

Gay cheftestant adds camp to reality TV

North Texas' Ben Starr pursues his passions for food and travel

Being on 'MasterChef' forced Starr to come out to his family — five weeks ago

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Odd man OUT

Carlos Vasquez, Texas' only openly gay school board member, takes on the establishment in Fort Worth

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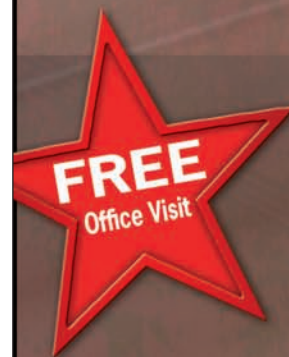
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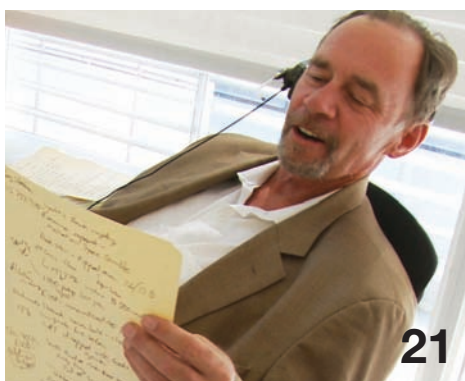
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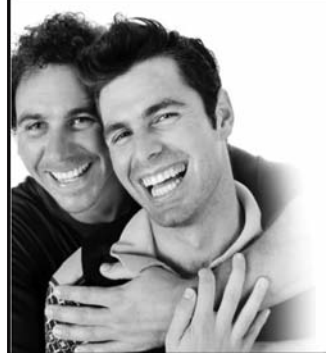
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'Behind every good man, there's a good man'

BTD to honor gay Dallas couple
Chet Flake and Bud Knight

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Chet Flake and Bud Knight are the 2012 Black Tie Dinner Kuchling Humanitarian Award recipients. For the first time, one of the awards will be given posthumously.

The award is presented annually by the Black Tie Dinner to acknowledge the contributions of individuals who have given their time and leadership talents on behalf of the LGBT community.

Knight died earlier this year after a battle with leukemia. He and Flake were together 45 years and were married in Vancouver on their 40th anniversary.

Nan Faith Arnold, co-chair of this year's board of directors and Black Tie Dinner, called their award a slam-dunk.

"They gave years and years and years of service with no hint of ever wanting any recognition," she said.

Flake and Knight have been Resource Center Dallas volunteers for about 20 years. Knight helped found Toast to Life, one of the center's annual fundraising events. Flake mostly volunteered time at the Nelson-Tebedo Clinic where he did phone counseling.

Knight served on the board of Bryan's House during the 1990s. He also initiated the Turtle Creek Chorale's A-Z Auction.

Flake credited Knight with the couple's work on behalf of the community.

"Behind every good man, there's a good man," he joked after talking about his husband's many achievements but taking little credit for his own.

Flake served on the board of the Chorale for 13 years and was its chair for three years.

He was a lay chaplain for the Episcopal Diocese of Dallas at St. Paul Hospital for 11 years. During the early days of the AIDS epidemic, he principally visited people at St. Paul and Parkland from out of town whose pastors were not available to visit.

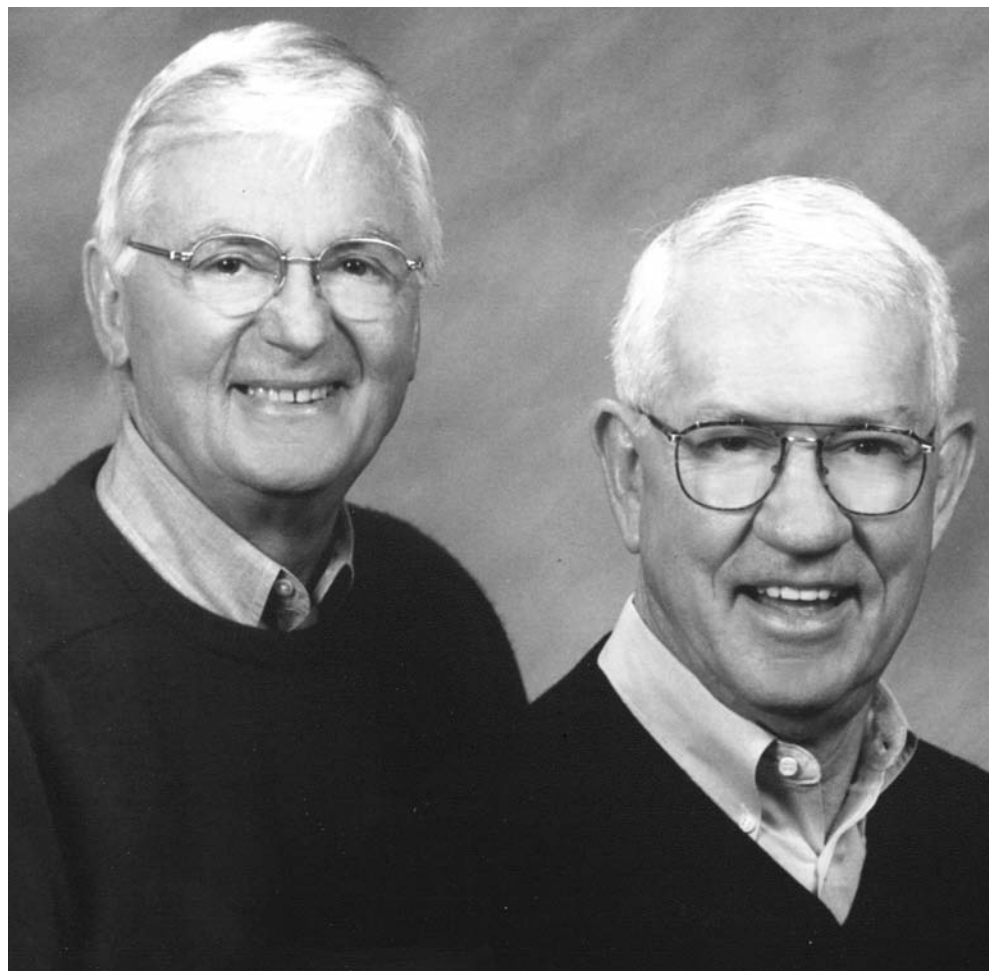
He said that those visits ended with changes to the HIPPA law that prevented hospitals from releasing any information about its patients.

At their church, St. Thomas the Apostle, the couple headed a ministry for people who were HIV positive.

"People came who said, 'I know I'm dying but my church won't bury me,'" Flake said.

Their ministry expanded into a program to find churches to help care for those with HIV, which was the beginning of AIDS Interfaith Network.

The couple met in 1965 when Flake, who was from Los Angeles, was in Dallas working on a doctorate taking summer classes at SMU. Knight was a buyer for Neiman Marcus. They met through a mutual friend and played bridge together on their first date.



Bud Knight, left, and Chet Flake

"Bud said he never played bridge so well," Flake said.

He said it was a beautiful summer romance. But then, during a buying trip, Knight was offered a job at I. Magnin in either Los Angeles or San Francisco. He took the job in L.A.

Flake said Knight dressed many celebrities but his favorite story was about Bette Davis. She looked at Knight in the dressing room and said, "Do you smoke?" Knight said he did so Davis said, "Then sit down and smoke."

In 1967, the couple traveled 16,000 miles across Canada and the U.S. for six months in a trailer.

When they got back to L.A., Knight was going to open a store on Melrose Place but the lease did not come through.

"Mr. Stanley [Marcus] heard about it and came out and insisted Bud come back," Flake said. And Marcus made an appointment to help Flake get a job in Dallas as well. He became a consultant in math and science for the State Board of Education. After two years, Knight was offered the position of president of Lester Melnick, a chain of women's stores in Dallas, where he worked until he retired.

Flake later worked for Xerox, traveling around the world, training teachers to use the company's products, including the Weekly Reader.

The Kuchling Award was founded as The Humanitarian Award at the second Black Tie Dinner

in 1983. John Thomas, the first executive director of Resource Center Dallas, was the first recipient. The award was renamed for Ray Kuchling, a founder of the Black Tie Dinner, an early Dallas LGBT community activist and the third recipient.

Many of the recipients, including Carol West who was named last year, may have been better known throughout the community.

But when Knight and Flake were named, Arnold said, many members of the board were in tears.

Nominations are made by the board of directors, the advisory board and by the beneficiary organizations. The advisory board reviews the nominations and makes recommendations to the board of directors that votes.

Black Tie Dinner Co-chair Chris Kouvelis said that the vote for Flake and Knight was overwhelming.

Arnold said that selecting the Kuchling recipient is one of the most important things the board does during the year. She said that the chairs mostly preside over meetings but this is one of the few times they participate in the voting.

For his speech at the Black Tie Dinner on Nov. 12, Arnold and Kouvelis advised Flake that the best ones come straight from the heart.

"I'll rely on Bud for my inspiration," Flake said. ■

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Jack's closed amid bankruptcy

Jack's Backyard owner Kathy Jack has not returned calls from Dallas Voice about the venue's abrupt closing on June 26. But Marla Custard, one of the property owners, alerted us to some of the details behind the closure.

According to court records, Jack filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on Dec. 16, 2010, for the business, Jack Out of the Box LLC. Documents show the business owed hundreds of thousands of dollars to investors including Custard, as well as the IRS, the state comptroller's office and the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission.



Considering that business seemed to be good at Jack's Backyard, Custard said she's still unclear about why the bills weren't being paid.

Days before the club's final Sunday, a judge dismissed the bankruptcy filing, saying the numbers didn't add up in Jack's plan to get out of the debt.

"That's when it became clear Jack's Backyard would have to close," Custard said. Custard is one of about 15 people listed as creditors who invested in the venue, including recognizable names in the LGBT community such as Howard Okon, Laura McFerrin and Matt Miller.

Custard said she's personally out more than \$600,000, between her investment in the bar and loss of rent payments.

"We love this place," Custard said. "I'm so mad at her [Jack] for this. It's heartbreaking, but at the end of the day, it all rests in Kathy's lap." The landowners are now looking for a new tenant.

— Rich Lopez

Araguz denied new trial

Meghan Stabler reports that Wharton County District Judge Randy M. Clapp has denied transgender widow Nikki Araguz's motion for a new trial on Wednesday, July 6.

Stabler, a board member for the Human Rights Campaign who's been monitoring the case, said even though the motion was filed 10 days ago, Clapp hadn't read it when he arrived in court for a hearing. Clapp called for a recess so he could read the motion, then returned and promptly dismissed it, Stabler said.

In May, Clapp issued a summary judgment saying Araguz isn't entitled to death benefits from her husband, fallen volunteer firefighter Thomas Araguz III. Clapp ruled the Araguzes' marriage was invalid since she was born male.

Araguz's legal team plans to appeal Clapp's decision to Texas' 13th circuit court in Corpus Christ, Stabler said.

— John Wright

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RCD receives Walmart grant

Resource Center Dallas has received a \$25,000 grant from the Walmart Foundation in support of the Center's nutrition program for people living with HIV/AIDS.

"This gift ... will help provide high-protein foods that are important for the nutritional needs of individuals who use our food pantry and hot meals program," said Cece Cox, executive director and CEO of Resource Center Dallas.

RCD's nutrition program, established in 1985, serves people living with HIV who lack the financial resources to support their nutritional and medication requirements. The program includes a food pantry that distributes an average of seven tons of milk, meat, fresh vegetables and canned goods every week. The Center serves more than 600 hot meals to clients each week.

Dallas Bears present awards

In addition to \$46,000 distributed to organizations by Dallas Bears at their banquet on June 25, the group presented several awards.

Spanke Studer was named Bear of the Year.

Patrick Sweeney and Rob Meade received the President's Outstanding Service Award. Partnership Awards were presented to Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dallas Eagle, Round-Up Saloon, Brick & Joe's, Ben E. Keith Co. and Big D Bear Dance for

their continued support and sponsorship.

The fifth annual "I Care" Randy Franklin Memorial Award for Community Service was presented to Jeffrey Payne of the Sharon St. Cyr Fund/International Mr. Leather, David Hearn of the Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund and the DFW Sisters, a mission of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.

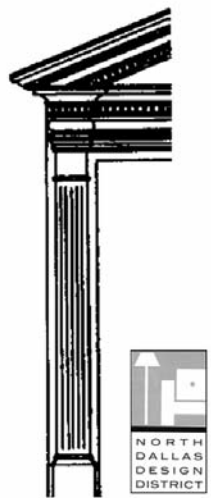
Oak Lawn Library art show set

The theme of the next Oak Lawn Library art show is Celebration of Animals. Submitted works should depict animals or our relationships with them. The library is also soliciting artists for month-long shows at the library.

This judged show will accept art in the following categories — painting, drawing, print, photography, watercolor and mixed media. Prize ribbons will be awarded for Best of Show and for first, second, and third places, as well as honorable mention in each category.

Artists may submit a maximum of three entries at \$15 for the first entry and \$10 for each additional work. Entries must be current, new to this event, and prepared by the artist for hanging or for display. Pictures may not exceed 40-by-40 inches.

Artists must be over 18. Intake day is Sept. 24 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Call 214-382-0202 or email scifi_chick@juno.com for more information. ■



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Many other great dogs and cats are available for adoption from Operation Kindness, located at 3201 Earhart Drive, 1 street south of Keller Springs and 2 blocks west of Midway Road, in Carrollton. The no-kill shelter is open 6 days a week: Monday, 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.; closed Tuesday; Wednesday, 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.; Thursday, noon to 8 p.m.; Friday, noon to 5 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. The cost is \$110 for cats, \$135 for kittens, \$150 dogs over 1 year, and \$175 for puppies. The adoption cost includes the spay/neuter surgery, microchipping, vaccinations, heartworm test for dogs, leukemia and FIV test for cats, and more. Those who adopt two pets at the same time receive a \$20 discount. For more information, call 972-418-PAWS, or visit www.operationkindness.org.

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A barroom promise worth keeping

LSR much deeper than a dare for rider representative — even if it started that way

M.M.ADJARIAN | Contributing Writer

If there's one thing David Smith has learned, it's this: Never underestimate the power of a barroom promise made in the presence of a friend with a videophone.

Thanks to both — the promise and the incriminating recorded evidence — Smith had all the incentive he needed to sign up for the 2010 Lone Star Ride.

Not that Smith wouldn't have signed up for the Ride ... eventually. But as it so happened, the person who recorded the IT consultant's vow was in the process of training for the event himself.

"And I said, 'You know, I might like to do that one of these days,'" recalls a grinning Smith. "That's when he made me commit to it."

His reasons for participating in the Lone Star Ride go much deeper than simply wanting to follow up on a dare, though. He's seen firsthand just what the funds raised through the event can do for people in need of HIV and AIDS services.

"I've had numerous friends over the years who've come in contact with the three [agencies the Ride benefits]," he says. "And I've seen through them a lot of what the LSR does for the community."

Smith is also a man of conscience. He came out in the late 1990s, just as the worst of the AIDS epi-

demical had passed. By contrast, his partner, who'd been out since the late 1980s, had directly witnessed the devastation AIDS had wrought in the gay community.

"I see the emotion in his eyes when he talks about losing [so many] of his friends to the [disease]," says Smith, his voice breaking. "And so I feel like since I wasn't there to see that, this is my way of giving back."

He also believes that the LSR is an important symbol, especially for LGBT youth and young adults. Despite the great strides medical researchers have made in combating the AIDS virus, the epidemic continues.

"When you see advertisements for HIV medicines in magazines today," he remarks, "you always see very healthy people. But in the '90s, you'd see people moving past the bars down Cedar Springs with walking canes or in wheelchairs. [Twenty-somethings] have no idea what it means to have to go through that."

Prior to joining the LSR in 2010, Smith had been one of the many casual cyclists you often see riding around White Rock Lake on any given day. He has since traded in his \$200 bicycle for the leaner, meaner road bike he initially borrowed from the LSR Locker, but which he now owns.

Participating in the Ride for just one season has also converted Smith into a committed LSR volunteer: He is now LSR's rider representative. Part of his work involves counseling new cyclists, especially those feeling uncertain about their ability to do the event.

Says Smith, "People ask me, 'How can you ride 40, 50 or 60 miles — that's just too far!' But if you've ever ridden your bike once around White Rock Lake, which is just shy of 10 miles, you [begin to] realize just how easy it is to do."

As the LSR rider rep, Smith also leads individuals and groups on unofficial training rides.

"One of the things I learned along my training path was that if I'm riding with somebody, it's easier than if I'm riding by myself," he explains. "Their energy pulls you along and yours pulls them along."

And that energy is crucial, especially for new riders who haven't attempted long distances before.


"There's a [back-and-forth] mental argument you end up having with yourself," Smith says. "It goes something like this: 'No, you can't give up' and, 'It's too far.' But if you push, you do get there."

Smith pauses and smiles. "And then you realize — wow, it wasn't as hard as I thought it would be." ■

Lone Star Ride Fighting AIDS takes place Sept. 24-25. For details or to donate to a specific rider or team or to the ride in general, go online to LoneStarRide.org. If you are interested in talking to David about the ride or want to schedule an unofficial training session, you can contact him at david@davidsmith71.com.

David Smith (Tammye Nash/Dallas Voice)







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Rural AIDS agency to shut down

ARRT served people with HIV in 29 counties west of Fort Worth

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

WEATHERFORD — AIDS Resources of Rural Texas will close on Sept. 1.

The agency serves clients in 29 counties with clinics in Weatherford and Abilene. In addition to providing primary medical care, its programs include case management, HIV testing, a food pantry, transportation, prevention education and housing, utility and emergency financial assistance.

The closure is blamed on a cut in federal funding.

The closest AIDS service organizations will be in Fort Worth, but ARRT board members said that some clients have no transportation and many are indigent. And while Weatherford is just 30 miles west of Fort Worth in Parker County, Abilene is about 150 miles from Cowtown. AIDS services are also available in Midland, which is 150 miles west of Abilene.

Kristen Bradbury, who works at the Weatherford office, said, "We are very worried about our clients."

She said that the Weatherford clients were better off than those served by the Abilene office.

Board members are not speaking publicly about the closing and will issue a statement next week.

About 150 people will be left without care in Abilene and 130 in Weatherford. Clients received a letter encouraging them to seek medical care elsewhere, but no suggestions were made.

Some infectious disease specialists can be found in the area, but most have little experience with HIV and some refuse to treat it.

ARRT began in the 1980s as an AIDS support group and incorporated as a nonprofit to provide services in 1993.

Rafael McDonnell, spokesman for Resource Center Dallas, said he doesn't expect an influx of clients to Dallas HIV organizations. Distance is one reason, but also many grants that are

awarded to AIDS agencies are geographically limited.

Fort Worth agencies and John Peter Smith Hospital may feel more of an impact.

AIDS Outreach Center in Fort Worth provides many of the same services as ARRT. Some clients who can get to Fort Worth will probably access that agency's services.

David Mack Henderson is on the North Central Texas HIV Planning Council, which covers Tarrant County as well as the 29 counties serviced by ARRT.

He said that negotiations are under way with other service providers to make sure some services continue seamlessly.

"They provided an amazing product for the consumers who needed it," Henderson said.

He said he's grateful for the 60 days notice to prepare for the agency's closing rather than finding that they had simply locked the doors.

Bryan King of North Texas Infectious Disease Consultants at Baylor had another suggestion for some clients of ARRT — looking for a drug study.

Clients are classified as either naïve or experienced. Naïve clients are those who have never been on medications before. In those studies, all drug costs, labs and doctors fees are covered. Experienced clients are those who have taken medication before. In those cases, only the trial drug would be covered.

However, he said patients are paid for their visits and often gas is covered.

"I have one who comes from Shreveport and he gets \$100 for gas," King said.

He suggested looking for trials at ClinicalTrials.gov. Under search, type "HIV AND Dallas."

Some of the clients of ARRT have insurance and will find local doctors to treat them. If the regional HIV planning council can find other agencies and federally qualified health centers to pick up the services provided by ARRT, low-income clients without insurance may find care without traveling up to 150 miles.

ARRT was named a 2012 Black Tie Dinner recipient. Nan Arnold, co-chair of this year's Black Tie Dinner, said this was the first time that she could remember losing a beneficiary because it closed before the event. ■



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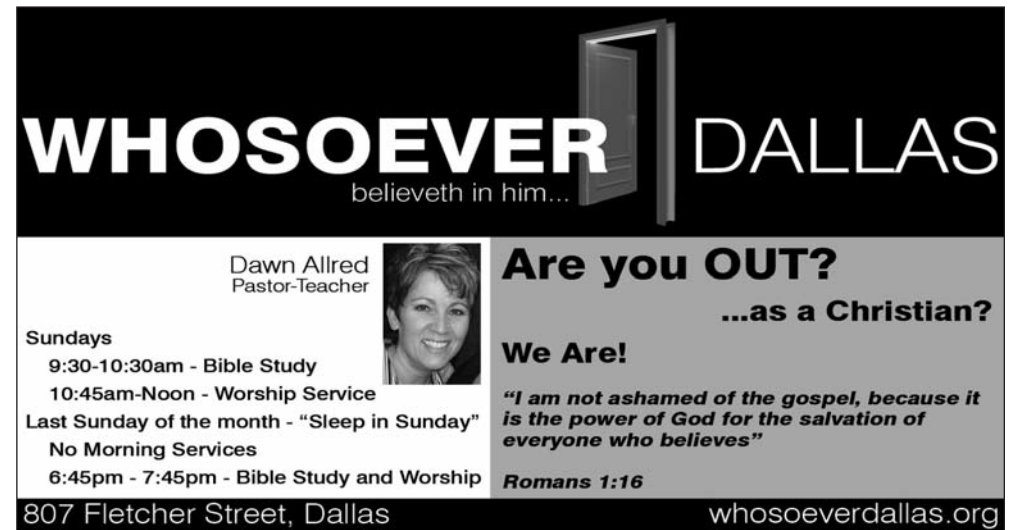
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DEATHS

Aidan Farrington Hartoon, 26, passed away on July 3.

Aidan: Irish-Gaelic meaning "little fire." For those who knew her, the name embodied the intensity and passion with which she lived. Her giggling, boundless energy lives on through all those who loved her. A memorial celebration of Aidan's life will be held at Alexandre's on Cedar Springs Road, Friday July 8 at 8 p.m. Come dressed to kill, as we all remember and celebrate a beautiful fire snuffed too soon.



Odd man OUT



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PIONEERING PAIR | Carlos Vasquez became only the second openly gay elected official in Tarrant County history when he joined the Fort Worth school board in 2008. Fort Worth City Councilman Joel Burns was the first.
(Andrea Grimes/Dallas Voice)



Carlos Vasquez, Texas' only openly gay school board member, takes on the establishment in Fort Worth

ANDREA GRIMES | Contributing Writer
editor@dallasvoice.com

"In Fort Worth, we have a very strong downtown."

When Fort Worth ISD trustee Carlos Vasquez says this, he's not talking about the manicured sidewalks of Commerce Street or plentiful parking for night-lifers. He's talking about a political establishment that doesn't take kindly to challenges. Elected in 2008 to the district's board of trustees, Vasquez has been a voice of dissent in a city that has notoriously favored those who fall in line, no questions asked.

"I have been a very strong supporter of stu-

dents and employees, and not the establishment," Vasquez told Dallas Voice over coffee last month. His record — and many, many critical editorials and opinion pieces from the Fort Worth Star-Telegram — certainly paints a picture of a trustee who feels little obligation to the status quo.

Vasquez unseated an incumbent to win North Fort Worth's District 1 with 64 percent of the vote. He loudly, and sometimes passionately, criticized former Superintendent Melody Johnson, who resigned under pressure in May. He has questioned the safety of gas drilling close to schools. He has advocated bringing in a new legal firm to take over the district's delinquent tax collections.

Vasquez also happens to be the only openly gay school board member in the state. It's a significant distinction, but he's gone largely unrecognized by the LGBT community in Texas — perhaps overshadowed by the likes of Fort

Worth Councilman Joel Burns, Houston Mayor Annise Parker and Dallas County Sheriff Lupe Valdez.

But even in a very red city in a very red county, Vasquez says his sexuality has been the least of his problems. Instead, he's been criticized by the Star-Telegram for accusing school board President Ray Dickerson of bowing to big business in gas drilling matters, and of resorting to "antics" with regard to hiring that new legal firm.

He even says he once got a call from former Mayor Mike Moncrief telling him to "cool it" with the criticism. But Vasquez believes that the "Fort Worth way is not always the right way, and the Fort Worth way many, many times excludes people."

One of Vasquez's colleagues in the Tejano Democrats of North Texas, community activist Jodi Perry, calls Vasquez the "padrino," or

■ **OUT**, Next Page

■ **OUT**, From Previous Page

"godfather," of education in Fort Worth.

Whether it's keeping gas drilling away from schools or advocating for anti-bullying measures, Perry says Vasquez has never been a "one-issue person." Constituents "don't see him as a gay trustee," she says, but as "Carlos, the champion for children."

Inclusion is one of Vasquez's passions, and as a 16-year veteran of the school district, where he's worked as both a teacher and a principal, he's made LGBT equality a staple of his tenure so far. Somehow, he has found time in between all his so-called "antics," to help found an LGBT employees' organization as well as help institute anti-bullying policies that include prohibitions against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, first for employees and, as of the last week in June, for students.

Elected just a few months after Councilman Burns, who made national news with his "It Gets Better" speech, Vasquez became the second openly gay public elected official to serve in Tarrant County. Burns, elected in December 2007, and Vasquez, elected in May 2008, have not yet worked closely together despite their shared interest in LGBT advocacy.

Vasquez says he's "surprised that we've gotten away with having as many gay rights as we have for students, teachers, employees," because of the conservative, Republican base in Fort Worth. But he believes that community building comes from inclusion. That's a philosophy he's been building on since childhood.

Growing up in a socioeconomically blighted area of Brownsville in South Texas, Vasquez found a way to bridge the gap between being a popular guy and a friend to kids on the margins. A student council member, yearbook editor and senior class favorite, Vasquez admits to growing up in a "pretty rough" neighborhood. Even so, he says, he's lived both "a good life and a hard life" that helps him identify with many different groups of people. In fact, his intersectional identity as a Latino man, a gay man and a lifelong educator helps him "go from 99-cent tacos to fifty-dollar steaks and still be the same kind of guy."

Still, he says, his critics have often asked him to pick one identity over the others — something he's not willing to do. "I have many different identities," says Vasquez, and while others may see those as being in conflict with each other, he believes they give him perspective.

Most recently, some members of the League of United Latin American Citizens in Fort Worth have criticized Vasquez's support of interim Superintendent Walter Dansby, who is black. Vasquez believes Dansby's 37 years with the district, despite the fact that he's yet to take his superintendent certification test, means he's the best man for the job, regardless of race. He was most recently the deputy superintendent. LULAC supporters have said they prefer Sylvia Reyna, the school district's chief of administration, who is certified as a superintendent but who has only been with the district a year.

"We have to move beyond race," says Vasquez, and "beyond diversity." Most importantly, he believes, Fort Worth ISD needs "somebody who has ownership of our district." He believes Dansby has that, and if it makes him unpopular with some in the Latino community, he says he doesn't mind, because he's being honest.

In keeping with his reputation for speaking his mind, Vasquez says that in-fighting in minority communities holds everyone back. In fact, he says, "I think I've had more bullying behavior in our own [LGBT] community than I've had outside." He remembers a time when he first came to North Texas 20 years ago when he'd head to a gay bar and find that "everyone was white and pretty and skinny."

Today, he says, "I see a lot of different faces." He says that comes from "better communication." To that end, says Vasquez, he's willing to take the lead. "If you're not going to say 'hi' to me, I'll say 'hi' to you."

If his go-getter attitude ruffles some feathers, Vasquez doesn't mind.

"I feel pretty good, even though the Star-Telegram and downtown establishment aren't happy, the community at large is." Vasquez says he gets a lot of "praise" and "kudos" from his constituents, and "ultimately, that's what it's all about." ■



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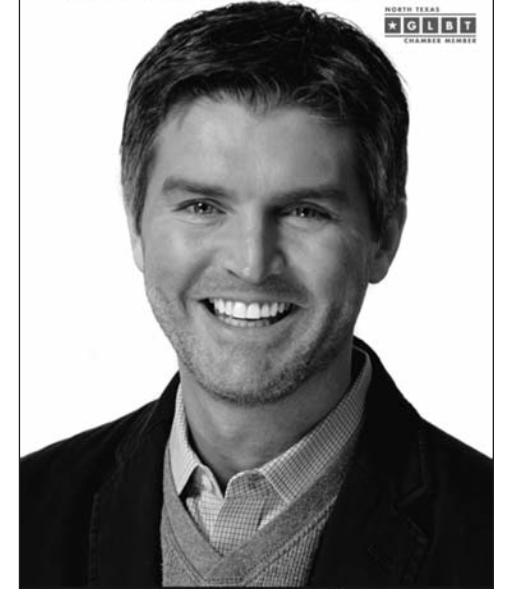
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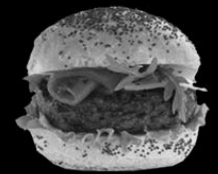
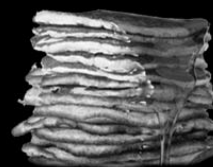
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The mission of Resource Center Dallas is to serve the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender (GLBT) and North Texas communities by providing health, HIV, and social services; education and advocacy; and support to GLBT individuals and organizations.

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CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

CORRECTION: The organization that presented a \$5,000 check to Resource Center Dallas recently was LEAGUE at AT&T. Presenting the check was John Cramer, national public affairs director for LEAGUE at AT&T. A photo caption on Page 6 of the July 1 edition indicated otherwise, and we regret the error.

viewpoints

New rumor: Is Rick Perry 'ex-gay'?

Days after allegations that he's closeted resurface, governor announces N.H. trip to speak to group promoting 'ex-gay' therapy

Sometimes the comments posted by readers of LGBT newspapers provide a fascinating glimpse into the mindsets of our community's greatest adversaries because they are often part of the audience.

One that caught my eye recently was posted by a reader who objected to criticism directed against Texas Gov. Rick Perry for agreeing to headline the annual dinner on Oct. 28 of the anti-gay group Cornerstone Action in New Hampshire. The engagement is seen as further evidence that Perry is leaning toward running for the Republican Party's presidential nomination in 2012 because New Hampshire is the first presidential primary state.

That put Perry on the LGBT community's radar again because Cornerstone Action advocates the repeal of the state's same-sex marriage law, and it promotes the work of so-called "ex-gay therapy"

groups such as Exodus International, Love Won Out and the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality. The conversion therapy practiced by these groups has been denounced by the American Psychological Association, which refutes the notion that homo-



David Webb
The Rare Reporter

sexuality is a mental illness.

The offended reader who was obviously a proponent of "ex-gay therapy" and a fan of Perry's wrote, "Many, many people tormented with same-sex attraction have benefited from therapy. The homosexual pressure groups have no moral right to speak for these individuals."

Only one reason comes to mind why someone would feel tormented by same-sex attraction, and that would be a result of being taught that homosexuality is evil and an aberration. Those same teachings would make someone who is heterosexual fear and despise someone who is openly gay. And if someone is gay and doesn't want to be, it's pretty easy to see how they would express homophobic opinions to help keep their shameful secret.

Groups such as Exodus International claim they are not attempting to influence "people who are perfectly happy living their gay life," but the readers' remarks make it clear they are monitoring everything we do by reading our publications. They also attend our public events surreptitiously when they are not staging protests, which prompts the question, "Why all the interest if sup-



Texas Gov. Rick Perry

pression is not their goal?"

Perry's camp announced the New Hampshire engagement after his appearance the previous weekend at the Republican Leadership Conference in New Orleans, where participants, enamored of his conservative social and fiscal policies, reportedly shouted, "Run, Rick, run."

The announcement of the New Hampshire appearance was viewed as humorous by some because it followed on the heels of the re-emergence of widespread rumors that Perry is secretly gay and that his wife, Anita, almost divorced him over it. The rumors that the governor's wife caught him involved in a sexual act with another high-level male government official became so widespread several years ago that Perry denied them in an Austin newspaper story, calling them a "political smear campaign." A spokesman for the governor has acknowledged his staff is prepared to address the rumors again should he run for the presidential nomination.

Although almost no one actually believes Perry is secretly gay, his alignment at this point with a group so involved with the promotion of "ex-gay therapy" seems a little peculiar. After all, many of the proponents of ex-gay therapy claim they are recovered homosexuals, and several have been exposed by gay activists as frauds who still engage in same-sex activity.

With all of the rumors that previously circu-

lated about Perry being gay and others claiming he cheated on his wife with other women, it would seem like the governor and his staff might be concerned that the next wild tale could be that he went to ex-gay therapy. If not, maybe the governor thinks this is a way of appearing to be compassionate toward a group of people his actions seem to indicate he despises.

Having talked with several of Perry's and his wife's high school and college acquaintances — some of whom are gay and lesbian — over the years, I doubt that Perry was always so intolerant and self-righteous. In fact, I understand the governor sowed quite a few wild oats in his younger years, to put it in the vernacular of his West Texas roots.

But somewhere along the line during his 26-year career in Texas politics, Perry, who is a Methodist, apparently realized that conservative religious zealots would propel him to fame, fortune and power if he pandered to them. That, unfortunately, puts the LGBT community in the crosshairs of Perry's aim, so it is a real possibility that the rest of the nation is going to experience what it is like to live in a state where an over-the-top, anti-gay elected official sets the political tone.

David Webb is a veteran journalist who has covered LGBT issues for the mainstream and alternative media for three decades. E-mail him at davidwaynewebb@yahoo.com.

Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst is neither dear nor a friend

Email touts disastrous budget cuts as a success, says he's preparing to share some 'exciting news'

As the Special Session of the Texas Legislature ended, Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst posted a "Dear Friend" letter online.

The Internet being what it is, the letter also went to those who do not think him dear and do not consider him a friend.

In it, he touts what he considers the accomplishments of "[w]e conservatives." These include cutting state spending by nearly \$15 billion, balancing the budget without raising taxes, preserving Rainy Day funds for future budget balancing, enacting a strong voter ID law, passing legislation to reduce frivolous lawsuits, and protecting the unborn.

Let's look at a few of the people and services that got the axe:

- School teachers
- School librarians

- Public library services
- Nursing home care
- Stipends for college
- Access to contraceptives
- Access to low-cost health care
- Food, etc., for prisoners

The list goes on and on. But the list is sad, while the letter is funny — assuming you enjoy black humor.

The first funny thing is that Dewhurst reminds readers five times of his position on the political spectrum. In addition to noting what "[w]e conservatives" did to make the 82nd Legislature "one of the most successful in Texas history," he mentions his conservative record, his conservative values, the Lege's conservative victories, and the wonders of conservative change.

Also funny is his claim to having reduced current state spending by almost \$15 billion. Does he think we have forgotten that he and Gov. Rick Perry never mentioned, during the last re-election campaign, our state's shabby

fiscal condition? Only later did we learn that our state was \$25 billion in the hole. That's give or take a few billion, according to State Comptroller Susan Coombs.



Phyllis Guest

Contributing Columnist

Even funnier is his pride in the passage of the voter ID law "to protect the integrity of our elections." Remind us how many unqualified individuals have dashed to the polls, desperate to vote? How distressing it was to wait for hours, in pouring rain or blazing sun, to get to a voting machine? Apparently it is true that a handful of ineligible people have voted, and some have been cited for technical violations. However, far more Texans turned out for the Dallas Mavericks parade than for

the Dallas mayoral runoff. Go Mavs!

Funnier still is that he boasts of providing "pregnant women the opportunity to see a sonogram of their unborn child." Does he believe no such opportunity had existed before? To his mind, and that of his colleagues, have clinics and clinicians across the state refused pregnant women access to ultrasound technology available even in (gasp!) Africa and Asia? As to his companion boast of "requiring a 24-hour waiting period" before a woman can get an abortion? Only a stupid straight or a closeted queen could deem that the state's business.

Finally, Dewhurst probably thinks clamping down low-cost health care is a real knee-slapper. The June 29 Dallas Morning News reported that the new state budget cuts funds to Parkland's family planning clinics by more than half, or about \$5 million. Statewide, \$63 million was cut from family planning programs. So the Lege is punishing not only an organization that refers women for abortion services — Planned Parenthood — but all low-income women. Men, too, of course. And the unwanted children who will be born as a result.

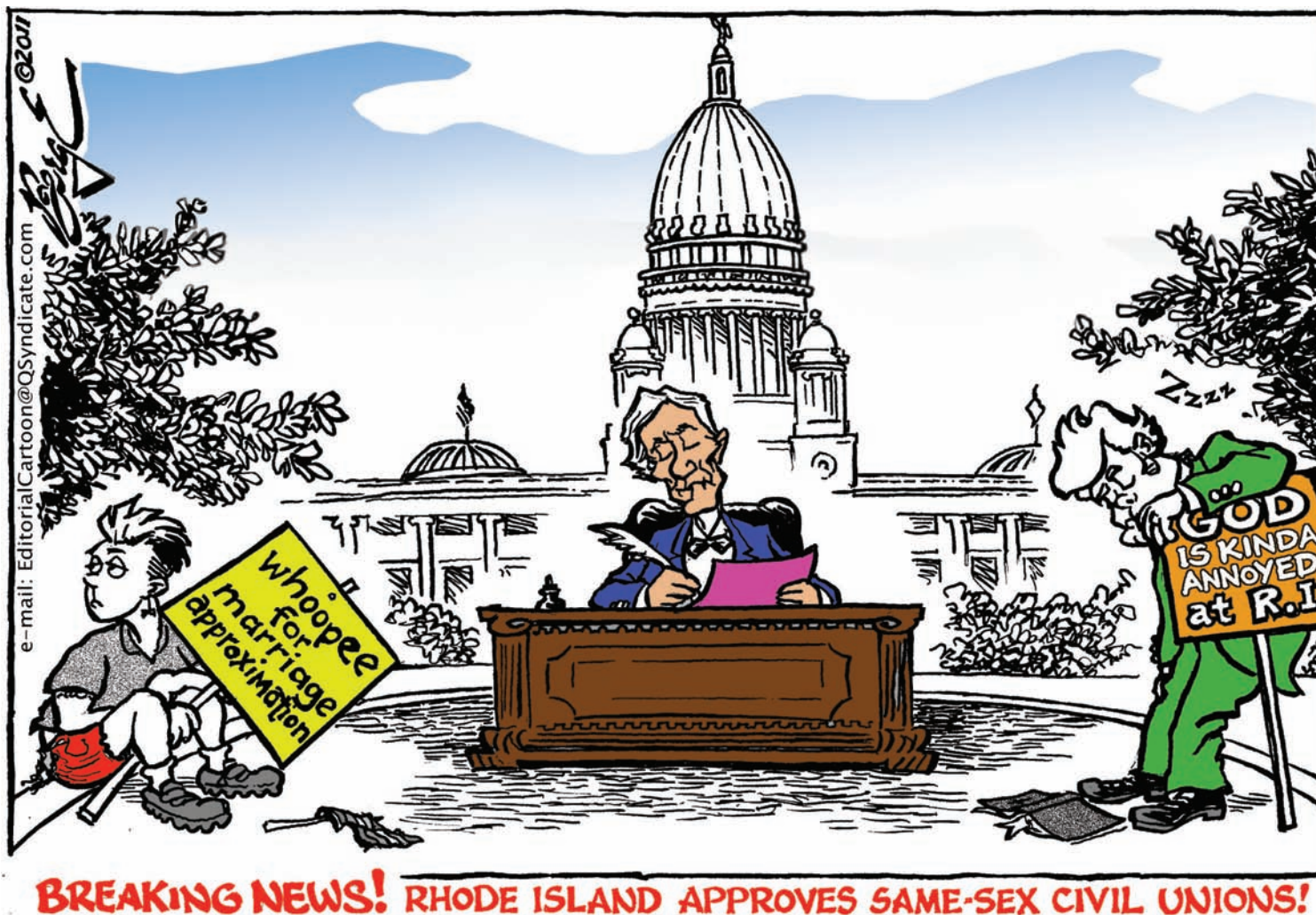
The 82nd Legislature on which Dewhurst was "proud to report" tore a \$467 million hole in the state's already frayed social safety net, lopping off chunks of the Medicaid program that would have helped, according to the DMN, poor children, pregnant women, nursing home residents, and the disabled.

But here's the best part of the Dewhurst letter. After assuring readers that he and his wife, Tricia, had prayed over his future, he reports — in bold face type — "we will have exciting news to share with you about what we will do next."

Be still, my heart.

Phyllis Guest is a longtime activist and member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas. Contact her via editor@dallasvoice.com.

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

Master of HIS domain

Ben Starr, the recently out Dallas cheftestant on Fox's 'MasterChef,' camps it up on Gordon Ramsay's cooking competition series

sophisticated enough? Is this *even* sophisticated?" The episode this week was a turning point. I felt like for the first time I'm back in my own element.

You certainly have made an impression with your outfits. I don't wear those hats at home, though I do wear an apron, just for practicality. But [the show] has started this storytelling legacy — people expect me to wear them when they come over. My mom made me the pumpkin hat and apron. Actually, she made me five or six pairs to wear. That's why you always see a different one on me each episode. I was going through them.

Was wearing them part of a conscious effort to stand during the auditions? I am fairly myself, though I had to set myself apart that wasn't just about food. I needed to be someone [the judges] remember when they go home at night. That's why I talked about my rural upbringing, because I thought it would generate a memory.

Had you watched the show before? Did you know what to expect? I don't watch much TV, but this is not my first time being on TV, which is ironic because I abhor reality television — it brings out the worst in our culture. But I did Rachael Ray's *So You Think You Can Cook* in 2007. The audience there was much more caring and nurturing than the machine on *MasterChef*, but I was a little bit prepared for the frank judgment.

I did not watch the first season of *MasterChef*, but my friend Karen Rutherford said, "I'll never speak to you again if you don't audition [for season 2]." So I watched them all on Hulu. I just sweated my way through them. I knew how intense and stressful it is to cook on TV, and saw how brutal Joe Bastianich and Gordon Ramsay were with the contestants. I thought: Screw this. Then a few weeks passed and the terror faded [and I went through the lengthy audition process]. It was a *lot* of work — the most difficult full-time job I've ever had that doesn't pay.

What's your favorite kind of cuisine? While my DNA wants to say Mexican food — I had it in the womb six times a week — I am most intrigued by Thai food. It is so complex, yet so much of it is cooked on the street in a tiny little cart. From the richest to the poorest, everybody eats on the street.

How about a favorite meal? One of the most memorable meals I've ever had was in Egypt on New Year's Eve in 2001. I spent it on Mount Sinai and hiked eight miles back down to the car for the drive back to our resort. [The driver] fell asleep at the wheel and we plummeted into a canyon. Eventually a camel train of Bedouins came by the bottom of this canyon. They took us onto the camels and rode four or five miles to their camp. All the women came out, killed a goat and started cooking while the men tried to pull our car out of the canyon.

MASTERCHEF

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It was a humble meal — just a goat stew and some flat bread — but the flavors were really intense and felt they came right out of the desert. I could not even communicate with these people who live in abject poverty, but still they were willing to kill one of their last goats and throw a big feast for us because it's in their nature to be hospitable. I realized it was important to me to use food to nurture people in my life — I could never be a chef and be in the back. I need to be with the people. My partner is one of the main reasons I cook — we've been together eight years and I want to marry him one day.

Did you plan to be "the gay guy" on the show? When I was on [Rachael Ray] it was not addressed and I didn't talk about it openly. At that point my family didn't know I was gay — in fact, I didn't come out to my parents until about five weeks ago. They were totally shell-shocked — they didn't have a clue.

Maybe mom should have guessed since she made you all those hats. Ha! Maybe.

When Lewisville-based travel writer Ben Starr auditioned for Fox's *MasterChef*, he doubted they'd be interested in his style of home cooking. But not only did he make the cut, he's been one of the more memorable cheftestants — just this week, he had the judge's favorite dish.

The series is only halfway through, but for Starr, it's already made a huge difference in his life: It forced him to come out to his parents just last month. We talked to him about the experience and his favorite meals. ■

You've been struggling since you wowed the judges at your audition. The audition kinda set me up to expect that I would do well in the competition, but we spun pretty quickly into an emphasis on gourmet cuisine, which is not my thing at all. My street tacos were a little bit spiffy, and I am extremely well traveled, but I tend to eat peasant food even when I travel. I was seeing all these people around me making restaurant quality cuisine and trying to compete on their level. Nice to make a good of catfish in a skillet.

What was the hardest challenge for you? The biggest challenge has definitely been psychological. I'm competitive by nature and I want to feel like I'm competition, but I was surrounded by chefs that were a little more connected to the Food Network than I am. They'd use words like *umami* [a Japanese word for a savory flavor] and I had to go look it up. There was a common lexicon among the contestants about what these famous chefs I've never heard of are doing in their restaurants. I felt like an idiot stumbling around in the dark. That started to leak into my cooking and I began to question, "Is this

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Each May, eyes fall upon Kentucky's pastoral Bluegrass area as Louisville holds the Kentucky Derby, the world's most celebrated Thoroughbred race. But from spring through late autumn, it's a fine time for touring the hilly, verdant swath of northern Kentucky that includes the state's two largest cities, Louisville and Lexington. Despite the region's generally conservative demeanor, Louisville has a growing core of hip neighborhoods, an increasingly locavore-driven restaurant scene, first-rate culture and one of the world's largest gay nightclubs, while collegiate Lexington makes a charming base for exploring nearby horse farms and acclaimed small-batch bourbon distilleries.

A large, modern metropolis (city-county population 721,000) on Kentucky's Ohio River border with Indiana, Louisville's West Main Street area boasts an impressive stock of grand, Victorian cast-iron buildings and a few of the city's gay nightspots. A paved River-Walk affords great views of the city as well as the Louisville Slugger Museum, the excellent Frazier International History Museum and Muhammad Ali Center. Louisville excels at the arts, with respected opera and ballet companies and the Actors Theatre of Louisville, which hosts the acclaimed Humana Festival of New American Plays every spring.

You'll find a number of gracious residential districts both downtown and south of it, and a particularly lively and gay-popular stretch of businesses and restaurants along Bardstown Road in southeastern Louisville's Highlands and Cherokee Triangle neighborhoods. Many of the city's most gay-popular eateries are on Bardstown, including the community's favorite java joint, Days Espresso, and Lilly's, where you can sample such contemporary regional American specialties as catfish spring rolls with Asian dipping sauce, and locally farmed pork confit and braised shoulder.

One of Louisville's most distinctive emerging neighborhoods is East Market, a relatively compact stretch of cafes, galleries and funky shops just a short drive east of downtown. Here be sure to check out Bodega at Felice, a trendy market, deli, and coffee bar all in one, and Toast on Market, which serves tantalizingly tasty breakfast and lunch fare, including a memorable Monte Cristo.

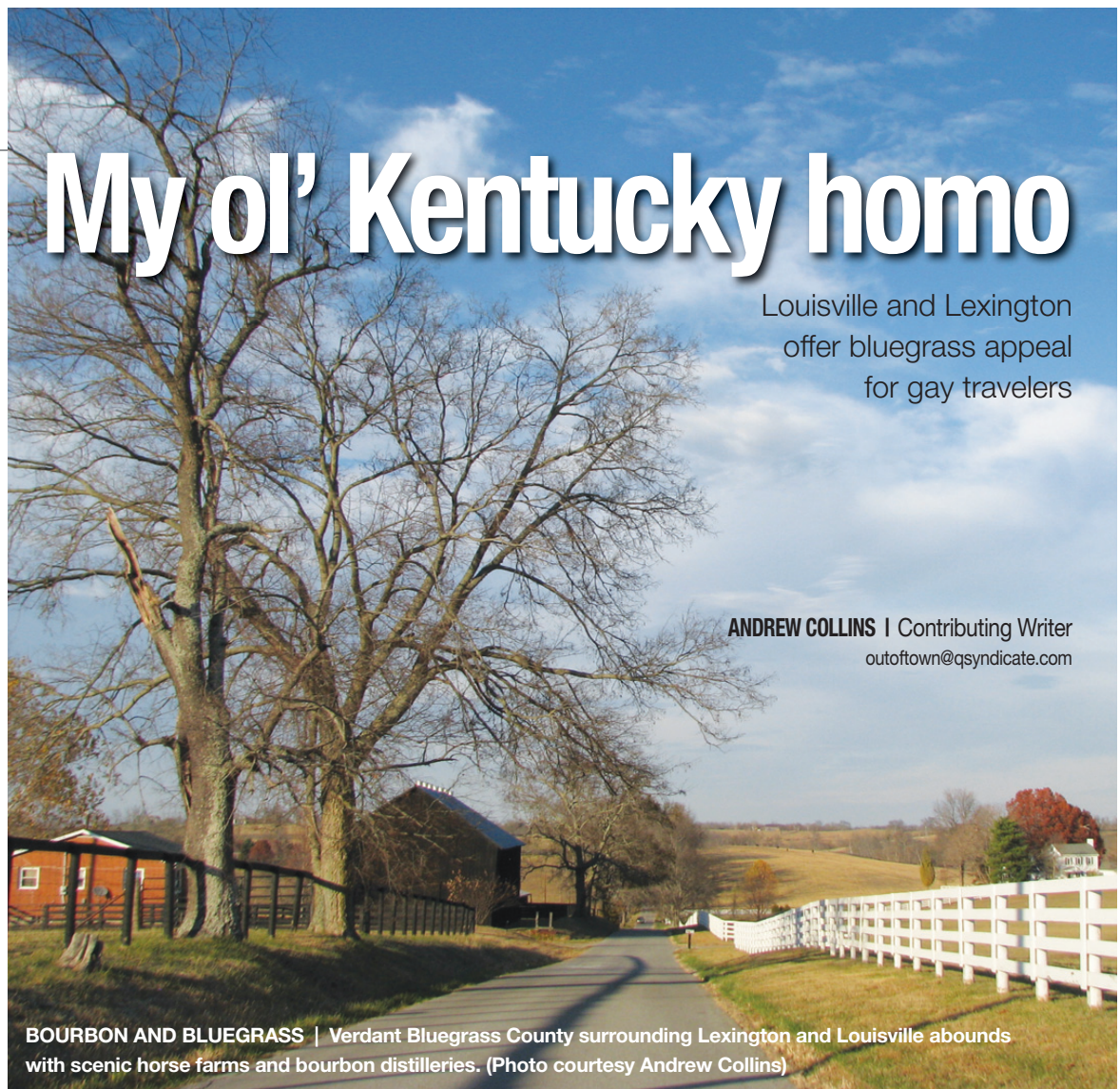
Other dining standouts include downtown's modern take on down-home cooking, Hill-billy Tea (try the "road kill stew" of venison, chicken and mountain vegetables) and a handful of spots along lively Frankfort Avenue.

Louisville's gay bars are spread around the city, with a few standouts downtown, including the legendary Connection Louisville, an immense nightclub with several distinct spaces, from a drag show bar to leather lounge (Boots, with its own entrance) to an area

My ol' Kentucky homo

Louisville and Lexington offer bluegrass appeal for gay travelers

ANDREW COLLINS | Contributing Writer
outoftown@qsyndicate.com



BOURBON AND BLUEGRASS | Verdant Bluegrass County surrounding Lexington and Louisville abounds with scenic horse farms and bourbon distilleries. (Photo courtesy Andrew Collins)



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with male erotic dancers — there's something for all tastes here. Around the corner, Tryangles is locals-oriented cruise bar with male strippers on weekends.

At the other end of downtown, in the Cultural District, Starbase Q is a handsomely decorated bar with a welcoming staff, fun theme nights (C&W line dancing, cabaret, karaoke), and a great mix of guys. Gay neighborhood spots south of downtown include Teddy Bears, Marty's Tavern, and the mostly lesbian Tink's Pub. Also of note is the famed Magnolia Bar & Grill (aka Mag Bar), an Old Louisville institution with a mixed gay-straight crowd and a fantastic jukebox.

Downtown's Cultural District is home to one of the most fascinating accommodations in the country, the 21c Museum Hotel. This luxe property with 90 sleekly designed rooms has been crafted out of a row of warehouses that once held bourbon and tobacco producers. The multilevel public areas comprise a dramatic, 9,000-square-foot contemporary art museum, and the hotel also contains a chic spa, a full fitness center and one of the hottest restaurants in the region, Proof on Main, which fuses mod Italian and Southern culinary traditions.

Stylistically, Louisville's grand Brown Hotel is the polar opposite of 21c, but this regal 1923 property is every bit as cushy, its nearly 300 rooms outfitted with classic Old-English-inspired dark-wood furnishings and baths with Spanish marble. Make every effort to dine in the hotel's formal English Grill, and plan a breakfast or lunch in the more casual but renowned J. Graham's Cafe, which is famous as the home of the "Hot Brown" sandwich, a local take on a Welsh rarebit.

The city's historic Old Louisville neighborhood has several gay-friendly B&Bs, all of them set in stately old homes with ornately appointed rooms: Austin's Inn Place, Culbertson Mansion and Columbine B&B.

About 75 miles away, genteel, attractive Lexington (population

296,000) is surrounded by picturesque countryside graced with lovely old horse farms. Although the city has just one gay bar, the presence of the University of Kentucky has given the city a more progressive bent than much of the region, and in 2010 the city elected openly gay Jim Gray as mayor.

(If you're headed to Lexington from Louisville, go by way of U.S. 60, stopping for a look at the historic downtown of the state capital, Frankfort, and passing through the quaint town of Versailles, which is home to one the respected single-batch bourbon makers, Woodford Reserve.)

The residential neighborhoods around the university comprise one road after another of gracious brick and limestone homes with neatly tended gardens and broad green lawns. A highlight is Ashland, the Henry Clay Estate.

Excellent dining options in Lexington include Metropole, the

cozy French bistro Le Deauville, Alfalfa (which specializes in healthful veggie-oriented fare) and the legendary breakfast joint, Doodles (beware — there's always a long wait for brunch on weekends).

The Bar Complex is the city's most popular gay nightspot — it's always packed at happy hour and well into the evening. Also worth a look is the loveably gruff neighborhood joint Al's Bar, an eclectic but gay-friendly spot, great burgers, live bluegrass and stiff drinks. The upscale dance club Soundbar also has something of a gay following, especially with students from university.

Lexington has a nice mix of hotels and inns, with the upscale Gratz Park Inn, a three-story 1906 hotel with 41 pleasantly furnished rooms and a fine restaurant, Jonathan's. The seven-room, gay-friendly Lyndon House B&B is perhaps the most romantic and luxurious inn in Lexington.



Gay artist Clint Mordecai holds parting show

We've liked Clint Mordecai's paintings for a long time. Maybe it's his bold use of color, or his witty visual playfulness or how effortlessly he weaves queer themes into everything from abstracts to portraiture. What we do know for sure is that we'll miss having him around.

Mordecai is relocating to Boston next week, so his last local exhibit is a sad farewell as much as it is an opportunity to see his work one more time — or even buy it for yourself.

The Perfect Dose is Mordecai's exhibition of 21 new pieces, which in some ways commemorate his time here in Dallas and his passage from native Texan to transplanted New Englander.

Mordecai will be in attendance at the show on Friday, which takes place at Ro2 Art Downtown. The pieces will be on display — and for sale — through Saturday.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Ro2 Art Downtown, 110 Akard St. in the Kirby Building. July 8, 7–10 p.m., on view July 9. RoArt.com.

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'4'-telling

In her latest, Beyoncé tries on new hats while relying on old tricks

RICH LOPEZ | Staff Writer
lopez@dallasvoice.com

Fans might be scratching their heads with Beyoncé's new album, *4*. Where is the explosive power? What is it with all these ballads? But *she* might be having the last laugh. Her fourth solo album (duh) might not have as many potential hit singles, but by dabbling with different formulas she delivers a respectable package — or at least a fascinating one.

Beyoncé has proved she can churn out major pop and R&B hits that are smart, fun and have a certain sass, but she holds back big time on *4*, setting a mellower tone with a collection of slower tempo tunes.

She croons old-school on the opener "1+1," her foray into deeper soul. The song is elegant and a surprise, but the second track, "I Care,"

makes a far stronger impression. The more mid-tempo ballad is restrained in her verses, but goes way lush in her chorus. The build-up to an emotive guitar solo feels a tad Michael Bolton-ish, but pulls back to a definitive groove.

Beyoncé slyly fuses her R&B vocals over an ambient electronica beat on "I Miss You." Is it weird this recalls Haddaway's 1993 song by the same name? She smartly works with the tune to offer the song as a package rather than showing off her voice and results in a lovely moment. Why she has to rhyme *I miss you/like every day/wanna be wichu/but you're away* is beyond me. We get it, B — you're street and glam.

We're already getting the impression that she's given the album a top-heavy atmosphere of ballads that might lose listeners, then comes "Best Thing I Never Had," co-written by Babyface, which doesn't dispel this. The pace is picked up slightly but the song recalls those overly polished '80s "soul" hits found on lite radio stations (echoed later with "Rather Die Young" and "Love on Top"). She's channeling her Patti Austin-Regina Belle with cheesy background choruses and keyboards. Let's *not*

discuss the Dianne Warren penned "I Was Here," which is ready for movie montages and hackneyed trailers.

Sometimes I wondered if Beyoncé was trying

to get into some serious soul *a la* Leela James or Sharon Jones, but kept missing the mark with these smoothed-out tunes that don't lend much to her attempts. With previous ballads like "Halo," "Listen" or "Irreplaceable," we could hear her distinct voice — literally and figuratively. Here, she gets lost and although she's co-written most of her songs, there's not a unique sense of the diva.

As if she realized that, she pumps up the jam in the final quarter of the 12-song collection. There's a relief when the beat-heavy "Countdown" hits at track no. 9. Although disjointed, it's a welcome reprieve from all her emoting. She does far better with her immediate follow-up "End of Time," by which time she seems obsessed with drumline beats. She's pulled it since Destiny's Child with "Breathe" and most recently with "Single Ladies," but the horns and that Beyoncé swagger we're used to recall the infectious sounds of Michael Jackson's "Wanna Be Startin' Somethin'."

She weirdly placed "I Was Here" in between the happening upbeat songs and kills the mood. But she closes out with her misfired hit "Run the World (Girls)." Again with the military beats, the song didn't take the world by storm like she probably hoped, but it puts the energy of the album in overload. I couldn't stand hearing it at award shows or Oprah's farewell, but after mellowing out for over half an hour, the song saves the album, ending it with a bang. The girl-power message seems passé but that



DROP DEAD DIVA | Beyoncé channels '80s adult contemporary in '4,' but delivers impressive surprises.

doesn't make it less fun.

I applaud Beyoncé's efforts not to deliver the obvious. Face it: We all want another "Crazy in Love," but instead, she opted to stick to her guns and try something new, even if some of it sounded like it was three decades old. Despite its stumbles and confusing paths, *4* could be the one album we look to as her most daring. ■

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Well, maybe not yet, as the New York Times makes news in doc 'Page One'

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

There's something impossibly *meta* about writing a review in a newspaper about a movie about a newspaper. Then putting that review online, which is what put the newspaper industry at risk in the first place. It's like facing two mirrors against an Escher print — eventually, you can hardly bear the self-reflectivity.

Page One: A Year Inside the New York Times makes it difficult not to navel-gaze, if only a trifle, as documentarian Andrew Rossi spent 12 months with substantial access to the halls of the Old Grey Lady during a turbulent period in the paper's storied history. Bloggers and news aggregators like Gawker sniped at the great print product, chastising it for Judith Miller's pro-war pieces leading up to the Persian Gulf War (based, it turned out, on false info) or gay reporter Jayson Blair's shameful plagiarism, while smugly wondering who would care to read a dead-tree product when Twitter gives you everything you could possibly ever want out of news! Instantaneously! And in 140 characters or less! Who needs reporting, analysis or concentration when the ADD generation is too busy getting obese to be thoughtful about what's going

MEDIA MATTER | Grizzled Times columnist David Carr is the spiritual protagonist of 'Page One.'

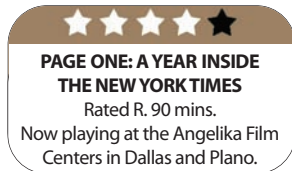
on beyond the headlines?

Of course, the NYT sees it differently, especially David Carr, a former crack-head and the de facto spiritual protagonist of the film. When Carr, grizzled as a hobo, schools a pompous vlogger about what's involved in true reporting, not the armchair quarterbacking of superficial online hacks. (At one point, Carr informs his editor his story will be ready in a few weeks; not even an eyelash is batted. Who can imagine

Perez Hilton waiting two *days* to work on a "story"?) It's not all about "feeding the Google algorithm," as Carr so incisively notes.

If there's a downside to the film, it's that it focuses almost exclusively on the *business* of newspaper and the travails of the NYT; we never even meet anyone from the arts and leisure section, one of the most read at the paper.

Even as a kid, the Watergate scandal fascinated me, especially Woodward and Bernstein's reporting in the Washington Post. You felt, truly, the power of the press. That feeling is different now that the Internet dominates our lives, but *Page One* serves much the same purpose as *All the President's Men* did: It reinforces the necessity to get the job done right, and reminds that genuine skilled journo's are harder and harder to come by ... and more important than ever. ■



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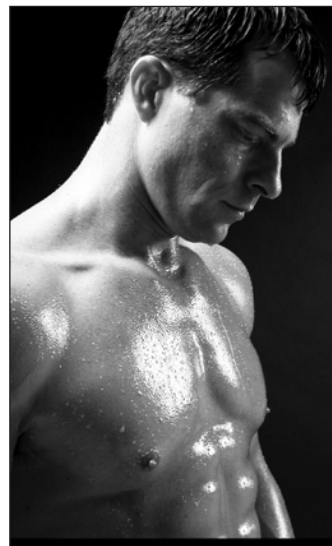
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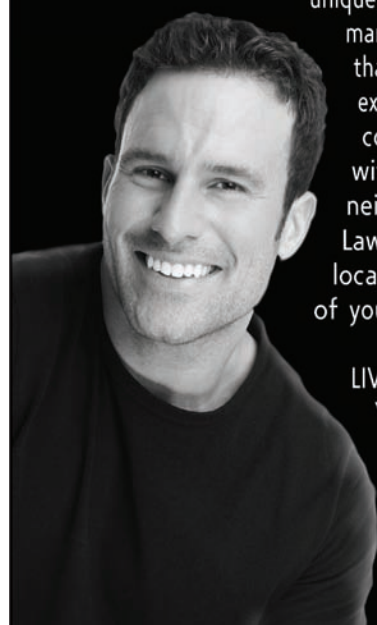
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Friday 07.08

What the Del?

Del Shores returns to Dallas with *More Sordid Confessions*, his one-man show that's part comedy, part biography and we're figuring, a whole lotta funny. His partner Jason Dottley performs later that night at BJ's NXS! the same night. We're sure that one won't miss the other's show. And you shouldn't miss either of them.

DEETS: The Rose Room, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 8 p.m. \$15-\$20. PartyAtTheBlock.com.

Friday 07.08

Who can blow out a 100 candles?

The legendary venue Sons of Hermann Hall celebrates a century this weekend and as part of the vast music lineup, LGBT faves Patrice Pike and Kathy & Bell join in on the celebration. Two days of Texas music in this Dallas gem is pretty much the equivalent to heaven.

DEETS: SOHH, 3414 Elm St. Through Saturday. \$25-\$45. SonsOfHermann.org.

Thursday 07.14

Fake news the way you like it

When the real news gets to be too much, The Onion is a nice reprieve. But how will the writers and editors pull it off live? The staff comes to talk about its satire and place in today's media.

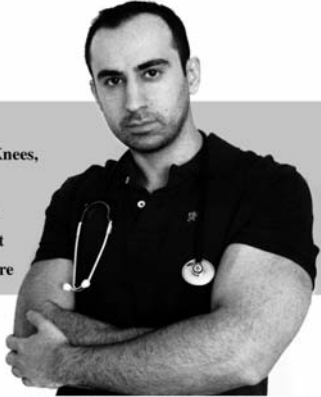
DEETS: Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. \$25-\$45. SonsOfHermann.org.



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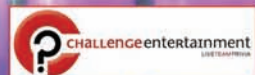
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**PINK LADY**

Nicki Minaj opens for Britney Spears Tuesday.

FRIDAY 07.08**COMMUNITY**

High Tech Happy Hour by the TI Pride Network, the LGBTA employee diversity group. Open to all. Capitol Pub, 2401 Henderson Road. 5:30 p.m.

Lambda Pride Toastmasters Club meets. Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 6:30 p.m.

Congregation Beth El Binah Shabbat service. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. 7:30 p.m. 214-521-5342 ext. 1784.

CONCERT

Rihanna, J. Cole. American Airlines Center, 2500 Victory Ave. 7:30 p.m. \$22-\$102. Ticketmaster.com.

SATURDAY 07.09**COMMUNITY**

Rainbow Ministries International meets weekly. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. 2 p.m. 469-222-3400.

FUSE drop-in weekdays for gay and bi guys up to 29. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. Tuesdays-Fridays at 2 p.m. DFWFuse.com.

Youth First Texas. 3918 Harry Hines Blvd. Fridays-Saturdays, Tuesdays-Wednesdays at 6 p.m., Thursdays at 4 p.m. YouthFirstTexas.org.

SUNDAY 07.10**COMMUNITY**

Youth First Texas Collin County. Group for LGBTQ and allies up to age 22. North Texas Youth Connection, 201 W. Boyd Road, Ste. 105D, Allen. 6 p.m. CollinCounty@YouthFirstTexas.org.

Breath of Life Interfaith Mindfulness Fellowship. LGBT-friendly "meditation and more" event. Dallas Meditation Center, 727 S. Floyd Road, Richardson. 5 p.m. Donations accepted. InterMindful.com.

The ONE Church, 2515 Inwood Road, Ste 213. Services at 11:45 a.m., 6 p.m. Dallas1Church.org.

MONDAY 07.11**COMMUNITY**

F.A.C.E., support group for those impacted by HIV/AIDS in any capacity. The group also meets on

Thursdays. Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 7 p.m. Cathedralofhope.com.

Self esteem support group meets. AIDS Outreach Center, 400 N. Beach St., Fort Worth. 1:30 p.m.

DFW Prime Timers play bridge every week at 1 p.m. Call 972-504-8866 for details.

TUESDAY 07.12**COMMUNITY**

Q's Day Potluck. LGBT gathering every Tuesday evening. The Corporate Image, 5418 Brentwood Stair Road, Fort Worth. 7 p.m. 817-446-3395.

Sista to Sista support group meets. AIDS Outreach Center, 400 N. Beach St., Fort Worth. 11:30 a.m.

CONCERT

Britney Spears, Nicki Minaj, Jessie & the Toy Boys, Nervo. American Airlines Center, 2500 Victory Ave. 7 p.m. \$29-\$350. Ticketmaster.com.

WEDNESDAY 07.13**COMMUNITY**

Lambda Legal Monthly Mixer is open to all. Dish Restaurant & Bar, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. 5:30 p.m. LambdaLegal.org.

DFW Prime Timers play bridge every week at 7 p.m. Call 972-504-8866 for details.

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

THURSDAY 07.14**COMMUNITY**

Choir and orchestra rehearsals at Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 7 p.m. Cathedralofhope.com.

CONCERT

The Hardly Boys Tour featuring Actor Slash Model, Elias Kreel and The Homoticons. Proceeds benefit Trans-cendence, the new trans support center in Fort Worth. Agape MCC, 4615 E. California Parkway, Fort Worth. 7 p.m. \$12-\$15. Trans-cendence.org.

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CELEBRITY BIRTHDAY

By Jack Fertig

Michelle Rodriguez turns 33 on Tuesday. The San Antonio born actress scored big with roles in films like *Avatar*, *Machete* and *Fast Five* playing the tough chick roles. In 2007, *Curve* identified her as bisexual, but while she has openly appreciated her queer fans, she's been clear that she is neither bi nor lesbian.



CANCER Jun 21-Jul 22

Nobody succeeds on their own. Stay clear on your goals and dedicated to your hard work, but knowing where you come from is essential for getting ahead in any endeavor.

LEO Jul 23-Aug 22

Temptations to arguments come out of inner doubts are better confronted. Worthwhile challenges are the internal ones. Creative expression in any mode helps you gain insight.

VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

Some of your friends have a better idea how sexy you really are. See what they see. Your sign is about detailed appreciation and utilization of material facts. That alone offers immense erotic skill.

LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Great opportunities pull you away from the one you adore. Make your baby a partner in your success. Be sure to reciprocate. Start by sitting down and talking about it.

SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

Sharpen your mind, not your tongue. Branch out and learn more about your field, new and different techniques or philosophies. Focus on priorities, even if it does slow down your sex life.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 20

Good sex is not about being the best there is, but being authentically who you really are and accepting your partner in the same authenticity. Developing technique doesn't really hurt either.

CAPRICORN Dec 21-Jan 19

Family members mean well trying to help your love life, but the best they can do is to butt out. Time alone is the best thing to get clear on your needs in a relationship, existing or hypothetical.

AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Keep a clear eye to the future. That requires going back and brushing up on old skills, or learning new ones to remain competitive at work. Heed advice from your partner and colleagues.

PISCES Feb 19-Mar 19

Hone your skills at games and/or arts, just don't expect to win any prizes right now. Being your best is the way to get ahead; trying to be better than others distracts you from that.

ARIES Mar 20-Apr 19

Rushing to defend your family is necessary, but don't circle the wagons. Your greater challenge is to take on a more expansive view that sees your tribe in a more global connectedness.

TAURUS Apr 20-May 20

Revealing your deepest secrets is scary. It's also necessary for your well-being. Holding onto all that tension undermines your health. Find a professional counselor.

GEMINI May 21-Jun 20

Be careful not to get sucked into competitive spending. Relationships are built on shared values and a vision of the future, not rounds of drinks and flashy baubles.

THIS WEEK

The sun in Cancer deepens our sense of identity with family and tribe. Sun squaring Eris, however, can increase tribalism and factionalism. Being with people is important; against others, not so much.

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

Kyle's Bed & Breakfast by Greg Fox

311

Panel 1: YOU KNOW, I GOT DUMPED ONCE IN A HEALTH FOOD STORE, KYLE.

Panel 2: PLEASE. I GOT DUMPED ONCE ON A MOVING ROLLER-COASTER. THE HEALTH FOOD STORE WAS CIVILIZED BY COMPARISON.

Panel 3: DESE ONES ARE VEGETARIAN. OH? OH MY...

Panel 4: REALLY? THAT'S AN ... ODD LOCATION TO HAVE SOMEONE BREAK UP WITH YOU. GOSH... I CAN'T FIND ANY CO-Q-10 HERE IN VEGETARIAN CAPSULES.

Panel 5: DEY ALSO HIGH-QUALITY SUPPLEMENT. AND IT IS ON SALE DIS WEEK. THANK YOU. THAT'S REALLY HELPFUL!

Panel 6: YAH, BUT... I KNOW MUCH ABOUT DE VITAMINS AND HEALTH FOODS. NO, WHAT I MEANT WAS... I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU HERE BEFORE.

Panel 7: GOOD DEAL. HEY, YOU'RE NEW HERE, AREN'T YOU? I'M KYLE. AND THIS IS MY FRIEND RICHARD. HIS VERY SINGLE FRIEND RICHARD.

Panel 8: I AM KRISTIAN. NICE TO MEET YOU, KRISTIAN. YOU'LL PROBABLY BE SEEING A LOT OF ME. WAIT... YOU OWN DE B&B ON HARBOR AVENUE? DE GAY ONE? UH-HUH. AND STRAIGHT PEOPLE ARE WELCOME, TOO, KRISTIAN.

Panel 9: I OWN A B&B RIGHT HERE IN NORTHPORT, SO I'M ALWAYS IN HERE PICKING UP SUPPLIES. MY BOSS TOLD ME OF YOU. I NEED A PLACE TO STAY. DO YOU HAVE ANY VACANCIES? YES, ACTUALLY... WE DO. AND IF WE DIDN'T, WE'D KICK SOMEONE OUT TO MAKE ONE.

Panel 10: RICHARD'S SUCH A KIDDER. RICHARD'S DEAD SERIOUS...

Website - www.kylecomics.com

E-Mail - KylesBnB@aol.com

bitter girl

Panel 1: I'M SO GLAD WE'RE NEIGHBORS NOW, YVONNE! I CAN LIVE WITH IT, BARELY.

Panel 2: AS LONG AS OUR PATHS NEVER CROSS. AS LONG AS I'M NEVER IN YOUR SNAZZY ALL-BLACK APARTMENT... DID YOU KNOW I'M ON THE BUILDING BOARD ALREADY?

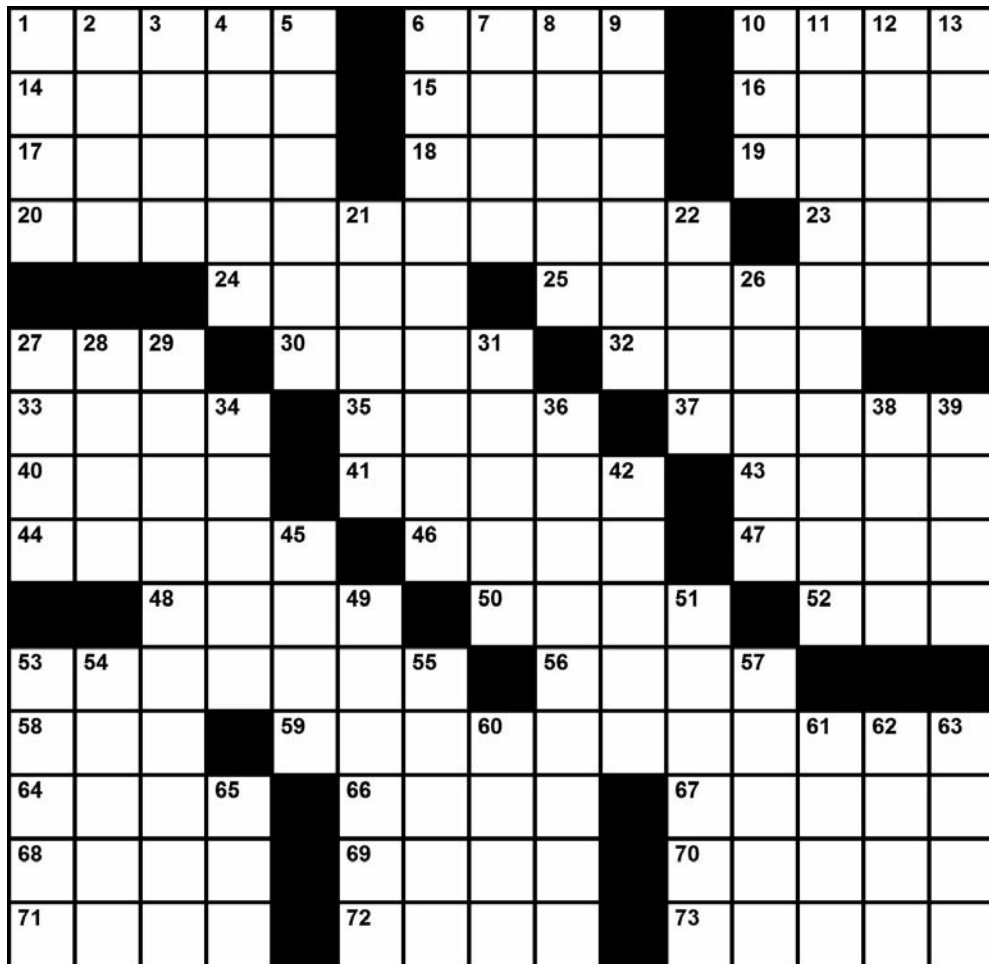
Panel 3: ...REMEMBERING OUR BLACK, BLACK BREAKUP... I CAN'T WAIT TO PUT MY STAMP ON THINGS...

Panel 4: WOULDN'T THESE DOORS LOOK GREAT IN BLACK?

email: bittergirl@qsyndicate.com

www.joanhilty.net

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Come Rite to New York

Solution on page 25

Across

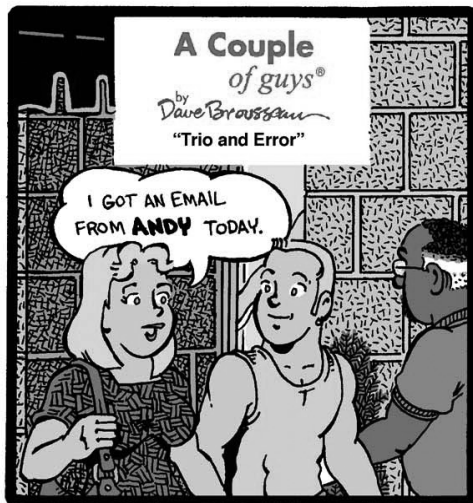
- 1 Game with two queens
- 6 Porgy and bass
- 10 They're good for tricks
- 14 "Brokeback Mountain" setting
- 15 "Diana" singer
- 16 Petty of _A League of Their Own_
- 17 _As You Like It_ forest
- 18 Muscle Marys pump it
- 19 Cocksure
- 20 Rite that makes gay couples come right to New York
- 23 Speed limit letters
- 24 Hang around
- 25 _The Page Turner_ writer David
- 27 Hail Mary path
- 30 Segments of _The Glass Menagerie_
- 32 "Doggone it!"
- 33 Come together
- 35 Madeline of _Blazing Saddles_
- 37 Diploma word
- 40 Downsize
- 41 What hibernating bears do
- 43 _Maude_ producer Norman
- 44 Ready for bed
- 46 Hunks of history

Down

- 47 Carpenter's connector
- 48 Secure with lines
- 50 Designed for all grades
- 52 7th notes in "Do-Re-Mi"
- 53 Painter O'Keeffe
- 56 Floor coverings
- 58 Turned tail
- 59 Governor who signed 20-Across into law
- 64 Just like you see it
- 66 Debussy's dusk
- 67 Czech leader Vaslav
- 68 Put your eye to a small opening
- 69 Proof part
- 70 LuPone Broadway role
- 71 Poet Gidlow
- 72 James of _East of Eden_
- 73 Family car

Down

- 1 Rock outcropping
- 2 Ring dance
- 3 Swirl around three men in a tub
- 4 Looks
- 5 Liberace piece, perhaps
- 6 Hans Christian Andersen story, e.g.
- 7 Letters over Mary's son
- 8 Toast with Danish
- 9 Like the man on a tarot card
- 10 Capone and Capp
- 11 With 29-Down, rites replaced by 20-Across
- 12 Shoot off some hot stuff
- 13 Tourist attraction
- 21 They hold balls in pool halls
- 22 Piercing places
- 26 Safe place
- 27 Part of Etheridge's equipment
- 28 Sow's opposite
- 29 See 11-Down
- 31 Hite of sexuality
- 34 Barbershop figure
- 36 _Hairspray_ coproducer with Craig Zadan
- 38 Romantic island for gay honeymoons
- 39 They're performing, in _Fame_
- 42 "Come, come!"
- 45 Roman wraparound
- 49 Cleaned off a foamy head
- 51 Has a seven-year problem with Marilyn Monroe?
- 53 Fruit that gets stomped
- 54 Stand next to Cassat
- 55 Get down on your knees in front of
- 57 Slick
- 60 Baltic port
- 61 "Ars Amatoria" poet
- 62 Physical opening?
- 63 Pearl Buck character
- 65 Cruising area



e-mail: acoupleofguys@qsyndicate.com



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Alberto and Marcus at Crossroads Lounge.



Girls' night out at Station 4.

This is looking like a big week ahead. Parties and concerts await! ... **Rihanna** and opener **J. Cole** play the **American Airlines Center** on Friday. Fellow pop princess **Britney Spears** performs Tuesday night with **Nicki Minaj** on the bill. That's some major girl action Head to **Candyland** on Saturday presented by **United Black Element**. The second annual block party features **Dona Jia DeMornay**, **Ky'Liyah O'Hara** and **Decameron Foxx** among others performing Get down with another block party on Friday. **Ease on Down the Road** celebrates the opening of **The Wiz** with live music by retro disco peeps **Le Freak** and free food all at **the Wyly Theatre** Catch dance singer **Jason Dottley** perform live on Friday at **BJ's NXSl** ... **Paul Kraft** hosts and deejays the **Club Dallas After Hours Party** on Saturday **DJ K.L. Kemp** spins all vinyl all the time at **Alt-Disco** on Wednesday at **the Fallout Lounge** in **Exposition Park**. This ain't your usual gay trash disco It may be hard to dance when you can't help but look at hunky **DJ John LePage** from **San Francisco** when he takes over the music at **the Brick** on Saturday. That's some major woofness **Krimson Door** jams out the crowd Friday at **Sue Ellen's**. **Rachel Stacy** does her part playing the club Saturday night and **Anchor Rose** closes out the weekend on Sunday Indie funksters **Reinventing Jude** performs at **Mable Peabody's Beauty Parlor** and **Chainsaw Repair** in Denton on Thursday Enjoy! ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREGORY HAYES. FOR MORE PHOTOS, VISIT DALLASVOICE.COM.



Ryan, Josh, Trent, Reed, Cole and Louis at the Round-Up Saloon.



Vanessa and Sonya at Sue Ellen's.



Chris, John, Steve and Todd at the Hidden Door.



Attendee at the Red Dress Party.



Jonathan, Stephen, Randy, John, Jennifer and John at the Rainbow Lounge.

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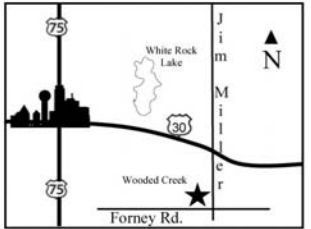


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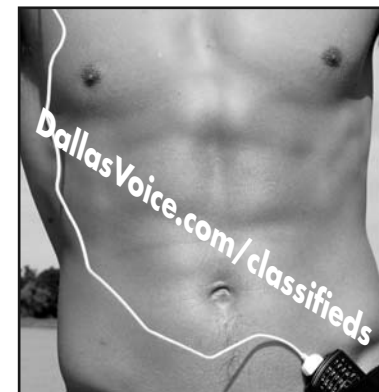
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