

IML's Jeffrey Payne is on a mission

Dallas' top leatherman's campaign
Charity seeks to give a voice to the hearing impaired gay community

■ PROFILE, Page 26



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Established 1984 | Volume 27 | Issue 9

FREE | Friday, July 16, 2010

Anti-gay protesters pack Fort Worth City Council chamber

Opponents of city's diversity initiatives
speaking during council meeting, even
though issue wasn't on the agenda

TAMMYE NASH | Senior Editor
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FORT WORTH — A crowd of about 200 people opposing recent diversity initiatives implemented by the city of Fort Worth packed Cowtown's City Council chambers on Tuesday, July 13, even though nothing related to the initiatives was on the council's agenda.

Five individuals representing the opponents spoke during the portion of the meeting allotted for citizen comments, while four representatives from Fairness Fort Worth spoke in support of the city's efforts to improve relations with its LGBT community.

The diversity initiatives grew out of recommendations forwarded to the council by the City Manager's Diversity Task Force and approved by City Manager Dale Fislser late last year. The task force — comprising 16 city employees and 16 LGBT community representatives, all appointed by Fislser — was formed last summer in the wake of the June 28 raid on the Rainbow Lounge by officers with the Fort Worth Police Department and agents of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission.

The recommendations suggested by the task force included improved diversity training for all city employees, domestic partner benefits for gay and lesbian city employees, coverage of gender reassignment surgery for transgender employees in transition, promoting the city as a destination for LGBT tourism, and lobbying for passage of state and federal laws banning anti-LGBT discrimination in employment.

The task force also recommended that the council amend the city's nondiscrimination ordinance to specifically prohibit discrimination based on gender identity.

■ FORT WORTH, Page 12

Argentina legalizes gay marriage



PROTESTING THE INEVITABLE | Members of Catholic groups protest outside Argentina's Congress against a same-sex marriage bill in Buenos Aires on Tuesday, July 13. On Thursday, July 15, senators voted to pass the measure, making Argentina the first Latin American country to legalize same-sex marriage. (Natacha Pisarenko/Associated Press)

Argentinian president supports
bill that passed the Senate

REX WOCKNER | Wockner News Service
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Argentina legalized same-sex marriage in the early morning hours of Thursday July 15, with a 33-27 vote in the Senate, with three abstentions. The vote came at 4:05 a.m. The Chamber of Deputies had approved

the bill in May, and President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner strongly supports it.

"The bill has passed. It is law. The executive power will be notified," the Senate president said as the vote was displayed on an electronic board in the chamber.

The debate lasted nearly 15 hours.

"The result sparked euphoria among the [LGBT] activists who, despite the polar wave that grips the city, held a vigil in the Plaza of the Two Congresses," said Buenos Aires' Clarín newspaper after the vote.

The website of Argentina's main gay political group, la Federación Argentina LGBT, was kicked off the Internet and replaced with a "Bandwidth Limit Exceeded" notice.

Evan Wolfson, head of the U.S. group Freedom to Marry, applauded the vote. "Today's historic vote shows how far Catholic Argentina has come, from dictatorship to true democratic values, and how far the freedom to marry movement has come, as 12 countries on four continents now embrace marriage equality," he said. ■

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Oak Lawn area crime stats drop

Police report 11 percent decrease in violent crime in Cedar Springs Wycliff TAAG in first 6 months of 2010

JOHN WRIGHT | Online Editor
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Despite a recent high-profile hate crime in Oak Lawn, the area surrounding the Cedar Springs strip has gotten safer over the last six months, according to statistics from the Dallas Police Department.

In 2009, a roughly 1-square-mile area that includes the gay entertainment district recorded the fourth-most violent offenses of any of the city's 26 worst crime hotspots.

But during the first six months of 2010, the area known as the Cedar Springs Wycliff Target Area Action Grid (TAAG) saw an 11 percent drop in violent crime, the statistics show.

From January through June of this year, the Cedar Springs Wycliff TAAG recorded 95 violent offenses, down from 107 in the same period last year.

While DPD officials have cautioned against ranking the areas, 2010 numbers put the Cedar Springs Wycliff TAAG at No. 7 on the citywide list for violent crime.

DPD Deputy Chief Malik Aziz, who's over the department's Northwest Division, said according

■ Top 10 Crime Hotspots in Dallas in 2010

Area:	No. offenses
Five Points:	153
Northwest Hwy/Harry Hines:	114
Ross/Bennett:	108
Hatcher/2nd:	102
Forest/Audelia:	97
Jim Miller Loop 12:	96
Cedar Springs/Wycliff:	95
Buckner/Peavy:	92
Jefferson Corridor:	91
Buckner/Bruton:	87

Source: Dallas Police Department

to more recent statistics, through July 11, violent crime is down 15 percent in the Cedar Springs Wycliff TAAG.

"We've been pouring a lot of resources into different areas," Aziz said Thursday, July 15. "We've still got issues we've got to deal with, but crime is on the decrease. The payoff is as great as the community engagement with police."

Overall, the 26 TAAGs have seen a 6 percent reduction in violent crime in the first half of this year.

In the Cedar Springs Wycliff TAAG, individual robberies have seen the biggest drop, going from 69 in the first six months of 2009 to 55 this year. The other categories of violent crime — aggravated assault, murder, rape and business robberies



Scott Whittall

— have stayed roughly the same.

Aziz said there's also been a substantial decrease in nonviolent offenses — including property crimes such as burglary and theft — in the Cedar Springs Wycliff TAAG.

Scott Whittall, president of the Cedar Springs

■ CRIME, Page 10

Hershner died from overdose

Marty Hershner, the owner of the Tin Room and the Drama Room who passed away in April, died from an overdose of alcohol and cocaine, according to the Dallas County Medical Examiner's Office.

Dr. Chester Gwin of the ME's Office said Thursday morning, July 15 that he wasn't at liberty to discuss the toxicology results in detail. But Gwin confirmed that the official cause of death was "cocaine and ethanol toxicity."

"The amount in the system doesn't really matter," Gwin said. "It's one of

those drugs where a little can do the same as a lot. ... Cocaine is toxic in and of itself, but when you combine alcohol to it, there's a metabolite that's formed between the interaction of ethanol and cocaine that's an irritant to the heart."

— John Wright



88% of Texans back bans on anti-gay bullying in schools

A whopping 88 percent of likely Texas voters think public schools should be required "to protect all children from bullying, harassment, and discrimination in school, including the children of gay and lesbian parents or teenagers who are gay," according to poll results released Tuesday, July 13, by the Texas Freedom Network.

TFN commissioned its survey to gauge people's attitudes about the infamous State Board of Education. Chief among the survey's findings were that 72 percent of likely Texas voters want teachers and scholars, not politicians, to be responsible for writing curriculum requirements for public schools; and that 68 percent say separation of church and state is a key constitutional principle. The question about bullying was the only LGBT-specific one in the poll, but advocates are encouraged by the result.

"We're glad to see TFN's polling numbers confirm the obvious — Texans overwhelmingly want to provide a safe learning environment and protect ALL children regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression," said Chuck Smith, deputy director of Equality Texas. "For some reason, it's only a few politicians who want to use gay kids as political footballs. Now, these numbers show there is no excuse (as if there ever was) for politicians to block good legislation to protect Texas school children.

"Equality Texas worked with State Rep. Mark Strama on anti-bullying legislation in the 2009 Session and we have continued to work with him on legislation for 2011. We expect the measure to again receive bipartisan support and we will work aggressively to get it passed in the Texas House and the Texas Senate."

— John Wright

Lesbian mother wins first fight in custody battle

Judge's ruling gives Debie Hackett standing to fight for visitation with son from previous relationship

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
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Dallas District Judge David Hanschen ruled in June that a non-biological mother could assert her right to pursue visitation with and access to a child she raised since birth.

Kim Ferris, the biological mother, argued that Texas law prohibits the non-biological parent from seeking the right of visitation.

She and former partner Debie Hackett decided together to conceive a child with donated sperm and raised and cared for the child together.

Hanschen's ruling was one simple sentence. "After reviewing the pleadings of counsel, relevant case law, and my own hearing notes, the court denies Kimberley Ferris' plea to jurisdiction in the above referenced cause," he wrote to the three attorneys involved.

The ruling did not grant visitation, but denied Ferris' move to dismiss the case and allowed Hackett to continue her pursuit of parental rights.

Hackett said she knew Ferris for 10 years and they had been in a relationship since 2007. They discussed having children early in their relationship and decided Ferris would have a child first, based on her age, Hackett said.

Ferris conceived with sperm donated by Carlos Rojas, a gay man who both women had known for seven years.

The women's relationship ended in November 2009.

"When Oliver was 11 months old, she asked me to leave," Hackett said.

Hackett moved out of the house and said she gave Ferris 30 days "to come to her senses."

After the women broke up, Ferris filed to change the child's name from Hackett-Ferris.

After reading a story in Dallas Voice in December about a court decision in favor of Kristie Vowels, a non-biological mother, Hackett retained legal counsel.

Attorney Jonathan Winacour, who represents Hackett, said Texas law gives a non-custodial par-

ent that has cared for a child for at least six months just 90 days to file a motion.

Ferris and Rojas retained separate attorneys in the case, but neither returned calls from Dallas Voice.

Before the child's birth, Ferris wrote that she wanted Hackett to have "all the rights and responsibilities available in the state of Texas as a parent."

The hearing established that Hackett shared full duties as a parent. To prove her involvement, she produced records that showed she paid for clothing, food, diapers, development classes and health care.

Their pediatrician testified that she understood that Hackett had medical decision-making power.

Winacour emphasizes that this case is not about establishing same-sex marriage, but simply about what is best for the child.

In his arguments, Winacour made the case that the father is not a legal resident and is less likely to be able to maintain a residence within 100 miles. The father's paternity was not established for a year and was not on the birth certificate until after Hackett and Ferris broke up.

■ CUSTODY, Page 10

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localbriefs

Equality Texas Foundation offers training in Frisco

Equality Texas Foundation staff will train North Texas residents in Frisco on Saturday, July 17, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Global Peace Factory Coffee Bar, 1133 Legacy Drive in Frisco.

The training is co-sponsored by Collin County Gay and Lesbian Alliance, Youth First Texas-Collin County, Equality March Texas, Stonewall Democrats of Denton County, and Texas Democratic Women of Collin County.

For more information contact Equality Texas Foundation at 512-474-5475.

10TH ANNIVERSARY



DE LA GARZA UND SENKEL |

Patrick and Paul De La Garza Und Senkel celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary on July 8, 2000, with a trip to the Rio Grande Valley, the same place where they spent their honeymoon. The two met in March of 1999 at Dignity/Dallas, where they still attend services. They were married the following year at Dignity/Dallas. They have lived in their home in Duncanville, which they share with two cats named Sheba and Cinnamon, since 2001. They expressed deep gratitude for the love and support of their friends and family through the years.

pet of the week / nell

Nell is a beautiful 2 1/2-year-old chocolate Chesapeake Bay/labrador retriever mix. She loves other dogs and cats, and has lived with small children. Nell is house trained and is a very calm loving dog. She would love to go for walks and would be a great family pet.

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Do you recall where you were in the spring of 2000? Perhaps not. Don't feel badly; I have to confess that ordinarily I couldn't tell you where I was last Friday, much less 10 years ago.

But I had a conversation in April of the beginning of this decade that changed my life and the lives of so many others so drastically that I'm sure I will recall it distinctly 10 years from today.

The then-executive director of AIDS Outreach Center, Mike McKay, called me to meet him for a cup of coffee and to discuss an idea he had been tossing around in his head about a fundraising event — an event we now know as the Lone Star Ride Fighting AIDS. Since I was the V.P. of the Holloway Family Foundation, he asked me to ask our board to consider being the presenting sponsor of the event, which would raise money and awareness for the AIDS Outreach Center, AIDS Services of Dallas and Resource Center Dallas.

As our foundation was already committed to supporting these agencies individually, even a dull blade like me could figure out pretty quickly that having a \$40,000 contribution potentially return \$100,000 to these agencies was a sharp idea.

And so, here I am, 10 years later, enthusiastically anticipating the thrill of pedaling my way across what seems like a thousand miles of searing Texas wasteland — straight uphill!

A rational person might ask, "Why not just write a check and, pardon the pun, move on down the road?" Let me see if I can explain. In 2001 I was that sensible person, and so I never even considered riding a bike in the scorching Texas sun for 175 miles into the middle of Nowheresville.

The thought literally never occurred to me.

In fact, the last time I had ridden a bicycle, I was fairly certain my mother was walking alongside of me making sure I didn't fall over.

And so with a fair amount of detachment and nonchalance, I showed up at the closing ceremonies that first year to congratulate the riders and crewmembers for their dedication and determination. But standing on that platform, staring into those exhausted, exhilarated faces and hearing that enthusiastic, endearing crowd — well, I knew in an instant that I didn't want to be in the audience, I wanted to be in the show.

And it's been showtime ever since.

Is it hot? Yes. Does it sometimes rain? Yes. Are there potholes the size of Kansas and hills that would bring tears to Lance Armstrong's eyes? Yes and, well, no.

But there are also themed pit stops to refresh and rehydrate you; motorcycle riders to guide and protect you; crew members to pamper and encourage you; and an old friend or a potential new one just around every corner — or "on your left" as it were.

Those are a handful of the somewhat superficial reasons that I have participated in some form or fashion in this ride for the past 10 years (well, maybe not in '05 when Hurricane Rita hit, but hey, nobody could expect the Queen of Damn Near Everything to cycle in a typhoon!)

But the primary reason, the reason that keeps me coming back year after year after year after — well, you get the point — is that if I don't ask, somebody won't give, and if I don't do, somebody won't have, and if I don't tell, somebody won't know.

And when my kids and my grandkids look back at this decade and the crisis that is AIDS, and ask me what I did to help, I want to be able to look into their faces and tell them I did my part.

And so, as is my way, let me close with a few lines of corny prose:

If you've never been a part,
Ask yourself, "Why?"
You don't know if you can do it
Until you give it a try.

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There's so much to gain
And so I just bet

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To the future of those
Who are counting on you.
And so I propose

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Even if now you don't "get it."
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Man in rape case also charged with assault in connection with HIV status

Tumbwe, former minister with Potter's House, claims sex was consensual; 2 other women say defendant didn't reveal his status and gave them HIV

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
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Nathaniel Tumbwe is on trial in Dallas for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. The weapon is his penis and his bodily fluids are the bullets because he has AIDS, herpes and genital warts.

According to testimony in Tumbwe's criminal trial, Tumbwe made repeated advances to Carolyn Hudson, which she refused. In October 2008, she reported to police that he raped her in her house. She said she invited him to her home twice to discuss religion and on that second visit he raped her.

Weeks later she learned he had AIDS.

The defense claimed that Hudson simply regrets having had a relationship with Tumbwe.

Hudson is a receptionist at Potters House, a megachurch in Southwest Dallas. Tumbwe refers to himself as a reverend who was affiliated with the church at the time.

Hudson has tested negative for HIV. Two other women who contracted the virus after unprotected sex with Tumbwe will testify at the punishment phase of the trial if he is convicted.

Ken Upton, staff attorney for Lambda Legal in Dallas, said that calling the penis a weapon is unusual.

He said that Lambda Legal has filed briefs in cases where police charged someone with assault when a person with HIV that was being arrested spit on the officer. Since that is not a method of transmission and spitting is not normally seen as assault, the courts dismissed the charges.

In a 2009 case in Michigan, a man with HIV arrested for assault was also charged with bioterrorism after biting his victim. Lambda Legal filed a brief in the matter.

"This charge leads to public misunderstanding of how HIV is transmitted, contributes to stigmatizing people with HIV and undermines important public health goals," Lambda Legal attorneys wrote in their brief.

In June 2010, the bioterrorism charge was dismissed.

But Upton warned about having unprotected sex or not revealing one's HIV status to a sexual partner.

"Knowingly having unprotected, nonconsensual sex puts it in a different category," Upton said.

He said in Texas it would at least be a good argument for battery.

Why Dallas prosecutors would go for the assault with a deadly weapon charge, however, when rape has severe penalties, Upton said he could only speculate. He thought they might have added the charge in order to get a plea bargain. Once the case went to trial, he suggested it might have been to further bias the jury against the defendant or simply add charges.

Jamille Bradfield is the public information officer for the Dallas County district attorney's office. She said she could not comment on the case because the trial is ongoing.

The charge has worked in North Texas before.

In 2009, a Frisco man was convicted of six counts of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon — his bodily fluids — because he was HIV positive. Ten women who seroconverted after having sex with him testified for the prosecution. The sex was apparently consensual. No rape was charged.

That case was the first in which DNA testing showed that the defendant was the source of the infection. He was sentenced to 45 years in prison.

■ ASSAULT CHARGE, Page 10

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ASSAULT CHARGE

From Page 9

In March, a Houston man was charged with having unprotected sex with a minor. The charges were upgraded to aggravated sexual assault when police learned that he was aware of his HIV positive status.

Enhancing the charges when HIV is involved is becoming more common according to The Center for HIV Law & Policy. They list about 60 current or recent cases across the country. Charges range from spitting and knowingly spreading infectious disease to assault with intent to kill.

The cases involving sex, rather than spitting or biting, all appear to involve heterosexuals.

The organization calls penalties for crimes involving persons with HIV "draconian," with up to 25 years in prison even when no transmission occurred.

In the Tumbwe case, there was apparently no infection in the case of the rape victim. Hudson has not tested positive for HIV but is being told that she needs to retest once a year for 10 years.

Bret Camp, associate executive director for health and medical services at Resource Center Dallas, said that was ridiculous and unnecessary.

"Technology has advanced," Camp said. "HIV RNA testing is now available at Nelson Tebedo

Clinic through a partnership with Dallas County. It detects HIV in seven to 10 days after an exposure."

He said for peace of mind, he'd recommend a follow-up at 60 days, but called even that medically unnecessary. He said he knows of no cases where someone suddenly tested positive years after exposure.

David Clohessy, national director of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, has been following the Tumbwe trial and said the case is of particular interest because of the trust people place in other people involved in their church.

He said that prosecuting crimes involving

churches are particularly difficult.

"Often people associated with a church are reluctant to speak up," Clohessy said. "By cooperating with law enforcement, churchgoers are strengthening their congregations and making them healthier communities."

And many churches are reluctant to discuss HIV prevention. By going public, Hudson may have helped open the discussion of several topics at the church including HIV testing and revealing status to partners as well as sexual abuse by church elders.

At press time, the trial was still in progress. Tumbwe faces 20 years in prison if convicted. ■

CRIME

From Page 4

Merchants Association, said he's noticed a difference.

"It's definitely an improvement," Whittall said. "I think as business owners on the street, we feel it. It's definitely reduced, so those numbers don't shock me."

Whittall and others have criticized the TAAG statistics in the past, saying they're not an accurate reflection of the gay entertainment district.

While it includes the strip, the Cedar Springs Wycliff TAAG stretches to Parkland Hospital and beyond Stemmons Freeway in some places.

CUSTODY

From Page 4

Winocour said that waiting a year is grounds for establishing abandonment in Texas.

Hackett said she is not trying to prevent Rojas from participating in raising the child. She simply wants standard visitation rights. She said she is in the best position to provide health insurance and has a stable home and income to benefit her son.

"The three of us made a contract to bring a child into this world. I'm not going away. This is my son," Hackett said.

On Wednesday, July 14, Winocour filed a motion seeking an order compelling mediation in advance of a hearing on temporary orders. All sides would be required to appear before a mediator.

If mediation were successful, Hanschen's court would presumably instate those orders. If not, the case would return to his court for further hearing. ■

Death

Jody Ray Walden, 44, of Fort Worth died Sunday, July 11, at his Fort Worth home after a brief illness.

Walden was a Texas native and was self-employed. His friends said he was a multi-

talented individual who adored his daughters and lived life to the fullest.

Walden was preceded in death by his parents, Arnie and Doodle Walden, and his brother, Jamie Walden.

He is survived by his daughters,

Cristen Walden of Fort Worth and Alyssa Walden of Aledo; and his brothers, Brian Walden of Keller and Kevin Walden of Springtown.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, July 17, at St. Paul's Catholic Church in River Oaks. A celebration of life will immediately follow at Brian and Angie Walden's home in Roanoke. The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to a memorial account for the benefit of his children set up at Chase Bank.



"I have a feeling that in our little area, that it's a higher drop," Whittall said.

He added that he's noticed an increased police presence, including an unmanned cruiser parked in the Kroger parking lot.

"That type of little extra effort is very welcome," he said.

Whittall, co-owner of Buli Café, said the busi-

ness received a visit recently from DPD officers conducting a survey about crime issues in the area.

During a June meeting with LGBT stakeholders, new Police Chief David Brown promised a return to community-oriented policing.

"We're just trying to drill down to be more pointed and more focused on specific things we need to target," Aziz said of the survey. ■

CYCLONE DONATION



BON VOYAGE | Gene Olvera, center, associate manager of Cyclone Anaya's World Class Mexican Kitchen, presents a check for \$1,747.20 to Turtle Creek Chorale President Sean Baugh, right, and Chorale Artistic Director Jonathan Palant. Cyclone Anaya's hosted seven fundraising dinners for the Chorale in recent weeks where a portion of each night's proceeds was designated to help fund the Chorale's recent trip to Spain.

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CAPITAL ONE DONATION



GIVING WITH PRIDE | Sanjiv Yajnik, president of Capital One Financial Services, second from left, recently presented a check for \$3,000 to AIDS Arms Inc., making Capital One a sponsor, at the Life Supporter level, of AIDS Arms' annual fundraiser, LifeWalk. This year's LifeWalk will be held Oct. 10. Yajnik presented the check to Margaret Byrne, director of resource development for AIDS Arms, during an event at Capital One's offices in Plano celebrating National LGBT Pride Month. Guest speaker for the event was openly lesbian Dallas County Sheriff Lupe Valdez, third from left. Also pictured is Naomi White, a development associate with AIDS Arms.

FORT WORTH

From Page 1

Most of the recommendations involved procedural changes that could be implemented by the city manager without a vote by the council.

The council did vote, 6-3, on Nov. 11 last year to add specific gender identity protections to the nondiscrimination ordinance. The vote came after a marathon hearing during which numerous people spoke in favor of and against the amendment.

However city staff are still studying the feasibility of offering domestic partner benefits and adding coverage for gender reassignment surgery.

A spokesman in the office of Fort Worth Mayor Mike Moncrief said this week that the resurgence of opposition may have been tied to the one-year anniversary of the Rainbow Lounge raid. This week's meeting was the council's first since the June 28 anniversary date.

But Thomas Anable, president of Fairness Fort Worth, said his organization believes Diversity Task Force opponents had intended to speak during time set aside for public comments on the proposed budget for the city's Crime Control and Prevention District budget. That budget includes funds to pay for diversity training for police officers and for officer recruitment efforts within the LGBT community, he said.

However, the council voted to delay the public hearing on that budget for two weeks.

"They were there because they felt like they got

shut out of the process [of the Diversity Task Force] last year," Anable, who was a member of the task force, said on Wednesday, after the council meeting. "Every meeting that the task force had was open to the public, and nobody showed up."

Anable said he believes the move to bring the opponents to the Tuesday night council meeting this week was led by Richard Clough, a failed candidate for Tarrant County judge who is an associate minister with Kenneth Copeland Ministries.

"They said last November when the task force's report was presented to the council, and when the council voted on the transgender ordinance, they said then that they had been left out and that they would be back," Anable said. "I think, with the CCPD budget on the agenda this week, they saw an opportunity to try and make a sneak attack."

Anable said Fairness Fort Worth learned on Monday of e-mails that had been circulated over the weekend among conservative and evangelical Christian churches, calling on evangelical Christians to pack the council chambers at Tuesday's meeting.

But instead of sending out a calling for the LGBT community and its allies to attend also, Anable said his organization chose to organize a small, but visible, contingent to attend as a show of support for the city's initiatives, with specific community leaders signing up to speak.

"We didn't want a big catfight," Anable said.

■ **FORT WORTH**, Next Page

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■ FORT WORTH, From Previous Page

"We just wanted to have people there to show support, with just a few speaking. We wanted to give a calm and dignified response."

Anable said after the meeting he feels confident that the city council will not reverse the progress it has made so far on diversity issues — a confidence that was reinforced by Mayor Mike Moncrief's statements both before and after the citizen comment session.

Moncrief opened the comment session with an admonition to both sides to "be respectful" and with a pledge that the city would not go backward.

"I am very pleased with the progress we have had to date," the mayor said. It has certainly reflected the diversity of our city. And it reflects this city's belief that no one should be discriminated against, no matter who they are. And that is not going to change. That is important for all of us, whether its an ordinance or not, that should be an ordinance in life. No one should be discriminated against."

The five men who spoke against the Diversity Task Force and the city's diversity initiatives all criticized city officials for "promoting a homosexual agenda" against the wishes of what they said is a majority of the city's residents.

Clough, who stood at the podium flanked by supporters wearing paper badges printed with the word "Truth," began by accusing Mayor Mike Moncrief and the council of "intentionally hiding the implementation of a homosexual agenda."

The accusation prompted an angry rebuttal for the mayor, who threatened to have Clough removed from the council chambers if he continued with "personal attacks."

The two men argued briefly, with Clough continuing to speak over the mayor's admonishments and with Moncrief at one point turning off the microphone at the podium where Clough stood.

"We have a way of doing business here, and that is not to come in here and personally attack anybody. We don't attack you, nor does anyone on our staff. We don't expect you to come in here and attack us," Moncrief said. "If you want to talk about the diversity task force, that is all well and good. But don't expect to come in here and get away with personal attacks."

When Moncrief allowed Clough to continue, the minister accused the mayor of refusing to meet with him, although some council members had met with him. Clough said that "every voice was not heard" on the Diversity Task Force's recommendations, adding that the council was going against the wishes of the majority of the city's citizens who had, he said, voted against same-sex marriage in 2004 by a 77 percent majority.

He criticized the city for spending money to send lobbyists to Washington, D.C., to promote passage of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, and for promoting the city as a destination for LGBT tourism.

"Who are you promoting it to? Queer liberation [possibly a reference to the now-defunct direct

■ FORT WORTH, Page 14

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FORT WORTH

From Page 13

action group Queer LiberAction]? To NAMBLA — the North American Man-Boy Love Association? Or are you just promoting it to the gay chambers?" Clough said.

Clough also criticized the addition of gender identity to the city's nondiscrimination ordinance, suggesting that council members "ask the ladies do they want a man who suffers from gender identity disorder coming in on them in the bathroom. ... If they gays want to promote something, let them spend their own money to promote it."

Clough said the city "has no business promoting the homosexual lifestyle, just like it has no business promoting the heterosexual lifestyle."

He said that while the city should "stand against hatred or discrimination or abuse of any kind," the media and the LGBT community have "distorted the facts" surrounding the Rainbow Lounge raid and are using that to "promote the homosexual agenda."

"Homosexuality can be divisive. That's not my intent," Clough said. "My intent is to have all voices heard and find a solution that is best for all."

Robert Hayes said the city's leadership "should serve the people of the city, serve the masses, and not cater to the wishes of the few." He said that the raid at the Rainbow Lounge was a situation that should have been investigated by police department officials, and "not a situation to make sweeping changes in the city."

"Do we set up a task force if we find the city has an unusually large number of employees coming down with the flu? Do we set one up to discuss who can live in what area of town? Then my question is, why did we set up a task force for diversity when it appears we only had a question of the use of force and the appropriate degree of force that was used?" Hayes said.

The Rev. Perfeto Esquibel, pastor of Christian Worship Center of Fort Worth, complained that the task force "seems to be made up of only one certain interest group rather than a combination of people with different opinions about gay civil rights."

Esquibel also said it is "a slap in the face" to racial and ethnic minorities to call LGBT people a minority. He said the task force and the city's diversity initiatives are part of a "gay rights agenda" being pushed by a "minute" number of people, and that most Fort Worth residents are Christians who believe that "the Bible is the word of God, and it's what the Constitution and the Bill of Rights are based on."

John Carlson, a Fort Worth businessman and husband of Texas Eagle Forum President Pat Carlson, told the council he believed it was irresponsible to spend city dollars on diversity initiatives when the city is facing a budget shortfall.

"This diversity will expand benefits and increase spending. Taxpayers do not want increased spending or taxes," Carlson said.

He said that as a businessman who provides insurance to his employees, he knows that health insurance costs increase every year. Providing coverage to the domestic partners of gay and lesbian city employees would increase the city's

costs, he said, because gays and lesbians engage in 'undeniably risky behavior. ... If that lifestyle were a pack of cigarettes, it would require a surgeon general's warning.'

Carlson said, "If you insure domestic partners, what if they have more than one partner? ... Why not insure boyfriends or girlfriends? ... Where does this coverage end? It just goes on."

Scott Graham, who described himself as a businessman and former police officer, said he had conducted his own investigation into the Rainbow Lounge raid.

He repeated allegations that patrons in the bar that night sexually harassed and groped officers (those allegations were found to be either false or grossly exaggerated during official investigations), and accused witnesses and LGBT community leaders of "gross misrepresentations" of the raid and of "mak[ing] things up as they went along."

Graham said, "Government was created by God to protect His definition of family," and then asked for — and received — permission to "pray and speak a blessing over our city."

The Rev. Carol West, pastor of Celebration Community Church, was the first of four speakers to speak in support of the Diversity Task Force and its recommendations. Noting that she is a member of Fairness Fort Worth and one of the people who leads the city's new diversity training, West said that the training makes clear that its purpose is not to address religious issues or question anyone's religious beliefs.

The training, she said, is designed to give "a perspective of the GLBT community. ... Is there a homosexual agenda? I have heard a lot of talk about it, and you [task force opponents] talk a lot more about it than we [LGBT people] ever do."

"We teach that everyone is your customer. We say treat everyone with respect. Treat people with dignity. We teach about not demeaning people, not making people unwanted," West said. "If that is a homosexual agenda, then it needs to be spread around."

Steve Dutton, a task force member, and Lisa Thomas, a member of the task force, the city's Human Rights Commission and Fairness Fort Worth, also spoke during the council meeting. But said the diversity initiatives are a question of equal treatment, not religious beliefs.

To close the public comment session, Moncrief said he believes there is "respect in this city. There is room for all of us."

"We are trying to work through something very difficult. We weren't pleased to be in the national spotlight for what happened or didn't happen. But it was and is up to us to find out what happened. Obviously, somebody did something. TABC certainly felt somebody did something they shouldn't have, because they fired the two agents that were involved."

He added, "Don't feel like we were not listening, because we were. We are. I hope you all feel like you have been heard tonight. ... What's in the Bible or what isn't in the Bible, that's not our job. Our job is to maintain the quality of life in our city, and that's what this [diversity] training is all about." ■

To watch complete video of the Fort Worth City Council meeting, go online to FortWorthGov.org.



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■ spirituality



BLESSINGS | The Rev. Jo Hudson, left, and His Holiness Karma Kuchen Rinpoche offer a blessing of the Interfaith Peace Chapel in April.

Cathedral celebrates 40 years of hope

LGBT church has had its share of struggles, but pastor says Cathedral continues to grow into new life

TAMMYE NASH | Senior Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

"Every church with any kind of history has its fair share of struggles," the Rev. Jo Hudson, rector and senior pastor of Cathedral of Hope in Dallas.

And with 40 years of history behind it, she said, Cathedral of Hope — which celebrates its 40th anniversary July 24-25 — is no exception.

Despite those struggles, Hudson said, the church this month celebrates not just 40 years of history, but also its growth into the next 40 years with new vision and new hope.

"When this church started in 1970, most of the

struggles were external. In 1970, it was dangerous to be openly gay in Dallas, and to be Christian and gay — well, that was considered an oxymoron.

"But now, 40 years later, our society has changed," she added. "Most denominations, most faiths have at least some churches that welcome and accept LGBT people in one way or another. ... But we believe there is still very much a need and a place for a church like us that is historically and predominantly gay. There is a healing and an affirmation [for LGBT people in a predominantly LGBT church] that can't necessarily be found anywhere else."

Although CoH remains a predominantly LGBT church, Hudson said that since its affiliation with UCC, the church has begun seeing "more and more straight couples and families coming here to worship."

■ Continued on Next Page

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■ Continued from Previous Page

"These are straight families who want their children raised in an environment of radical welcome. These are people who are also looking for a place to belong, who are trying to rediscover Christianity," Hudson said.

Hudson said that the CoH board recently "revisited our vision statement and our mission statement," and reaffirmed the church's core values to be a "large-member church, one big enough to change the way straight people think about LGBT people, to change the way LGBT people think about God, to reach out to LGBT people — especially teens — living in isolation in small towns and to redefine Christianity as a faith of radical inclusion, instead of exclusion."

She continued, "Our mission remains the same — to reclaim Christianity as a faith of extravagant grace, radically inclusion and relentless compassion. But it has broadened, in some ways, too."

The Cathedral, Hudson said, has begun finding new ways to collaborate and partner not only with other churches, especially its sister churches within the UCC, but also with other organizations within the LGBT community.

The most visible symbol of that renewed and expanded outreach is the Interfaith Peace Chapel. Although completion of the chapel was delayed by the economic crash of 2008-2009, Hudson said this week that construction is back on track, and the chapel should be completed by September.

"We hope to be able to dedicate the chapel in November, and we have planned a '40 Days and 40 Nights' celebration, with 40 events taking place between All Saints Sunday and Christmas Eve," she said.

"This chapel will be a tremendous vehicle to continue the kind of interfaith dialog necessary to find peace, an opportunity to actively pursue peace in our own lives, in our own community, in our nation and even beyond," Hudson said.

She said that as construction began on the interior, representatives of 16 different world faiths were invited in to place decorative plates — created by artist Donna Collins and each represent-

■ CoH's 40th Birthday Party

Sunday, July 18: Presentation of the Hero of Hope Award during the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services. Recipient is the Rev. Stephen Sprinkle, a professor at TCU's Brite Divinity School. Gospel singer Cynthia Clawson will attend the morning services and will perform in concert at the church Sunday night at 6 p.m.

Saturday, July 24: Birthday Celebration at the Infomart. Begins at 7 p.m. Features live music by The Roof Raisers and a performance by comedian Judy Tenuta. After party at 10 p.m. featuring "Judy Unplugged." Tickets \$40 for 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.; \$80 for the entire evening, including the after party.

Sunday, July 25: 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services at the Meyerson Symphony Center, featuring a performance by Broadway star Sam Harris.

ing a different faith — at positions around the sanctuary. As the plates were placed, prayers from the different faiths were recited in what was "a deeply spiritual moment, a holy moment," Hudson said.

The prayers, she explained, represent the hope that the chapel will be a place of dialog, a place of healing and a place where peace can be created — all contained within a structure that has already earned attention purely for its architectural significance.

"As excited as I am about this new building, I am more excited about what will pour forth from it," Hudson said. "This chapel is a symbol of what our congregation has sought to do all along, from its beginning, and that is to welcome all people and transform lives.

"Right now we are in such an interesting and exciting position. We are birthing new churches, doing all the things Jesus would have us do," she added. "It is required of us to do justice, and we have this great opportunity to live into that calling, and to still be a haven of hope for all people who are hurting." ■

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CoH

- The congregation now known as Cathedral of Hope starts in **1968** as The Circle of Friends.
- In **July 1970** the congregation is chartered as Metropolitan Community Church-Dallas.
- In **December 1971**, MCC-Dallas moves into an office building at 3834 Ross Ave that the congregation had rented and renovated.
- In **October 1976**, the congregation purchases an old church building at 2701 Reagan.
- In **1984**, the AIDS epidemic hits North Texas full force. The church loses hundreds of members, and the membership drops from about 500 to about 300.
- In **November 1987**, the Rev. Michael Piazza is chosen as senior pastor. He hires the Rev. Paul Tucker as associate pastor ministering to those with HIV/AIDS.
- In **1990**, MCC-Dallas changes its name to Cathedral of Hope. The church sells the Reagan Street property and moves into temporary quarters on Maple Avenue.
- **December 1992**, Cathedral of Hope moves into its new facility at 5910 Cedar Springs Road.
- In **July 1995**, the church announces that architect Phillip Johnson will design a new cathedral.
- The John Thomas Bell Wall is dedicated on **July 30, 2000**.
- Congregational Life Center, is dedicated on **July 28, 2002**.
- In **July 2003**, the congregation votes to disaffiliate with UFMCC and becomes an independent congregation.
- In **February 2005**, the Rev. Jo Hudson is elected senior pastor and rector of the church.
- In **October 2008**, Cathedral of Hope becomes an official UCC congregation.
- In **November 2007**, ground is broken for the Interfaith Peace Chapel. Although delayed by the economic crisis of 2008-2009, construction is expected to be complete by **September 2010**.

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"INVIGORATING AND FRESH. UPROARIOUSLY FUNNY."

Annette Bening and Julianne Moore are real treats. Director Lisa Cholodenko shows a warm, funny side and crafts some brilliant chemistry between her two leads. A seductive turn by Mark Ruffalo."

BILGE EBIRI & LOGAN HILL

Entertainment

"FUNNY, SMART AND SEXY."

This pitch-perfect movie charms audiences into a state of enlightenment."

LISA SCHWARZBAUM

ANNETTE BENING JULIANNE MOORE MARK RUFFALO

THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT

MIA WASIKOWSKA JOSH HUTCHERSON

Nic and Jules had the perfect family,
until they met the man who made it all possible.

STORY BY LISA SCHWARZBAUM. SCREENPLAY BY ANNETTE BENING AND JULIANNE MOORE. DIRECTED BY LISA CHOLODENKO. CASTING BY LISA SCHWARZBAUM. COSTUME DESIGNER: JENNIFER WOOD. HAIR: JESSICA WOOD. MAKEUP: JESSICA WOOD. PRODUCTION DESIGNER: JESSICA WOOD. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: JESSICA WOOD, JESSICA WOOD, JESSICA WOOD. PRODUCED BY JESSICA WOOD. WRITTEN BY LISA SCHWARZBAUM. BASED UPON THE PLAY BY CECILIA WOOD. CASTING BY LISA SCHWARZBAUM. COSTUME DESIGNER: JENNIFER WOOD. HAIR: JESSICA WOOD. MAKEUP: JESSICA WOOD. PRODUCTION DESIGNER: JESSICA WOOD. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: JESSICA WOOD, JESSICA WOOD, JESSICA WOOD. PRODUCED BY JESSICA WOOD. WRITTEN BY LISA SCHWARZBAUM. BASED UPON THE PLAY BY CECILIA WOOD. CASTING BY LISA SCHWARZBAUM. COSTUME DESIGNER: JENNIFER WOOD. HAIR: JESSICA WOOD. MAKEUP: JESSICA WOOD. PRODUCTION DESIGNER: JESSICA WOOD. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: JESSICA WOOD, JESSICA WOOD, JESSICA WOOD. PRODUCED BY JESSICA WOOD. WRITTEN BY LISA SCHWARZBAUM. BASED UPON THE PLAY BY CECILIA WOOD. 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Dallas Voice is published weekly on Fridays. Each reader is entitled to one free copy of each issue, obtained at official distribution locations. These locations include most area 7-Eleven stores and the businesses and organizations marked with an asterisk in the directories located near the back of this issue.

Subscriptions via First Class Mail are available at the following rates: Three months (13 consecutive issues), \$65. Six months (26 consecutive issues), \$85. One year (52 consecutive issues), \$130. Subscriptions are payable by check, cashier's check, money order, Visa, Mastercard or American Express.

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OL Library needs our community – now!

Friends and volunteers are needed to help restore service, but saving the library with such a large LGBT collection will be a struggle.

The Oak Lawn Library — the center for the largest LGBT population and site of a large LGBTQ collection of fiction, nonfiction, CDs and DVDs — needs the immediate, ongoing and outspoken support of our community.

City of Dallas budget proposals for 2011 would take a meat axe to funding for the entire system, comprising the Central Library downtown and 26 branches.

Here is what our community can now get at the Oak Lawn Library:

- Convenience: Tuesday, Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Wednesday and Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Free book rentals, including fiction, biographies, cookbooks and how-to books.
- Free DVDs, including gay and straight hits, documentaries and TV series.
- Free WiFi access and quiet tables in well-lighted working areas.
- A free online catalog, searchable from home or at the library.
- Free, confidential help available through income tax season.



Phyllis Guest
Guest Contributor

- Free meeting space for organizations, including the area crime watch group.
- Free use of computers for job searches and submitting online applications.
- Free ESL classes and a range of other learning opportunities.
- And for LGBTs with children, many age-appropriate programs.

Here is the outlook from the city's 2011 budget proposals:

- Oak Lawn Library would open the same hours, but with half the staff.
- Pages — half-timers who haul, sort and shelve materials — would be gone.
- Pages' work would be left for remaining staff and community volunteers.
- Central Library research and reading areas would open only Thursday, Friday and Saturday.
- Dallas' system would lose its American Library Association accreditation.
- Without accreditation, state, federal and grant funding would all be lost.

So let's cut to the chase. Here's what Oak Lawn Library needs:

- New "Friends" members — costing as little as \$15 a year.
- Supporters wearing buttons at citywide budget meetings being held through August.
- Speakers to attend City Council, political and community meetings.
- Letters, e-mails and calls to City Council members and the media.
- Reliable volunteers, because the library is already shorthanded.

Two years ago, the library was funded to the tune of \$32 million. The 2011 proposal is for \$13 million, a reduction of 57.5 percent. The earlier sum included \$3.7 for materials (a little over \$3 per patron). The 2011 proposal slashes that to \$167,000 (about 12 cents per patron).

That's our starting place. Dallas is the "epicenter" of the dropout debacle, is home to more than 20 percent of persons who lack "basic" literary skills, and is allergic to taxes. So saving our library will be a struggle. And unless we stand up, speak out, and fight, we have already lost. ■

Phyllis Guest is an LGBT activist and a member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas.

1 gay athlete came out and a league changed

Thomas wants to become the role model he said he never had and knew coming out before retirement would have greatest impact



Leslie Robinson
General Gayety

else fought to keep his secret from his rugged teammates and his rugged country.

You can guess how well that worked out.

In 2006, at a physical and emotional low, Thomas began telling people closest to him the truth, starting with his wife — generally a good choice.

He resisted going public until December of 2009, when, wrote Smith, "a now-or-never feeling gripped his chest. He was 35, his international career finished, and he trusted his Cardiff Blues teammates and coaches."

Thomas knew coming out as an active player rather than in retirement would have a far greater impact.

Hours after he came out in print, he found him-

■ **ATHLETE**, Page 19

Things do change. Consider the case of Gareth Thomas, an international rugby star. The Welshman is 6 feet, 3 inches, and a muscular 225 pounds. He's busted his nose five times, fractured both shoulders, a hip and an arm, lost eight teeth and been concussed an average of three times a year.

You wouldn't think Thomas would be afraid of anything. But he was, in a bone-deep way. He feared that people would find out he was gay.

In the May 3 issue of Sports Illustrated, writer Gary Smith delved into Thomas' psyche, his years of striving to be fitter, louder, drunker than his teammates, his brothers. The man named to the Welsh national rugby team more often than anyone

Should an HIV-positive person who has unprotected sex face criminal charges?

CAST YOUR VOTE ONLINE AT DALLASVOICE.COM

speaking out poll

RESULTS FROM LAST WEEK'S POLL:

Would you vacation in Hawaii after this week's veto of civil unions?

• Yes: 31 percent	157
• No: 58 percent	Votes cast
• Unsure: 11 percent	

■ **ATHLETE**, From Page 18

self in a game sporting the jersey the team occasionally wears for away matches — the pink one.

At least the ball wasn't rainbow-striped.

The man Sports Illustrated called "the world's bravest athlete" for being the only out active player in a major men's team sport has become a changed fella, a visible gay force.

In the months since coming out, he's talked about homophobia on TV and at universities, and become a patron of LGBT History Month.

Thomas wants to help kids: "I want to be the gay role model I never had. The note I got from a guy who gave up rugby years ago because he was gay and has returned to playing it since I came out — that outweighs lifting the biggest trophy as captain of Wales."

Such notes won't break any part of his anatomy, either. Except perhaps his heart.

It's not just one man who has changed. The reaction from teammates, fans, the media has been largely positive. Paul Burston, a gay editor who hails from Thomas' Welsh hometown, said, "Something really deep is changing. There's still a lot of homophobia, but it's not something you let out in genteel company now. It's been stigmatized."

How great is that? The stigma is now on the other rugby boot.

Thomas, who was planning to retire, felt so invigorated that he signed on with a team in northern Wales to play two years of an even faster and more physical brand of rugby. Either he's feeling suddenly, wonderfully free, or the man has had one too many concussions.

On March 26, in his second game for the Crusaders, his squad played the Castleford Tigers in Yorkshire, England. Tigers fans subjected Thomas to homophobic taunting. Some of those Yorkshire lads would rather hurl themselves into the scrum than go along with this change thing.

But they may have to. On June 29, the Rugby Football League (RFL) slapped the Castleford club with a fine of about \$60,000. The RFL said, "Castleford were found guilty of unacceptable behaviour, of breaching the RFL's respect policy, of misconduct by their supporters and of conduct prejudicial to the interests of the sport."

Here's my very un-British reaction: Yeehaw!

First Thomas came out, now the league has his back. Finally, everybody's on the same team. ■

Leslie Robinson prefers sports that keep her body intact. E-mail her at lesarobinson@gmail.com, and visit her blog at GeneralGayety.com.



OUT AND ACTIVE | Gareth Thomas of the Cardiff Blues became the first active player on a major league sports team to come out before retirement. The RFL backed him when taunted with homophobic slurs.

query 07.16.10
BY DAVID TAFFET

Should the troops have input on ending "don't ask, don't tell?"

Jim Putnam — "No, it's not a democracy. It's the service."

Richard Flores — "No, because we have a commander-in-chief who should make the decision."

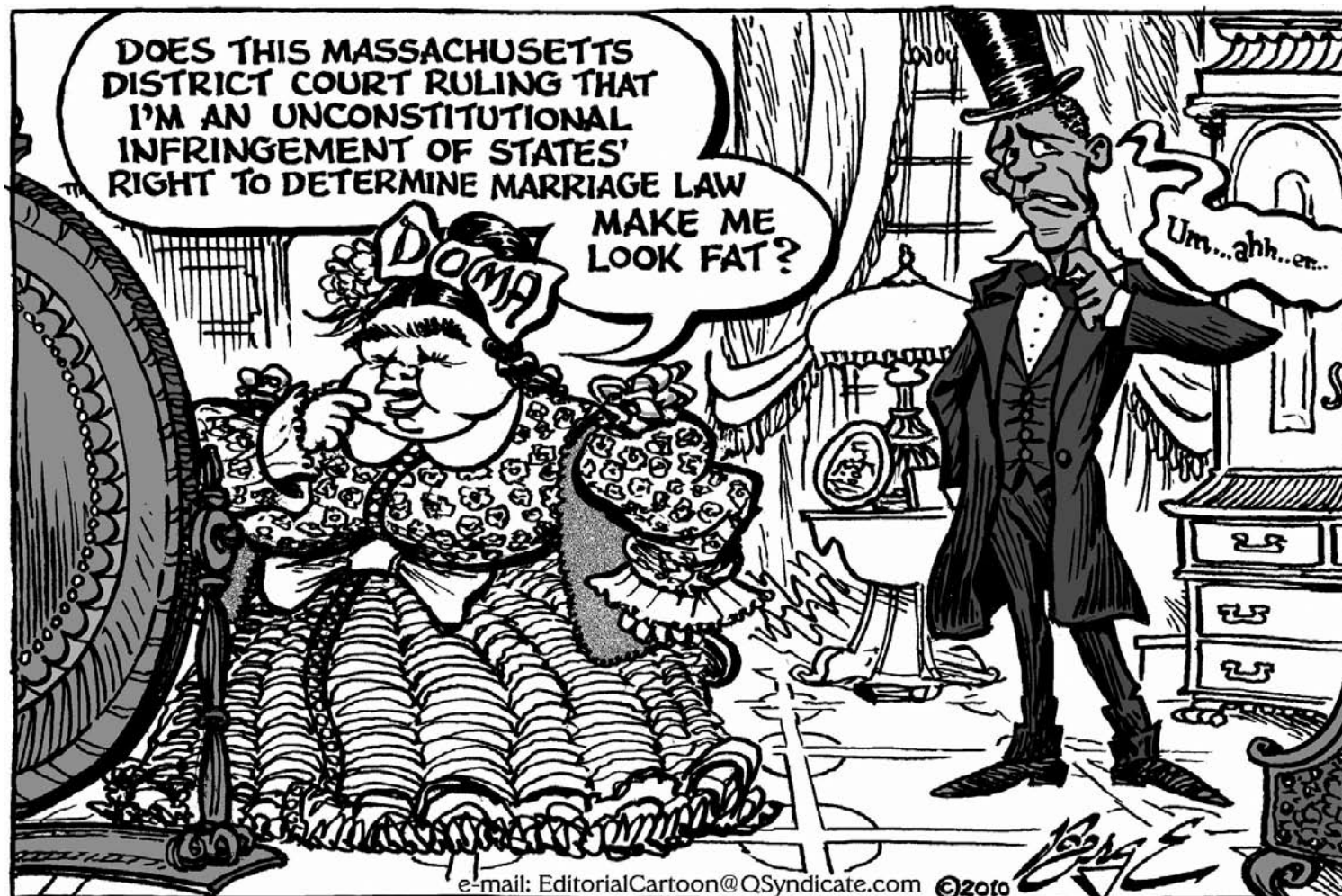
Karen McCrocklin — "No. The troops don't have input on where and how they do their jobs. It's the military. The decisions come from the top. I can't wait to see the surveys about whether we should invade Iran or which officer should get promoted."

Mike Weaver — "Yes, because they're in the military so why not ask them this. Make people feel part of the decision."

Chantel Nelson — "Does the military give them a voice about their deployment or a vote on who their 'enemy' is or where they will be stationed? No!"

Have a suggestion for a question you'd like us to ask? E-mail it to nash@dallasvoice.com.

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Modern. Family.

Julianne Moore and out director Lisa Cholodenko talk about the summer's coolest 'family' film

LAWRENCE FERBER | Contributing Writer
lawrenceferber@hotmail.com

To help Julianne Moore prepare for her role as a lesbian parent in *The Kids Are All Right*, out director/co-writer Lisa Cholodenko gave her some critical materials to study: Gay porn. "Yeah!" Moore laughs, discussing the film in Manhattan's Waldorf Astoria weeks before the film rolled out.

Moore and Annette Bening play Jules and Nic, a middle-aged lesbian couple who spice up their sex life by watching gay male porn — which their 15-year-old son, Laser (Josh Hutchinson), discovers and has a very awkward discussion with them about.

"That stuff is really funny," Moore admits regarding the scenes. "I love the honesty with which they explain it [to him]. It's really adorable."

This is but one raucously funny sequence in the *High Art* director's third feature, which she co-wrote with straight screenwriter Stuart Blumberg (*Keeping the Faith*, *The Girl Next Door*).

Debating to acclaim and ecstatic reviews at 2010's Sundance and Berlin Film Festivals, *The Kids* begins when Laser and his 18-year-old sister Joni (Mia Wasikowska), who were conceived via artificial insemination from an anonymous donor, track down their biological father, laid-back restaurateur Paul (Mark Ruffalo). Paul is intrigued by his sudden "father" status, and slowly ingratiates himself. Uptight Nic isn't enthralled with this development, but Jules, in the midst of an identity crisis, develops a rapport with Paul, which leads to explosive complications.

Comedic and sharply drawn, *The Kids* represents Cholodenko's first screenplay collaboration. While ultimately symbiotic — Blumberg gets credit for insisting they include the deliciously funny gay porn bit, which was borne from a random writing break conversation — Cholodenko admits the scripting process, which commenced following the release of her 2002 feature *Laurel Canyon* and endured for the better part of a decade, was fraught with tension and disagreement.

"There were times we wanted to throttle each other and quit," she says. "It was protracted and painstaking and [there were] differences of opinion, but ultimately we defaulted to where we began. I liked that he was bringing a comedic and commercial sensibility and he liked I was bringing a more auteur sensibility and we each wanted a little something of what the other had or could do well."

The script also reflected some personal events in Cholodenko's and Blumberg's own lives. She and long-term partner Wendy Melvoin (of Wendy & Lisa fame) were attempting to get pregnant (they succeeded in 2006); Blumberg had been a sperm donor while in college.

Luckily, they also had Moore attached early on. Moore, who played queer and sexually fluid characters in films including *The Hours* and *Chloe*, says she had been determined to work with Cholodenko even before they met at a Women In Film luncheon a few years after the 1998 release of *High Art*.

"We said we'd like to work together," Moore recalls, "so we had a meeting and later she sent me [an early draft of *The Kids*]. I probably would have done anything. For me, it's an examination of a long-term relationship and middle age marriage and that's really interesting and unusual."

The script went through numerous drafts, with major shifts in both its tone and scope. "There was originally a river rafting trip that all the big drama happened on," Cholodenko says. "Once that went away because we realized we weren't going to get \$15 million to make the film, we really just focused in on the characters [because] that was the material that was going to make or break this



JONI AND LASER HAVE TWO MOMMIES | Lesbian parents (Annette Bening and Julianne Moore) cope with meeting a sperm donor in the summer's most off-handed gay movie, 'The Kids Are All Right.' Moore worked for years with writer-director Lisa Cholodenko to bring the film to the screen.

film. But the biggest shift was the comedy and pushing that out front and center more than it had been in earlier passes."

Playing the rudderless Jules proved an irresistible, meaty prospect for Moore. "She's caught in a moment in time when she's so uncertain, she doesn't know what her next move is. She doesn't even understand why she feels the way she does. You've been taking care of the kids for 18 years and suddenly are like, wow, I've got to get it together because they're going [away]. So I like that and her swipes at change. It's messy, interesting and compelling."

As for the aspect of Jules she liked the least? "That she cheats," Moore responds. "It's not admirable what she does, it's really tough. It's not intentional and it's hurtful. It was a challenge to play. How do you rebound from something like that?"

A womanizer and cuckold on one hand yet sensitive male who listens to Joni Mitchell on the other, the complex character of Paul (of whom even Ruffalo admits, "what the guy does is pretty fucked-up") represented one of the film's greatest creative successes, says Cholodenko. "That was some real brain surgery for us," she admits. "We kept pushing until he was the right balance of sympathetic and schmucky."

To Moore, that Jules has sex with a man doesn't say anything about the character's lesbian identity.

"It's very important that when Nic says to her, 'Are you straight now?' she says no. It's authentic — that's the last thing on her mind. This guy was just someone who validated her. She needed to be seen as other than what she was within that family."

Although Moore remained attached during the lengthy writing and pre-production process, finding an actor to play Nic waited until late in the game. "By the time they finally had the script and kinetic tone they wanted, Lisa had a short list of people and said, 'What do you think of Annette? She's the one I really see in this,'" Moore says. "I was like, 'That sounds great. I don't know Annette but I'll e-mail her.' So I did. It's a way to cut through. Things can take months if you [go through] an agent, but you can generally get a response from a peer pretty quickly."

The lesbian component has so far received applause from straight and LGBT audiences alike. But what does it bring to the story?

"I don't know," Moore replies after a pause. "Everything and nothing, really. It's a portrait of middle-aged marriage and a family in transition. In terms of them being lesbians, the most interesting thing is ... I think films, rather than influence popular culture I think they reflect popular culture. So the fact we can have a movie like this means this is an ordinary American family."

For their part, Cholodenko and Blumberg wanted Nic and Jules' sexuality to be "offhand and incidental," and they focused on keeping things universal.

"I think it was really just the focus on the inner life of those characters," she explains, "and being clear about their dilemmas and giving them all an arc, a place to begin and journey to go through. That's not always an easy thing to do with five characters, and to have them woven in a way there's a lot of cause and effect. If anything I'm really proud we pulled that off." ■

THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT

Julianne Moore, Annette Bening, Mark Ruffalo. Rated R. 100 mins. Opens Friday at Landmark's Magnolia Theatre. To read Arnold Wayne Jones' review, visit DallasVoice.com/Screen.

Living the dream

'Inception' is too smart for its own good, but compelling nonetheless

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Life+Style Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

DANCING ON THE CEILING | The action set pieces in Christopher Nolan's 'Inception' are gorgeous and thrilling to watch. But to what end?

Heath Ledger's brilliant performance aside, *The Dark Knight* was the most overrated film of 2008 — muddled and overlong, it was a fine mess. *Inception*, by contrast — from *Dark Knight* director Christopher Nolan, who also wrote the script — could be called a beautiful disaster.

"Disaster" may be exaggerating. It is gorgeously decorated, with moody lighting, sharp costumes, expansive vistas and visual effects to beat the band. A fight sequence in a hotel hallway in zero gravity is the most exquisite action set piece since *The Matrix*.

But that's also its downfall. *Inception* continually suggests tons of other movies, including *Strange Days*, *Ocean's 11*, *The Spy Who Loved Me*, *Mission: Impossible*, Nolan's own film *The Prestige* as well as *Star Trek's* Holodeck, M.C.

Escher's art and a first person shooter video game — especially the latter.

The plot is actually quite simple — a standard heist film with a tech-heavy thesis behind it. Cobb (Leonardo DiCaprio) is a thief who invades the dreams of industrialists and potentates and steals secrets from their subconscious.

But here's where it gets tricky: Cobb is asked by a new employer (Ken Watanabe) to do something different: *Plant* an idea, and make the victim think it's his. The process is called "inception," and will require an architect (Ellen Page) to build several dream layers, allowing them to go deep enough to make the idea stick.

If that's at all confusing, then watching hardly

makes it easier. The technobabble makes *Inception* too smart for its own good. The layers of dreaming, the role of the "architect," the manipulation of time and space... it all smacks of a gloriously crazy acid trip. The patina of complexity almost makes your head hurt.

But only almost. Even when it's at its convoluted worst, *Inception* is the most consistently watchable of all the summer's Hollywood blockbusters. DiCaprio played the same guilt-ridden widower with weird psychological issues in his last film, *Shutter Island*, an abortive haunted

house movie masquerading as Hitchcock. He doesn't add much to his resume with this performance, but his ability to doff the dialogue and make you understand, if only instantaneously, is a notable achievement.

The supporting cast, as the crew who get stuff done, fare the best. Tom Hardy is charming as a possibly gay forger, and Joseph Gordon-Levitt's implacable innocence has never been put to better use in a mainstream film. Even Page, who was in danger of seeming one-note since her work in *Juno*, tones down the snark smartly. It's also nice to see Tom Berenger working again.

Inception will be huge, of course, and it should be. The effects themselves merit rushing to the theater to see it on the big screen. Maybe that will encourage multiple viewings... and make the plot, eventually, decipherable. Until then, I'll just relax in its beauty.



Zeus Comics turns 10 with party

It's survived a move from Oak Lawn to Lemmon, a web series and the *Jonah Hex* movie and gay-owned Zeus Comics is still going strong. Richard Neal, pictured, is celebrating its 10th anniversary with a party on Saturday including special guests.

Writers Paul Benjamin and Alan J. Porter, who work on the comics of *Monsters, Inc.* and *Boom Kids*, will join Snow White in making personal appearances along with balloon animals and cake — sounds about right for a 10-year-old.

Zeus Comics, 4411 Lemmon Ave. July 17, noon-5 p.m.



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Fresh air, town square

Tiny Red River, N.M., makes summer bearable with outdoorsy beauty



GREEN ACRES | Even in summer, the lush greenery of the Red River makes for breathtaking mountain-
scape. (Photos by Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Life+Style Editor
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By the look of it, Red River, N.M., could be an Alpine village accidentally misplaced in the American Southwest, Spots of Bavarian architecture and décor combine with a frontier utilitarian quality. You'd expect in the winter months that the town's three-dozen-plus lodges and hotels would be occupied with skiers — the slope, which rises 10,350 feet above sea level, is in the midst of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, the southern tip of the Rockies. But even now, it's a draw.

Locals have gotten away from calling summer and fall the "off-season," preferring terms like "second season." It's not just posturing, either. Even in June, there were "no vacancy" signs on many of the lodges and the restaurants were hopping at dinnertime. When the snow melts, this is still a gloriously clean mountain village and a wonderful place to enjoy the outdoors away from the stifling Dallas temperatures.

About 100 miles from Santa Fe (with the new American Eagle direct flight from DFW, not a bad route), Red River is deliciously remote — an 11-hour drive from Dallas on a good day. The drive from Santa Fe offers lovely mountain vistas and even a breathtaking gorge. It's a great mood-setter for a mountain retreat.

Red River tops the noon position on the Enchanted Circle, an 83-mile scenic loop that links the resort ski villages of Taos Ski Valley, Angel Fire and other resorts in northern New Mexico. Taos, once the mystical arty center of the area, has become increasingly commercial and less charming — a fate that has not befallen Red River.

Consider: Aside from a Best Western-affiliated lodge, not a single business in the town is part of a chain. That means no Starbucks, Dunkin' Donuts or Kroger. (The nearest Walgreen's is 45 miles away — in Taos, natch.) For city slickers, that can seem like retail hell, but (especially if you don't live there year round) it makes for a true "get-

away" vacation. You make do.

And making do is part of the fun. Like many resort towns, there are a disproportionate number of boutique stores, activity centers and restaurants dotting Main Street and its environs. ("Environs" is an exaggeration: All of downtown is just one mile long, and the town is only three streets wide — High and River are the other two.) You can walk almost anywhere you need to, and even by car you're never more than 90 seconds from anything. It's Mayberry in the mountains.

Not even Mayberry. With only 450 residents, it's easy to get to know the entire town pretty quickly. People are friendly here, from the waiter who used to own a business in Deep Ellum to the Jeep guide who'll wave you down on the street a day after your tour.

Although fishing, hiking and rafting are popular draws in the summer, a Jeep tour through New Mexico Adventure Company is an ideal introduction to the overwhelming physical beauty of this region. The three-hour open-car ride takes you to the top of Greenie Peak, the highest point in the state accessible by motorized vehicle. Even in summer, the horizon is flush with greenery, except for still-snow-capped mountains in the distance. It's a bumpy, exhilarating way to kick off a vacation.

Although you're nowhere near the beach, bring pretty of sunscreen — you'll need it on the chair lift ride to the top of the Red River Ski Area. About 30 minutes each way in an open-air bench, it's not for the faint of heart, but the glorious scenery is worth overcoming your acrophobia. From the top you can hike down or just explore until you're ready to head back down. At base camp, stop at the Lift House Bar & Grill, a fun, friendly pub with beer and mouthwatering burgers.

That's by no means the only place to eat, though. Sixteen restaurants will keep you well-fed with good but not extravagant food. Don't call

Sundance's cuisine Tex-Mex — this ain't Texas, and they're proud of their New Mexican green chiles here, nestled among the tasty enchiladas.

Just the name of Texas Reds Steakhouse signals the town's close ties with the Lone Star State. Try the hearty, well-priced ribeye and a delicious, fresh cobbler for dessert. They do up the Wild West cliché here, albeit it with tongue in cheek. Complimentary peanuts are meant to be shelled and discarded on the floor, Walt Garrison-style; the menu resembles an old newspaper (and has some actual news on it). I half expected a cowboy to come in, order sour mash and shoot up the varmint who looked funny at his gal.

For breakfast or brunch, the Mountain Treasures Gallery and Coffee Bar is a quick and courteous stop, with all pastries made in-house, including savory kolaches, turnovers and cinnamon rolls, plus a refreshing latte. For a bigger sit-down meal, Old Tymer's is a diner out of a history book, with a single blueberry pancake clocking in at the size of a hubcap; you could feed a family of four on what I couldn't finish. Maybe my favorite stop though: The Candy Shop, where they sell homemade fudge to break any diet.

Rustic Three Bears Lodge is truly a cabin in the woods — if that cabin had DirecTV. Spacious, hardwood-floored accommodations are basic but useful (a full kitchen for cooking). You won't need air conditioning — just open the windows to



GOLDILOCKS OPTIONAL | For rustic but comfortable accommodations, rustic Three Bears Lodge is just right.

allow crisp mountain air to oxygenate you and keep you cool. (The high on my June visit was 79; the low was 40.) The owners, Chris and Debbie, toast marshmallows and have a kind of redneck happy hour most nights.

If you wanna walk into town after sunset, live bands perform along the strip many nights, but the beautiful quiet of the mountains? That's really music to my ears. ■

LITTLE BLACK BOOK

ACCOMMODATIONS

Three Bears Lodge, 301 Main St. 3BearsRR.com.

ACTIVITIES

New Mexico Adventure Company, 220 E. Main St. Bighorn Sports.us/NMAC. Red River Ski Area (and Chair Lift), 200 Pioneer Road. RedRiverSkiArea.com.

DINING

Lift House Bar & Grill, 200 Pioneer Road. Mountain Treasures Coffee Bar, 121 E. Main St. MountainTreasuresGallery.com. Old Tymer's Cafe, 210 E. Main St. Sundance, 401 High St. Texas Reds Steakhouse, 406 E. Main St. TexasReds.com.



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'Flaming' shoots buckshot, guffaws and 2 steely magnolias

RICH LOPEZ | Staff Writer
lopez@dallasvoice.com

Theatre Too bills its season opener, Jane Martin's **Flaming Guns of the Western Sage**, as a "B" Western horror flick. But director Terry Dobson has fashioned a play that unfolds like an episode of *Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman* — one of the funnier ones. The cast delivers a wallop of a comedy with an unexpected amount of blood and gore to go with it. And it is greatness.

Big 8 (Gene Raye Price) is a retired rodeo star working as a rodeo healer, laying her hands on young bucks in all kinds of ways. She tends to rider and airhead Rob Bob (Justin Vorpahl), who lives with her in Casper, Wyo. During a late-night discussion over cowboy movies, belt buckles and rodeos, the two are interrupted by a visit from the frenetic Shedevil (Emily Jackson). On the run from her killer Russian boyfriend Black Dog (Jordan Willis), Shedevil claims to carry Big 8's grandchild, but her facial piercings, goth clothes and creepy squeals only raise eyebrows.

The first half of *Sage* gives a whole lot of exposition albeit with fair amounts of hilarity. The audience roared as the country-fied folk sputtered shotgun-quick volleys of insults, demands and jokes, with Big 8's sister Shirl (Sally Soldo) joining in the fray. But the banter gets wearisome and in the tiny Theatre Too, the shouting and Jackson's high-pitched wailing is borderline unbearable as back-story is delivered in oodles. The energy of the cast was both contagious and tiresome. I was worn down enough that I could have taken a nap during intermission.

But the spurs kick for Act 2. With the inclusion of Black Dog and local cop



YOU KILL ME | Two old broads fuel the humor in 'Flaming Guns.'

Baxter Blue (Dan Ramsey), the comedy is amped up by bloody shenanigans. Shirl's slaughterhouse skills come in handy as folks work to get rid of a corpse.

At the risk of sounding like an ageist, you'd expect the young'uns of the cast to supply a frenzy of energy, but by this point *Sage* is Price and Soldo's show. Their comic physicality could put the Three Stooges to shame.

Price fills the boots of Big 8's large presence with Paula Deen spunk and Thelma Harper temper. She's a caricature, but Price still shows a heart and soul in the woman that could've easily gotten lost in lesser hands. Soldo's Shirl matches Big 8's over the top demeanor, but instead of competing for laughs, works magic with Price. Her bloody facial is legendary.

Vorpahl holds his own with goofy, ditzzy charm, but he hasn't honed Rob Bob enough. His performance is wooden, as if he's waiting for cues rather than listening and reacting. Jackson delivers a dynamo performance but her shrillness comes annoyingly close to eclipsing that.

There is a patchwork chemistry that binds it all together and *Flaming Guns of the Purple Sage* ends up being one of the best TV episodes ever seen onstage.

ON THE BOARDS

FLAMING GUNS OF THE WESTERN SAGE at Theatre 3, 2800 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Through Aug. 8. \$20-\$30. Theatre3Dallas.com.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST at the Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. Through July 25. \$25-\$150. ATPAC.org.

Be my guest

Looks can be deceiving in listless Disney tour of 'Beauty & the Beast'

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Life+Style Editor
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Beauty and the Beast was the first of the Disney two-and-a-half-hour stage adaptations of their charming 90-minute movies, so the fact it's a bit clunky can be forgiven. What is less easy to forgive about the production at the Winspear Opera House is what a low-rent tour this turns out to be.

There's a reason why most Disney (and now, Pixar) films are set, among elsewhere, under the sea, in toy boxes, in outer space and in the jungle: They are meant to be elaborate fantasies with eye-popping and unusual characters. If they existed in nature, we could just watch the Discovery channel.

So what better reason is there to see *Beauty and the Beast* than to watch dancing dishware, candelabra in a kickline and tart-mouthed teapots twirling about for two hours?

But that is not this show. Here Lumiere (Merritt David Janes), the droll French candlestick,

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FOR WHOM THE BELLE TROLLS | Disney's on-the-cheap tour of 'Beauty and the Beast' is a tired and shopworn staging without the whiz-bang fantasy costumes it needs.

looks like a maitre d' with hathead carrying two flashlights. Cogsworth (Keith Kirkwood), the fussy grandfather clock butler, could be a doorman in a rundown brownstone. The spout on Mrs. Potts (Sabina Petra), the portly porcelain teakettle, resembles a glove bought at a fake Michael Jackson estate sale. Even the sets appear shopworn and cheap. There is no *pow*. There is no magic. Only Justin Glaser as the Beast delivers at all, and that's just with a powerful voice on the solo "If I Can't Love Her."

There also isn't much else to entertain. There's only one real song in the first 30 minutes of the show, and few good one-liners sewing the famil-

iar plot together. This production seems to go for kiddie appeal more than old-fashioned brassy fun. That means sluggish jokes, frantic busy-work in place of dazzling choreography, a less-than-hunky Gaston (Nathaniel Hackmann). Even the big Act 1 production number — the instantly catchy "Be Our Guest" — is underbaked. Where are the silver cake knives, the Busby Berkeley spectacle, the fireworks? Confetti is just a bit pathetti, if you ask me.

A bit disgusted, I bolted at intermission. In my mind, Belle (Liz Shivener) will forever be trapped in a mirthless castle. Now she'll know what my evening at the Winspear was like. ■

School's in for summer: 'Drag U'

"I don't mind hospitals," an old joke goes, "it's just that they're full of sick people." That's kinda how I've always felt about Logo: I like the idea of a gay TV network, I just wish the content was good. *The Big Gay Sketch Show*? Puh-leez. Reruns of canceled Comedy Central shows? Can't they do better?

Yes. And "better" goes by the name "RuPaul."

For two seasons, *RuPaul's Drag Race* has been the *American Idol* of Logo: The engine that keeps the channel on the TiVo queue. *Drag Race* is veritably brilliant reality television (its omission on the Emmy list was a travesty), with drag goddesses who are sassy and talented, bitchy and funny.

The decision to take some of the best of them from past seasons and give them a new show smacks of overkill, but I don't care. I needs me some Ongina and Pandora Boxx.

RuPaul's Drag U is basically *Queer Eye* with "professor" queens dragulating hopelessly unfeminine straight women into genuine glamorpusses. The delicious irony that men can instruct women in the female arts is unsaid but omnipresent. This is empowerment television that doesn't rub hetero noses in it. We're here, we're queer, you need us to make your wives presentable. No need to thank us.

While suffering a bit from spinoff-itis, *Drag U* has the patented Ru insouciance plus a sweet root-for-the-underdog appeal. "Queen for a day" takes on a whole new meaning.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Grade: B+

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Making himself heard

Former International Mr. Leather **Jeffrey Payne** shines light on the challenges faced by the hearing impaired in the gay community

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Life+Style Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com



When Jeffrey Payne stood on the dais as a contestant at International Mr. Leather in Chicago last year, he was the last person in the room to know he'd won. The sign language interpreter had his back to the contestants, and Payne, who is hearing impaired, couldn't hear them call the winner. Then, after nothing happened, he looked over. "One-one" the interpreter signed, which was Payne's contestant number. "Texas."

The experience brought into sharp focus an issue that has cast a shadow over Payne's entire life, but only hit home recently. Both Payne's father and brother suffer from a condition that causes deafness, "where the nerve going from your ear to your brain is dying and eventually just dies out," he explains. Even though the condition is genetic, Payne thought — hoped — he had been spared.

"Adult-onset hearing loss is not rare, but usually this kind affects you earlier in life," he says.

The only way to test for it is when it happens. Both his father and brother started losing their hearing at young ages, so when Payne turned 30, he felt he was past it. By 35 he was complacent.

Then at 40, his partner David told him to get tested. "Something is wrong with you," Payne recalls him saying.

By the time he had the checkup, Payne had lost 50 percent of his hearing. Today, just two years later, he has lost 85 percent. Doctors tell him he'll likely be completely deaf by Christmas.

"First it was volume," he says of the progressive loss. "The part of my hearing I'm starting to lose now is the sounds — the s sounds like *th*. The clearest way to explain it is like a road that has these potholes and the sounds fall into it."

But Payne is not wallowing in self pity. Instead, he's turning his disability into a crusade to help other deaf members of the LGBT community.

Last year, around the same time he won IML, Payne established the Sharon St. Cyr Fund, named after his mother, who passed away when he was 3. The mission of the fund is two-fold. One goal is to provide funding to individuals in the community who need to purchase hearing aids and cannot afford them; second is to encourage American Sign Language interpreters at more events.

The project is especially important as studies have indicated that a greater than expected proportion of deaf people are gay.

"I've read those studies and heard that in passing and find it very interesting, but have no explanation for it," Payne says. Still, he looked in the gay community to see what resources there were. For the hearing impaired. He found little.

"I did not see anything out there helping our community with the purchase of hearing aids, and 90 percent of insurance does not cover them," he says. Unlike vision and dental

insurance, no supplemental policies for hearing loss are even offered. That can lead to fear and expense at the same time.

"They can cost \$2- to \$6,000, depending on your loss," Payne says. "Most of us don't have 4, 5, 6,000 dollars lying around. And studies prove you can prolong the length of time you can hear when you wear hearing aids. If we get them on people sooner rather than later, it makes a difference."

The lack of ASL interpreters also can lead to a sense of isolation in the deaf community. That's something Payne became acutely aware of in his travels as reigning IML.

"As I went around last year I said, 'Wow, I don't know what's going on and being said' and there was no sign interpreter," he says. Although IML has had one for years, he spoke to producers and managers at other events where there weren't interpreters; most welcomed the idea. Not all, though.

"I've had organizations say, 'We don't have anyone come who's deaf, so why have an interpreter?'" he says. He explains that the lack of an interpreter may be *why* they don't come.

The deaf community is literally a "silent minority." Many things hearing people take for granted become issues, which Payne has realized even more in the last two years as his hearing has waned. It is often not as obvious someone is hearing impaired as it is when they are, say, blind or paralyzed. They might suffer at work because they can't hear at staff meetings or misinterpret things said to them. And many people engage in behavior that is disadvantageous to the hearing impaired without thinking about it.

"Receptionists have a habit of not looking at people — anyone who turns their back on me I can't hear," he says. He has been a lip reader for years, even before the onset of deafness. But even that didn't help much in foreign countries: "I learned that [while traveling with IML]! Lip reading went to hell in a hand basket very quickly," he laughs.

That's where ASL comes in handy, though Payne himself still works on it.

"I'm much better at receiving and a little slower returning it. It is a different language. A lot is inferred as part of our facial expression. You can give a sign very sarcastically without ever uttering a word. But the older I get, the slower my brain gets," he says.

The condition isn't all bad. Payne is able to "turn off" sound, which he would often do when judging a leather contest this past year to minimize distractions. "And I like when I can go to the bedroom and just lay down the with dogs. When I take out my hearing aids it is very peaceful. I don't hear the traffic or the TV on the other room. It is good when I can have that moment of quiet — every so often we all need that. Those moments are nice. But the negatives outweigh the positives."

Which is why he wants to make a difference — and feels he already has.

"I receive tons of e-mails from people who say we are helping who say, 'I never knew I could hear the traffic two streets over.' That's what really moved me."

"It's going to be work," he says. "Our goal is, within five years, that every event within the GLBT community has sign interpreters that they can fund themselves and we are able to help fund for them. Speaking about hearing aids, I believe that is an ongoing issue as our community gets older. We do partial funding on some, full on others. It's based on financial need."

And not just in Dallas.

"We are a nationwide organization with contributions coming from all over. Even funding from Canada — though Canada health

PLEASE GIVE | Payne hopes people will vote in the Pepsi Refresh Project for his charity, the Sharon St. Cyr Fund, which assists the hearing impaired. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

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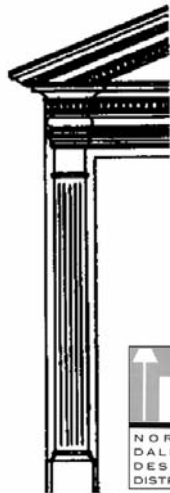


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Justin Tranter, center, won't keep his punk rocks tucked away during a show.

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CHRIS AZZOPARDI | Contributing Writer
chrisazzopardi@pridesource.com

Semi Precious Weapons misses when sex — the dirty come-ons, reckless rebellion and, of course, groin grabbing — was as important to rock as the music itself. So they're bringing it back ... Justin Timberlake be damned.

As those who've beheld Lady Gaga's Monster Ball spectacular know, they're taking this mission seriously — in pantyhose or whatever other girly garb singer Justin Tranter's feeling, the New York foursome make every glam-rock song, like the brazen, buzzed-about "Magnetic Baby," a climax.

As the modern priestess of pop rolls out another leg of the tour this summer, Semi Precious Weapons, which dropped its proper debut *You Love You* late last month — will wield sexy shenanigans across the world. Before they head out again, we caught up with Tranter to talk about being on tour with Gaga, how he sees himself sexually and his own precious weapon (or lack thereof).

THE MONSTER BALL

American Airlines Center,
2500 Victory Ave. July 22–23.
8 p.m. \$49–\$175.
Haus of Gaga official afterparty
at **Ghostbar**, 2440 Victory
Park Lane. 11 p.m.
SemiPreciousWeapons.com

me even though maybe I'm fixing my pantyhose. Maybe I'm checking the dance belt. Maybe I'm just trying to grab my crotch. I don't even know myself!

It's not because you're obsessed with your junk then? Oh god, no. I like to pretend I don't have genitalia. I like to think of myself as a "merperson" — genderless.

Your sexuality confuses me. Well, it should. Ha!

How do you describe yourself sexually? I don't really describe myself at all when it comes to gender and sexuality. There was a period of time where I techni-

cally would've identified as gay, but then I started sleeping with lots of women so that confused everybody. And I feel like if I were to call myself bisexual, that's just so '90s/*Reality Bites*, so I don't really define myself at all. I'll say like, "gender fluid" — that's what I am. I've actually been on a kick lately where I really like to sleep with people who look just like me. So I don't really know what you'd call that either.

So why don't you make a name for it? Once there's a name for it, I have to give it up.

Why do you hate that Semi Precious Weapons is often labeled a "queer band"? It's not that I hate when the band is labeled as a queer band. It's just that it's not true. I'm obviously some sort of something that's not typically heterosexual, but the rest of the band is 100 percent straight and there are four of us in the band, so to label us as a queer band would just be wrong. Besides, a verse and a chorus can't decide whom it wants to fuck; it's just a verse and a chorus. So labeling music as "queer" or "black" or "Asian," it's not that I'm against it, I just think that it's incorrect.

Dallas Voice: Why is sex an important part of rock 'n' roll? Tranter: Because the whole reason rock 'n' roll became something different than pop music — and why rock 'n' roll became something different than every other genre out there — was that it was dangerous and rebellious and extremely sexual. Sex needs to exist in rock 'n' roll always, or it shouldn't be called rock 'n' roll.

Hence the crotch grabbing? I don't really even realize how much I grab my crotch. It's a very natural thing for

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You've licked tits on stage? Oh yes. I've done lots of motorboating on stage. I've made out with lots of women on stage. Lots of exciting things.

Not on the Lady Gaga tour, though, right? When we play club shows they're much, much crazier. Not that Gaga shows aren't crazy, but as far as the audience interaction with me, it's much crazier at smaller venues because security wise it's actually a possibility.

Are you ever surprised at the fans that come out to your shows? Our audience is so mixed, and that's how we love it. There are lots of cutesy gender-confused teens that come to see us play, which is amazing and an inspiration and they're cooler than I am. But then there are lots of dudes that come with their girlfriends, and there are lots of clubby hot girls that try to bang the other guys in the band, or I guess try to bang me. Most times they just want to pet me.

How has opening for Gaga changed your life? We've got to travel with the biggest pop star in the whole world, who luckily is a friend of ours. It's an amazing, surreal experience for her to love our band so much even though we're a filthy rock band and she's a cutting-edge pop star. It's a pretty ballsy move to have a rock band open for her, but she's obviously a ballsy girl.

What have you learned from her? Her advice deals with the beginning stages of our career, because we've been a band for three-and-a-half years, driving ourselves around in the van and playing every small, gross bar in America. Her advice on how to deal with [fame, meeting celebrities, etc.] — and our first trip around the world as an actual band that people pay at-

ention to — has been amazing.

Does she ever let you borrow her clothes, like the Kermit the Frog get-up? Ha! We do not share clothes. I'm 6-foot-4 and she's 5-foot-2, so I don't think it would be work out. That would probably fit on one of my thighs. Maybe one day I'll wear it as a leg warmer.

When did you start dressing in feminine clothes? I started dressing in *genderless* clothes on and off since I was 15. I thought I looked fantastic, but now when I look at pictures, I looked absolutely hideous. I had glasses and clear braces and blue eye shadow. I've been wearing heels every single day since 2004, just after I had been in New York for two years, when I felt comfortable enough to look like that every day no matter what shit people said to me. I just realized that's just how I see myself — as pretty — so that's what I'm going to look like every single day. It's a lot more fun to feel pretty, all day every day. I'd prefer to get a bottle to the back of the head and feel awesome as the blood drips down my neck.

You're a lot happier with this album than your actual debut, *We Love You*. True. We bought back the record we made with [our label] so that we could really make our first album, *You Love You*. We wanted to pay tribute to the first record, to the fans who loved it and what it meant to us. But since we made that record, I've realized that letting kids know that we love them is not nearly as important as letting them know that they should love themselves. Obviously, they should love me and worship me, but they should love and worship themselves just a teeny bit more.

■ PAYNE

From Page 26

care provides coverage. Hopefully we'll be able to help anyone. But right now, funding is limited."

To that end, Payne is hoping to get a big grant from the Pepsi Co. The SSC Fund is in the running for "Pepsi Refresh Project" monies, given to charitable organizations every month who get online voting support. If the SSC Fund can make it into the top 10, it will get \$50,000; it's currently 66th.

"I see major cities have applied for this grant and we're still ahead as a community. That's very satisfying," he says. "But to be completely satisfied, I'd like to be in the top 10!"

To vote for SSC Fund for the Pepsi grant, visit RefreshEverything.com/SSCFund. To learn more about the organization, visit SSCFund.com.



THANK YOU | Payne signs a thanks to those who support his efforts in the gay deaf community.

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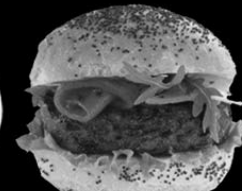
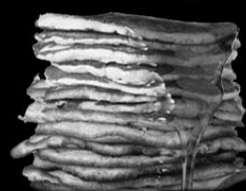
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Saturday 07.17

Happy birthday to you, GayBingo

Our favorite game turns nine years old this year and to help celebrate, *Kidd Kraddick in the Morning* co-host Kellie Raspberry comes in to host Not Another GayBingo. The GB peeps also want you to dress up for the birthday party or maybe it's a bribe. They will offer discounts to anyone dressed in drag.

DEETS: Rose Room inside Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 5 p.m. \$25. RCDallas.org.

Sunday 07.18

Alice is looking a little FIT lately

The Festival of Independent Theatres is back, featuring eight local theaters and a slew of new plays. We're curious to see how company White Rock Pollution will convey its retelling of *Alice in Wonderland* that looks to be a whole lot darker than the original, and in real-life 3-D, unlike that Johnny Depp movie.

DEETS: Bath House Cultural Center, 521 E. Lawther Drive. Through Aug. 7. \$12-\$16. ATPAC.org

Thursday 07.22

You won't forget this lady's Haus party

The last time we saw Gaga perform in Dallas was at the Round-Up when she was another club singer finding her audience. And boy did she. She comes back arena style, selling out many of large venues, and the gays have followed her through to superstar status. For two nights, AAC becomes the Haus of Gaga.

DEETS: American Airlines Center, 2500 Victory Ave. July 22-23. 8 p.m. \$49-\$175. Ticketmaster.com.



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FRIDAY 07.16

COMMUNITY

Youth First Texas groups for ages 14 to 22. 3918 Harry Hines Blvd. 4–10 p.m. 214-879-0400.

Oak Lawn Tennis Association. L. B. Houston Center, 11225 Luna Road. 6 p.m. OLTADallas.org.

Triangle Networking Tarrant, for gay-owned and gay-friendly businesses. Dos Gringos, 1510 University Ave., Fort Worth. 6 p.m. \$5. 817-496-3479.

THEATER

Dreamgirls. Music Hall at Fair Park, 909 First St. Through Sunday. Friday–Sunday at 8 p.m. Weekend matinees at 2 p.m. \$15–\$65. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

The First Day of School by Billy Aronson. Presented by Amphibian Stage Productions. Sanders Theater, 1300 W. Gendy St., Fort Worth. Through July 25. Thursdays–Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. \$25. AmphibianProductions.org.

It's a Bird...It's a Plane...It's Superman. Wyly Theater, 2400 Flora St. Through July 25. Tuesdays–Thursdays, Sundays at 7 p.m., Fridays–Saturdays at 8 p.m., weekend matinees at 2 p.m. \$15–\$80. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

ART

Georgia O'Keeffe and the Faraway: Nature and Image. National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame, 1720 Gendy St., Fort Worth. Through Sep. 6. Cowgirl.net.

I Am Woman featuring work by 18 female artists and benefiting Alley's House. Rising Gallery, 4631 Insurance Lane. Through July 31. RisingGallery.com.

Tangled in Aura featuring the work of local artist Michelle Ruvalcaba. Tony Collins Art + Home, 1916 S. Lamar St. Opening reception at 5 p.m. Through Aug. 27. TonyCollinsArt.com

Vintage. Art show featuring the work of David Parise and Debbie Curtis. Rising Gallery, 4631 Insurance Lane. Through July 31. RisingGallery.com.

SATURDAY 07.24

COMMUNITY

Not Another GayBingo. The event celebrates nine years with hosts Jenna Skyy and Patti Le Plae Safe. The Rose Room inside Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 5 p.m. \$25. 214-540-4495.

Talk MS LIVE. A free group discussion with Drs. Jeffrey Gitt and Annette Okai. Plano Centre, 2000 E. Spring Parkway, Plano. 10 a.m. Call 866-756-0494 to register.

DFW Prime Timers Prime Brunch at The Mecca, 10422 Harry Hines Blvd. 11 a.m. Call 972-504-8866 for details.

SUNDAY 07.25

COMMUNITY

Oak Lawn Tennis Association. Samuell-Grand

Center, 6200 E. Grand Ave. 9 a.m. OLTADallas.org.

The Set for mature-minded SGL African-American men to create a community meets every third Sunday. South Dallas Cultural Center, 3400 S. Fitzhugh Ave. 6 p.m. (cocktails begin at 6:30 p.m.).

Lutherans Concerned, LGBT affirming group for Lutherans. King of Glory Lutheran Church, 6411 LBJ Freeway. 7 p.m. 214-855-4998.

Order of St. Francis and St. Clare every first and third Sunday. Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 12:30 p.m.

Family Pride Coalition, a monthly support group for gay and lesbian parents and their children, meets at a private home. For time and location 214-521-5342 ext. 1708.

Friends Associating and Relating, LGBT social group meets for social activities. Newcomers welcome. Call 214-328-6749 for details.

BROADCAST

Lambda Weekly. This week's guest is Ken Upton, attorney with Lambda Legal. 89.3 KNON-FM at noon.

Cathedral of Hope airs its worship service. WFAA Ch. 8 at 12:35 a.m.

MONDAY 07.26

COMMUNITY

DFW Prime Timers play bridge at member's residence. 1 p.m. Call 972-504-8866 for details.

FUSE drop-in weekdays (except Tuesdays). For gay and bi guys up to 29. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. 3–8 p.m. 214-540-4435.

F.A.C.E., support group for those impacted by HIV/AIDS in any capacity. Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 7 p.m. Cathedralofhope.com.

Self esteem support group provided by AIDS Outreach Center meets weekly. AIDS Outreach Center, 400 N. Beach St., Fort Worth. 1:30 p.m. 817-229-4621. AOC.org.

BROADCAST

The Rick Vanderville Show streams Monday–Friday from noon–2 p.m. on RationalRadio.org.

TUESDAY 07.27

COMMUNITY

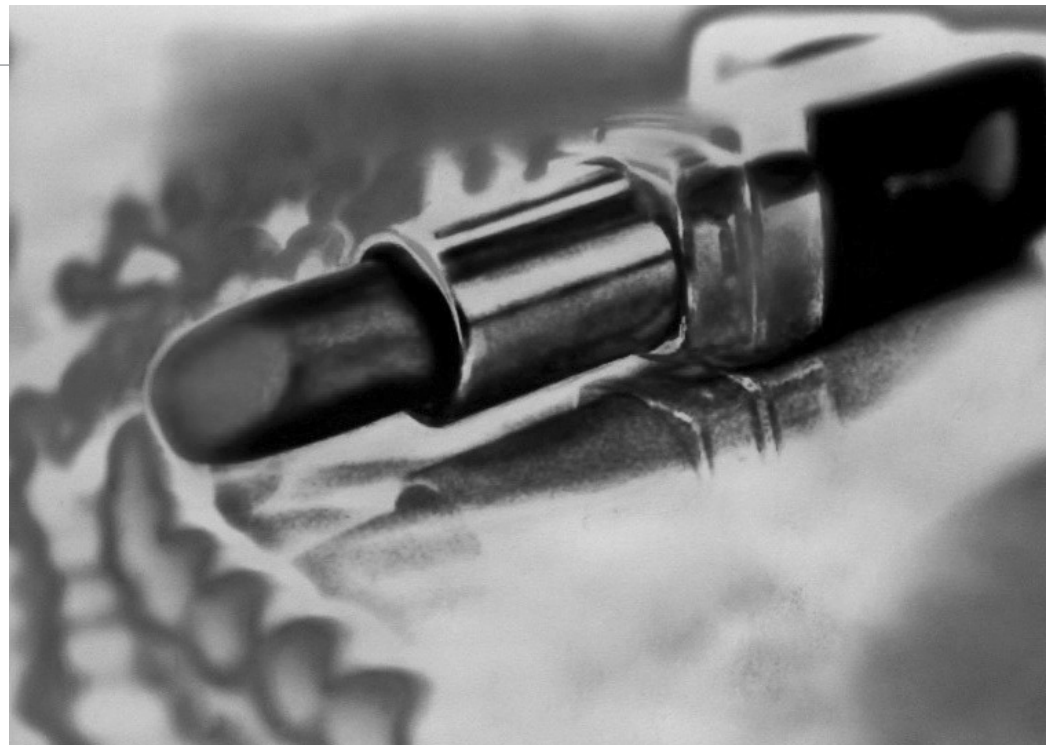
Sista to Sista support group meets. AIDS Outreach Center, 400 N. Beach St., Fort Worth. 11:30 a.m. 817-335-1994 ext. 204. AOC.org.

Dallas FrontRunners meet at Knox Street entrance of Katy Trail. 6:30 p.m. Dallasfrontrunners.org.

Q's-Day Potluck. Casual LGBT gathering every Tuesday evening. The Corporate Image, 5418 Brentwood Stair Road, Fort Worth, 817-446-3395.

Stonewall Democrats of Dallas. Ojeda's Restaurant, 4617 Maple Ave. 6:30 p.m. 214-887-4990.

Lesbian Book Club. Borders Books Music Cafe, 10720 Preston Road. 7 p.m. Julie at 214-363-1243.



JUNGLE RED | Michelle DeMetz's work will be featured in the all-female show 'I Am Woman' at Rising Gallery.

BROADCAST

Ilume-A-Nation Tuesday with Jack E. Jett. Streams weekly at 11 a.m. on ilume.com.

The Jack E. Jett Show with co-host Jackie Stal-lone streams every Tuesday and Thursday at 3 p.m. on RationalBroadcasting.com.

WEDNESDAY 07.21

COMMUNITY

Dallas Prime Timers play bridge at member's residence. 7 p.m. Call 972-504-8866 for details.

Positively Straight meets. AIDS Outreach Center, 400 N. Beach St., Fort Worth. 2 p.m. 817-335-1994 ext. 217. AOC.org.

Gay Teen Project. 909 W. Magnolia St., Suite 2, Fort Worth. 7 p.m. 817-332-7722.

20Something social group meets at Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 6:15 p.m. Cathedralofhope.com.

Apartment Managers and Stakeholders Crime Watch. Oak Lawn Branch library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road. Noon. 214-670-1359.

DFW Prime Timers Prime Lunch at Sweet Tomatoes, 15225 Montfort, Addison. Noon. Call 972-504-8866 for details.

THURSDAY 07.22

COMMUNITY

Dallas FrontRunners meet at Knox Street entrance of Katy Trail. 6:30 p.m. Dallasfrontrunners.org.

The ONE Church West Bible Study. First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth. 7:30 p.m. OneChurchTX.org.

Stonewall Group of Narcotics Anonymous. Meets daily at noon and 7:30 p.m., 5415 Maple Ave. #349 (access via Butler).

Standing on the Promises is the Alcoholics Anonymous group that meets at Cathedral of Hope. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for membership; A.A. is self-supporting through contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, political organization or institution. 5910 Cedar Springs Road, Room 107. Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.

FUSE drop-in weekdays (except Tuesdays). For gay and bi guys up to 29. Resource Center of Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. 3–8 p.m. 214-540-4435.

Youth First Texas groups for ages 14 to 22. 3918 Harry Hines Blvd. 4–10 p.m. 214-879-0400.

The Group. Support group for black men who are HIV-positive. Every second and fourth Thursday of the month. Call 214-455-7316 for more information.

FILM

CSMA Outdoor Movie Series with movies every Thursday in summer on the TMC patio. Showtime is officially 8 p.m. but always at darkfall. Visit site for listing of films. TMC: The Mining Company, 3903 Cedar Springs Rd. Free. ShopCedarSprings.com.

this week's solution

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CELEBRITY BIRTHDAY

By Jack Fertig



Sandra Oh turns 39 on Tuesday. While she's a favorite as Dr. Christina Yang on *Grey's Anatomy*, she was on everyone's radar before then with her spirited turn as Stephanie, the good-natured but jilted lover in 2004's *Sideways*. But we loved her as the pregnant lipstick lesbian in *Under the Tuscan Sun* who tried to star 69 Italy.

CANCER Jun 21-Jul 22

The clash of your ambitions against your traditions shows creative awareness, but roots are important. Find a meeting point in your values. Reconciliation comes from empathy, not ideology.

LEO Jul 23-Aug 22

You're feeling your oats and ready to roar, but stop and think. You can focus all that energy into something spectacular. Greatness takes work, patience and discipline.

VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

Erotic ideas are stoking your imagination. Within your fantasies it's fair game, but with a partner you'll need to reconcile dreams with real-life limits. Some limits are open to renegotiation at least.

LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

In these tough times your instinct is to hunker down and get serious, but your partner is proving disruptive. Welcome new input, but do it with careful consideration, grounding and discipline.

SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

Careful, conservative instincts will help you to the top. Consider daring ideas and see how they can fit in constructively. Use expert opinions from authorities and those "in the trenches."

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 20

Welcome new ideas even if they do send your mind into dizzying directions. New insights into family problems offer you a chance to ameliorate problems that may never be entirely solved.

CAPRICORN Dec 21-Jan 19

Behind-the-scenes work will be noticed and boost your career. Family and community support may look counter-productive, but harnessing that constructively is key to your success.

AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Crazy new ideas are knocking against long-held ideals. You can't solve the dilemma on your own, but engaging a partner or a respected opponent can help you see how the pieces fit together.

PISCES Feb 19-Mar 19

Look into potential health problems you've been neglecting. You're due for a surprise, but can still nip it in the bud. Pay special attention to your heart, circulation, kidneys and pancreas.

ARIES Mar 20-Apr 19

Fun and games can help you dodge problems in relationships even when they feel like solutions. Work through your private fears and pains. Direct those playful urges to creative healing.

TAURUS Apr 20-May 20

Cleaning house isn't the problem, but could be the solution. Focus on your friends and future while putting things in order and the answers will surprise you with clarity and foresight.

GEMINI May 21-Jun 20

What kind of creative fun can be used to bolster your work rather than to distract from it? Reassessing your goals may be a necessary step toward that answer.

THIS WEEK

As the sun enters Leo, he offers chances to reconcile the opposition between Saturn in Libra (conservative social controls) and Uranus in Aries (individualistic impulses). Standing up for yourself and looking good may feel too important. Focus on the special gifts you have to offer others. The real challenge there is to keep generosity untainted by ego. Paradoxically, the best way is to acknowledge your own selfish motivations.

Jack Fertig can be reached at 415-864-8302 or Starjack.com

JANE'S WORLD



bitter girl

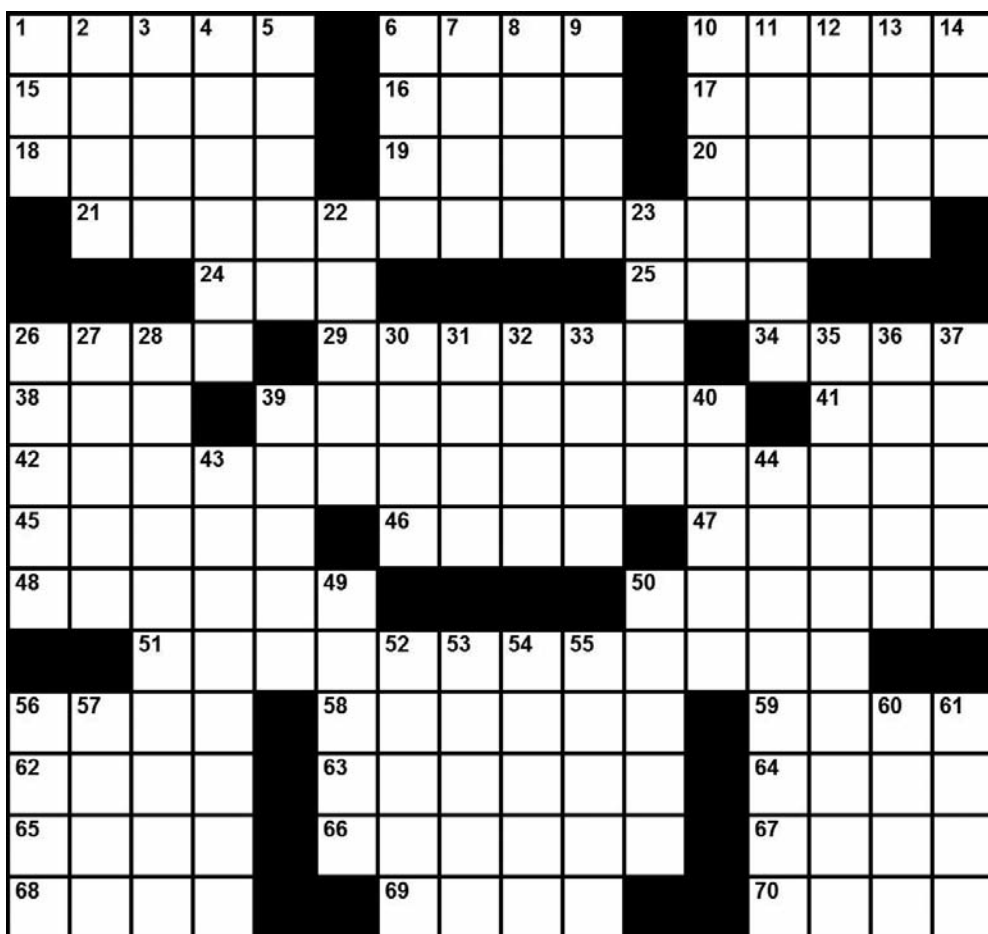
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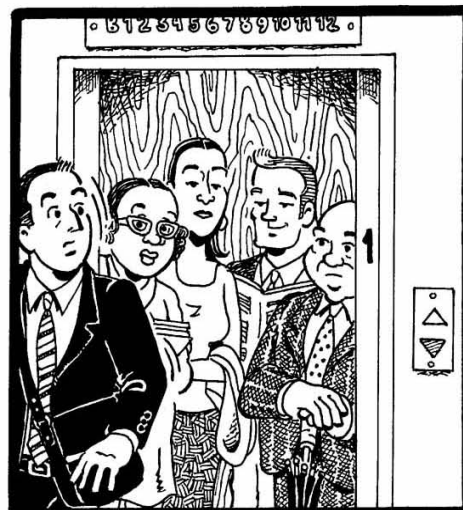
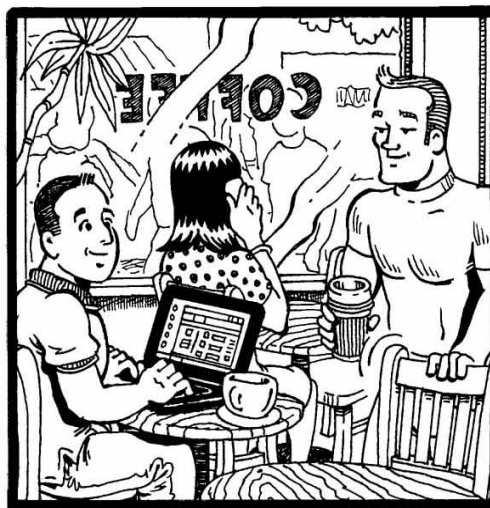
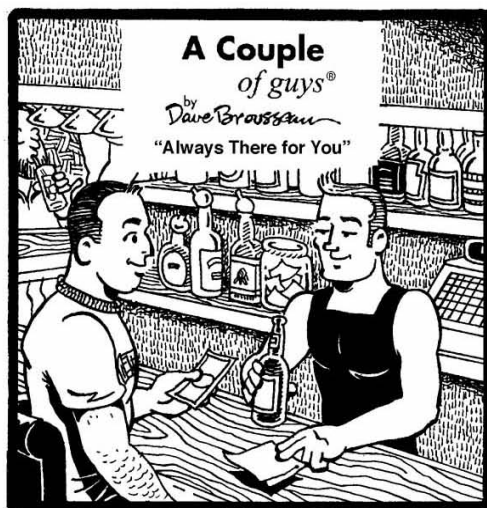
Solution on page 33

Across

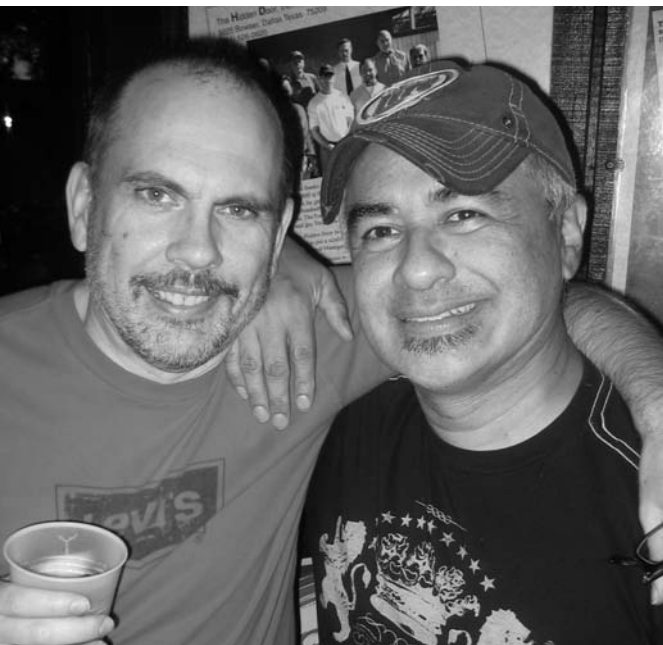
- 1 Turns the meat at Hamburger Mary's
 6 The we kissed links?
 10 Go down
 15 Filthy smackers
 16 Norse port
 17 Places where the salami isn't hidden
 18 From the top
 19 Ark architect
 20 Cara of "Fame"
 21 Book by Chaz Bono, with "The"
 24 Poet's before
 25 Nice affirmative
 26 Chicago Bears wear them on their knees
 29 Oz man
 34 Cut glass
 38 Versatile truck
 39 Related to intercourse
 41 P on fraternity row
 42 Process by which Chastity became Chaz
 45 Have pizza delivered, say
 46 Place for a stud
 47 What parents may hope homosexuality is
 48 Worsted cloth
 50 Bones in the back
 51 Book by Chaz Bono, for short

Down

- 56 Sr. advocate
 58 Capital of South Dakota
 59 Von Trapp youngster
 62 French leather
 63 Consumed amount
 64 Nastase of the net
 65 Metric prefix
 66 Made a profit of
 67 David's brother on "Six Feet Under"
 68 1963 movie role for Liz
 69 Witty Coward
 70 Mardi ____
- 1 Neighbor of Ala.
 2 Go down on a hill
 3 "___ do anything better than you"
 4 Groups in "The Lion King"
 5 Kahlo in drag?
 6 "WKRP" actress Anderson
 7 Has the stage
 8 Scheme
 9 Gay nightlife district of London
 10 Word of parting
 11 Collaborator with Elton
 12 Mapa of "Desperate Housewives"
 13 Meat stabber
 14 Ethnic suffix
 22 Not as many
 23 Musical endings
 26 Seattle's sound
 27 Dangerous emission for Tin Man
 28 Toothpaste
 30 Part of ILGA (abbr.)
 31 "Apartment ___"
 32 Saudi or Iraqi
 33 Philosopher Descartes
 35 Like a gay symbol
 36 Selected guys to play with
 37 Puts an edge on
 39 Snaky discharge
 40 Painting Fra of Florence
 43 Rimbaud portrayer in "Total Eclipse"
 44 Using your head
 49 It may be made on the rebound
 50 It goes under a jockey's shorts
 52 Dirty stuff aired by Ted Casablanca
 53 "The best is ___ come!"
 54 Use a gifted tongue
 55 "Family Matters" nerd
 56 Current band of the past?
 57 Prehistory novelist Jean
 60 First name among lesbian writers
 61 Ball balancers



This Paper is 100%
RECYCLABLE



T.J. and James at the Hidden Door.



Bryan and Will at JR.'s Bar & Grill.



Melissa and Steph at Best Friends Club.



Cody, Jacob, Xklyside and Kyle at the Brick.

Summertime heat got you down? There's no app for that, but these cool spots might help **Cocktails** is back at **Rush** with hits from the '80s thanks to **DJ Micah B** **The Round-Up Saloon** continues its **30th Anniversary Celebration** through Sunday Catch the glam at **Club Elm** and **Pearl's Super Sunday Drag Show** **Woody's** hosts **Live on the Back Patio** Fridays with local musicians strumming their stuff We're thinking footie PJ's won't do the trick but you can try at **1851 Club's Pajama Party** on Saturday. They'll be looking for the hottest jammies on men and women **Station 4** gets some flava when **Club Papi** presents **Laura Leon** in concert **Jack's Backyard** brings **Inner Frequency** to the stage Friday followed by **The Bright** on Saturday. **Kathy and Bella** play **Sunday Night Live** **Koko Chanel** presents the **Miss Kaliente** contest Monday at, you guessed it, **Kaliente** We just love **Tin Room's** over the top approach to nightlife. Don't miss their **Intimate Alibi Saturdays** or **Hunk-O-Mania Thursdays** **JR.'s Bar & Grill** goes **Turnabout** with Caven employees putting on the glitz in this comedy drag show hosted by **Cassie Nova** It's **Leather Harness Night** Saturday at **the Dallas Eagle**. Sunday, they hold **Christmas in July**, the annual **UCLSE** event benefiting **Home for the Holidays** **DJ Alex Acosta** comes from Mexico to spin the night away at **the Brick** on Saturday. **DJ Adam Metts** follows on Sunday with the club's weekly **Tea Dance**. Catch the **Ida Mae Watergate Comedy and Talent Show** every Tuesday night Up and coming singer **Karen Noseff** performs at the **Rose Room** Friday Oh, and we hear a certain mega pop star is in town Thursday night, but nothing to go gaga over ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREGORY HAYES



Nikki, Jenna and Travis at the Rose Room.



Frankie, Eric, Larry, Franco and Michael at Alexandre's.



Chris and Jamie at Grapevine Bar.

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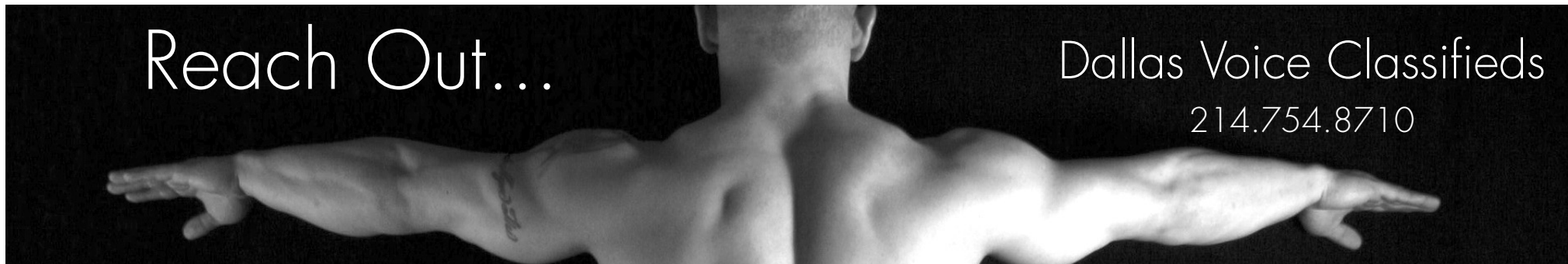
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