah, and you’re one of the first people to get a copy of the new album.

Tell me about your vision. Well with Mansion Harlots, because we formed in the ‘90s, I thought it would be a really beautiful thing to explore all of those influences that really made us tick as teenagers while bringing our adult perspectives to it, too. And one big influence for us, back then and now, is the band Everclear.

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All Around A Fairground by Mansion Harlots
Available on Magic Cat Records, Ltd.
Never-Ending Apocalypse
Trump sort of makes vague threat

Here comes the rough new decade, slouching toward us like some lumbering beast. And just in time for the always-incoming apocalypse, President Donald Trump—the Great Dragon—is reminding everybody that our freedoms exist only as far as he sees fit.

Late last month, the hungry dragon attached a signing statement to HR 1158, the “Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020.” The law authorizes appropriations to fund certain federal agencies through September 30 next year. Generally, when a president attaches a signing statement, it’s to flag provisions of laws that he believed could impede on his executive authority. This one specifically called out a provision that protected most states with medical cannabis laws—not including South Dakota, Idaho, Kansas and Nebraska—from federal intervention.

The statement reads: “Division B, section 531 of the Act provides that the Department of Justice may not use any funds made available under this Act to prevent implementation of medical marijuana laws by various States and territories. My Administration will treat this provision consistent and not including South Dakota, Idaho, Kansas and Nebraska—from federal intervention.

In English: I don’t care what Congress says. Marijuana’s illegal and I can shut it down anytime I want.

Before you lose your head, though, remember that this is the third time he’s signed a statement along these lines. So far, he’s kept his mits off. Considering the current state of his career, he’ll probably be too busy fending off the dogs to try moving against cannabis. And he’s spoken vaguely in support of states’ rights concerning cannabis legalization on numerous occasions in the past.

But who knows? I’ve been told I’m an incorrigible optimist. And it wasn’t that many weeks ago that the Trump administration was trying to implement new rules that would deny asylum to migrants with misdemeanor marijuana offenses on their records. It seems like his opinion of cannabis swings with his mood.

Most New Mexicans Want Legalization

A recent survey found that almost three-quarters of New Mexico voters support the legalization of recreational cannabis.

According to the Santa Fe New Mexican, the governor’s cannabis working group commissioned Change Research to conduct the poll. It found that 73 percent of 1,055 New Mexicans support the sale of recreational cannabis for adults over 21 in their own communities. Only 39 percent said they would purchase it themselves. The poll was carried out online and was conducted between Nov. 26 and Dec. 2. The margin of error was plus or minus 3 percent.

According to a similar poll conducted by the Albuquerque Journal, only 61 percent of voters supported legalization in 2016.

This is not a stoner-led movement,” said Albuquerque City Councilor Pat Davis, head of the governor’s cannabis task force. “This is real people who see an opportunity that we’re not taking advantage of.”

The task force gave the governor its list of recommendations related to future cannabis legalization legislation in October. Last month, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham told KOAT that legalization was at the top of her priorities for the 2020 legislative session. “It’s a complicated piece of legislation, and I think it’s going to be a tough piece of legislation to pass, but I committed to putting it on my call,” Grisham said.

Hemp Farmers Discouraged by First Year

Hemp producers say their first year hasn’t quite panned out the way they were expecting.

Las Cruces Sun News reports that low yields and a flooded market have made returns on hemp crops significantly lower than originally predicted. More than 400 licenses to grow hemp were issued by the New Mexico Department of Agriculture this year—including 276 licenses to grow outdoors totaling 7,540 acres, and 132 licenses for indoor growers totaling 8,534,424 square feet.

New Mexico Secretary of Agriculture Jeff Witte told reporters that the flood of applicants was more than double what the state had anticipated. “There was a challenging year in the state, and quite frankly across the country, because there were a lot of people who jumped into it and basically over-supplied what was traditionally in the market,” Witte said.

Many of the new hemp farmers also appear to be inexperienced.

Some farmers reported crops with lower yields and CBD content than they were promised by seed broker, and much of the product ended up selling at a fraction of what was originally expected. Farmers have also reported coming into conflict with border patrol agents who seem to have trouble differentiating cannabis crops from hemp crops (for obvious reasons).

Despite all the problems, though, it seems as though many farmers are optimistic about next year’s harvest and plan to continue producing the new crop. After all, if recreational marijuana is legalized next year, even more opportunities could open up for producers.

Lobby Group Warns Against Legalizing

I would hope that some of our more astute readers out there will have noticed that the only outcry over the legalization of recreational cannabis in New Mexico seems to be coming from Far Right conservatives and medical cannabis lobby groups. I’ll leave it up to you to decide what their motives could be.

The most recent grunts of disapproval have come from “medical cannabis experts” with the New Mexico Medical Cannabis Patients Advocate Alliance. They claim that legalization could threaten the availability of cannabis for patients enrolled in the state’s Medical Cannabis Program.

“New Mexico as it stands just does not have the logistics for recreation,” the group’s secretary, Chad Lozano, told KVIA in El Paso, Texas. “We don’t have enough cannabis for everybody,” he said. “We don’t have enough producers. The price to become producers is ridiculous … The way that we’re going is just down the wrong path.”

I tend to enjoy the euphoric and uplifting effects one experiences with certain strains, versus the heavy physical couchlock of others. Even strong strains that offer up a bolt of excitement and attentiveness can dissipate quickly and end up feeling heavy—physically or mentally. The strain I found last week was able to awaken and excite me without bogging me down or making me tired.

I went over to Verdes Foundation (7301 San Antonio Dr. NE) to see what was on offer and was suggested a strain named Cuban Linx (THC: 23.00%, CBD: 0.07%—$10/gram). The buds were very sugary and had an appealing color palette similar to the light green and greyish lichen that can be found growing along the sides of trees and rocks. Tight clumps of orange hairs could be seen poking through, adding light splashes of color throughout. The buds emitted a musty and earthy smell that reminded me of chocolate and chocolate.

After a few more errands and some bouts of cursing at inap drivers, I finally made it home and was ready to try out this new strain. The tight but moist nugs were quickly broken down and placed into a bowl for consumption. There was a smooth, cooling and airy feeling at first as the flower was combusted, but it gradually became harsher and began to taste more like cloves or pine. Towards the end of the bowl, the hits began to feel intense and actually made my throat feel a bit sore and itchy.

I experienced a sudden sensation of mental sharpness and focus. I felt alert, animated, excited and eager. Physically, I didn’t feel as overwhelmed as I do with other strains, and my eyes didn’t feel as heavy. If anything, they felt as if they had widened to attention. My body also felt light and bubby, but not so comfortable that it causes distraction or absolute sloth. This was a strain where I could get things done and be focused.

This strain would be good for those suffering from depression or lack of motivation. I found the pep that Cuban Linx offers to be a much needed boost for a dejected or distracted person’s day. The attentive feeling I experienced while using this strain would make it useful during social situations. I tend to have pretty regular stomach issues, and I noticed that this strain aided in treating the nausea and discomfort I felt as well. Cuban Linx was a solid strain that offered up a refreshingly joint high that wasn’t overwhelming or overpowering.

The smell and taste were rather standard and didn’t offer up anything too surprising. Although it did begin to feel a bit harsh towards the end. If you’re looking for a good strain that will perk you up without bogging your mind, be sure to give Cuban Linx a try.
FREEWILL ASTROLOGY | Horoscopes by Rob Brezsny

ARIES (March 21-April 19): “We are all hostages of the joy of which we deprive ourselves,” wrote poet Odysseus Elytis. Isn’t that an astounding idea? That we refuse to allow ourselves to experience some of the bliss and pleasure we could easily have; and that we are immersed inside that suppressed bliss and pleasure? I call on you, Aries, to rebel against this human tendency. As I see it, one of your main tasks in 2020 is to permit yourself to welcome more bliss, to aggressively seize more pleasure, and thereby free yourself from the rot of its nullification.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): At age 22, Taurus-born Dutch citizen Willem de Kooning sneaked into the United States. He was a stowaway on an Argentina-bound freighter and stealthily disembarked when the ship made a stop in Virginia. As he lived in America during subsequent decades, he became a renowned painter who helped pioneer the movement known as Abstract Expressionism. His status as an illegal immigrant rarely presented any obstacles to his growing success and stature. Not until age 57 did he finally become an American citizen. I propose we make him one of your role models in 2020. May he inspire you to capitalize on being a maverick, outsider or stranger. May he encourage you to find opportunities beyond your safety zone.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): When British novelist E. M. Forster was in his late 30s, he had sex with another person for the first time. Before that he had published five novels. After that, he produced just one more novel, though he lived till age 91. Why? Was he having too much fun? Looking back from his old age, he remarked that he would “have been a more famous writer if I had published more, but sex prevented the latter.” I suspect that sensual pleasure and intimacy will have the exact opposite effect on you in 2020, Gemini. In sometimes mysterious ways, they will make you more productive in your chosen sphere.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): “Every part of our personality that we do not love will regress and become hostile to us,” wrote poet Robert Bly. I don’t know anyone who doesn’t suffer from this problem at least a little. That’s the bad news. The good news for us Cancerians (yes, I’m a Crab!) is that 2020 will be a favorable time to engage in a holy crusade to fix this glitch: to feel and express more love for parts of our personality that we have dismissed or marginalized. The result? Any self-sabotage we have suffered from in the past could dramatically diminish.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): As a young adult, Leo-born Raymond Chandler worked as a fruit-picker, tennis racquet-stringer and bookkeeper. At age 34, he began a clerical job at the Dabney Oil Syndicate, and eventually rose in the ranks to become a well-paid executive. The cushy role lasted until he was 44, when he was fired. He mourned for a while, then decided to become an author of detective fiction. It took a while, but at age 50, he published his first novel. During the next 20 years, he wrote six additional novels as well as numerous short stories and screenplays—and in the process became popular and influential. I present this synopsis as an inspirational story to fuel your destiny in 2020.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): The fame of Virgo-born Italian poet Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1535) has persisted through the ages because of Orlando Furioso, an epic poem he authored. It tells the story of the Christian knight Orlando and his adventures for a pagan prince. This great work did not come easy to Ariosto. It wasn’t until he had written 36 versions of it that he was finally satisfied. I suspect you may harbor an equally perfectionist streak about the good works and labors of love you’ll craft in 2020. May I suggest you confine your experiments to no more than 10 versions?

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Leonardo da Vinci worked on the painting of The Last Supper from 1495 to 1498. It’s a big piece—about 15 by 29 feet. That’s one reason why he took so long to finish. But there was another explanation, too. He told his patron, the Duke of Milan, that he sometimes positioned himself in front of his painting-in-progress and simply gazed at and thought about it, not lifting a brush. Those were times he did some of his hardest work, he said. I trust you will have regular experiences like that in 2020, Libra. Some of your best efforts will arise out of your willingness and ability to incubate your good ideas with concentrated silence and patience.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): By 1895, Henry James had already published 94 books. He was renowned in the US and England, and had written the works that would later lead to him being considered for a Nobel Prize. Then, at age 52, although he was not physically fit, he decided to learn how to ride a bicycle. He paid for lessons at a bicycle academy, and cheerfully tolerated bruises and cuts from his frequent falls as an acceptable price to pay for his new ability. I admire James’ determination to keep transforming. Let’s make him a role model for you in 2020. May he inspire you to keep adding new aptitudes as you outgrow your previous successes.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): When Sagittarian composer Ludwig van Beethoven created the Eroica symphony in the early 1800s, many observers panned it. They said its rhythms were eccentric, that it was too long. One critic said it was “glaring and bizarre,” while another condemned its “undeniable originality.” This same critic concluded, “Genius proclaims itself not in the unusual and fantastic but in the beautiful and sublime.” Today, of course, Eroica has a different reputation. It’s regarded as a breakthrough event in musical history. I’ll go on record here, Sagittarius, to say that I suspect you created your own personal version of Eroica in 2019. 2020 is the year it will get the full appreciation it deserves, although it may take a while. Be patient.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): I’m going to speculate that sometime in the next 6 months, you will experience events that years from now you’ll look back on as having been the beginning of a fresh universe for you. What should you call this launch? I suggest you consider elegant terms like Destiny Rebirth or Fate Renewal rather than a cliché like the “Big Bang.” And how should you celebrate it? As if it were the Grand Opening of the rest of your long life.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): In 2020, I believe you will be able to summon the insight and kismet necessary to resolve at least one long-running problem, and probably more. You’ll have an enhanced ability to kick bad habits and escape dead-ends and uncover liberating truths about mysteries that have flowered you. Frustrations and irritations you’ve grudgingly tolerated for far too much time will finally begin to wane. Congratulations in advance, Aquarius! The hard work you do to score these triumphs won’t always be delightful, but it could provide you with a curiously robust and muscular kind of fun.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Let’s say you wanted to dress completely in silk: skirt, pants, vest, scarf, socks, shoes, hat, underwear all made of silk. And let’s say your dream was to grow and process and weave the silk from scratch. You’d start with half 10,000 silkworms. Eventually those hardworking weaver would have fun cultivating your allure, style and flair.

HOMWORK: I DECLARE YOU CHAMPION, UNVANQUISHABLE HERO, AND TITLE-HOLDER OF TRUMPHANT GLORY. DO YOU ACCEPT?

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12/11 WALMART NEIGHBORHOOD MARKET MONTGOMERY
Wednesday 12/11 around 5 I saw you at the WM Market near the pharmacy. You had a black beanie, black jacket and long wavy auburn hair. You were eating something like a twizzler at self check out. I’m blonde and was also wearing a black jacket. I almost stopped after we smiled at each other, but had to run. You seem cool and I just moved from out of state. If you’re free, let’s talk sometime.


BEARDED HANDSOME GUY
Was making nachos for my nephew. I turned as you walked into the store. We made direct eye contact as you walked in. You got in line. I couldn’t help but stare due to your well groomed beard given I am a pogonophile it drove me crazy you seemed so perfect with your body type beard and hair. I believe you wore a navy blue shirt and grey sweats. I been looking for someone like you. I hope you are not staring due to your well groomed beard given I am an environment.


BAD RELIGION
I saw you at the Bad Religion concert looking stunning dressed in black, with big beautiful eyes, and sitting with a blond by the bar. You offered to buy me a drink and said that I rescued you. We leaned into each other and had a great conversation. The instant chemistry was magic. Before we knew it the night was over and we went our separate ways. Becca do you believe in fate? Is there any chance I’ll get to see you again?

“You Turned Up”—I’m just following directions.

by Matt Jones
© 2019 Matt Jones

Across
1 Coat of arms inscription
6 Dir. from NYC to Seattle
9 Sibilant sound
13 In the vicinity of
14 “The Beatles at ___ Stadium” (music documentary)
15 Minimal amount
16 __keep a kaenS
19 Collapsible shelter
20 Paleozoic and Cenozoic, e.g.
21 What baby shampoo avoids
22 Hybrid citrus from Jamaica
24 Proped open
26 ‘Toot s’tisirucinaM
30 “___ a Rainbow” (Rolling Stones tune)
34 __ apso (dog breed)
35 Prescriptions, briefly
37 “Mixed-ish” network
38 “You’ve Got Mail” ISP
39 With 49-Across, ?retsis s’aneresS
42 Blazers’ org.
43 Unhealthy
44 High or low cards
45 “Li’l” guy in the comics
47 Take five
49 See 39-Across
52 “___ be surprised”
54 “… ___ it seems”
55 Birch of “Ghost World”
58 “Flashdance” director Adrian
60 Paintball mark
64 ‘Trekrowoc s’rotcdunoC
67 Precious metal sources
68 “Eat, ___ Love”
69 ___Whirl (amusement park ride)
70 Second to
71 Wood used to make baseball bats
72 Fabled tale-teller

Down
1 Beer ingredient
2 Symphony orchestra woodwind
3 “Who Framed Roger Rabbit?” character
4 Onomatopoetic name for motorized rickshaws
5 First N.L. player to hit 500 home runs
6 “Hold up!”
7 Company’s bottom line
8 When doubled, a guitar effect
9 Job opening fillers
10 Only state name starting with two vowels
11 Head the cast
12 Reports
14 Feature of a font
17 Assist
18 Sched. guess
23 Tropical fruit with pink flesh
25 Baby Yoda, eventually (one presumes)
26 Prime minister between Major and Brown
27 “Head Like ___” (Nine Inch Nails song)
28 They may be recorded for quality and training purposes
29 “Hello, ___ Be Going!” (Phil Collins album)
31 Barbera’s animation partner
32 Diminished
33 Do a haunted house job
36 Catches
40 Raw silk shade
41 Annoying ones
46 “Two-bite” bakery item, maybe
48 Actor Gibson of “2 Fast 2 Furious”
50 “The Daily Show” correspondent Chiang
51 Neighbor of Nev.
53 Rafter’s need
55 Disney movie about computers
56 Lifesaver, maybe
57 Subway fixture
59 “I know”
61 Wriggely tankful
62 “Dallas Buyers Club” Oscar winner Jared
63 Sandy golf hazard
65 Hotel offering
66 “Give ___ go!”

ANSWERS TO THIS WEEK’S PUZZLE ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT ALIBI.COM
WEEKLY ALIBI
JANUARY 2-8, 2020

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7

NEW YEAR’S EVE WITH RYAN MCGARVEY
EL REY THEATRE

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8

MOBILE DEATH CAMP
HOLocaust
DESTROY TO RECREATE
UNDYING EVIL

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9

PERIPHERY
PLINI COVET
SUNSHINE THEATER

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10

CONCEPTO TAMBOR
SOL DE LA NOCHE
EL SUPER MR. MRVL

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11

THE TALKING HOURS
DARKEN THE DAY
ILLUM DISTANCES
DEPATER

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12

THE RIDDIMS
THIRD ROOTS
REVIVA DJ POSITRAX

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

MORGAN HERITAGE
INNASTATE POCKETFULL OF DUB

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15

J STONE
BOBO
KEE.OOD ROACHKXNG

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16

MOBILE DEATH CAMP
HOLocaust
DESTROY TO RECREATE
UNDYING EVIL

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17

RED LIGHT CAMERAS
LINDY VISION CODA
THE LOST REMOTES

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18

THE RIDDIMS
THIRD ROOTS
REVIVA DJ POSITRAX

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF "THE EVIL POWERS OF ROCK ‘N’ ROLL"
SUPERSUCKERS
GET ACTION
SWEET NOTHIN

MONDAY, JANUARY 20

TONY MACALPINE
SCHIERMANN
THE GROUND BENEATH

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