

Palant resigns as TCC artistic director

Board also announces David Fisher as new executive director

Taylor says 31-year-old gay men's chorus is in a time of 'exciting transition'

■ TEXAS NEWS, Page 4



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Palant resigns; Fisher joins TCC staff as ED

Chorale board chair says group is on solid financial ground in the midst of 'exciting transitions'

TAMMYE NASH | Senior Editor
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As the Turtle Creek Chorale is in the midst of gearing up for its 32nd season, word came this week that the chorale's artistic director for the last four years, Jonathan Palant, had resigned, and that David Fisher had been hired as the new executive director.

Fisher replaces Stephan Tosha, who announced in May that he would be resigning at the end of July to take a position with Morgan Stanley financial services firm.

But despite the upheaval in the chorale's top staff positions, board chair the Rev. Dawson Taylor said this week that the chorale is in excellent financial position and that the 32nd season, set to kick off Oct. 23 with "Messiah" at the Meyerson Symphony Center, will continue as scheduled.

"We are moving ahead with our ticket sales and looking at all our options" regarding an artistic director for the season, Taylor said. He said the board is creating a committee to conduct a national search to replace Palant and at the same time discussing how to fill that vacancy in the meantime.

"We expect the search to take six to eight months," Taylor said. "We will determine how the podium is handled until a new artistic director is

hired. We may possibly name an interim artistic conductor, or we may work with guest conductors for different programs. Either way, I am confident the chorale will be in good hands until we find a permanent replacement."

Taylor said it is very possible that if choosing an interim director, the board would choose "someone local," and that an interim director would be "someone the membership is comfortable with and confident in."

Taylor said that Palant had turned in his resignation during a previously scheduled meeting with Taylor on Monday morning, July 18.

"He simply stated that he is leaving [the chorale] to pursue other interests, and I am taking him at his word," Taylor said.

In an interview Thursday afternoon, July 21, Palant said he is not in a position to disclose details about his future plans at this time, saying only that he resigned from the chorale "to pursue other artistic endeavors" and that he has some "exciting opportunities on the horizon."

He also said that he will continue as minister of music at Kessler Park United Methodist Church, a position he accepted earlier this year, and that he will continue his duties as chief judge of the Dallas Tavern Guild's 2011 Voice of Pride competition.

Palant said that "making music with" the Kessler Park church is "a new challenge for me, and lots of fun," and that he enjoys the opportu-



Jonathan Palant



The Rev. Dawson Taylor



David Fisher

nity Voice of Pride gives him to "promote new talent, hear lots of great singers and spend time with friends."

In a prepared statement released Thursday afternoon, Palant said of his future plans, "I am excited to be starting a family with my partner, Mark, and academia has never been far from my heart."

He also repeatedly heaped praise on the chorale, both in his written statement and in his interview with Dallas Voice.

"It has been a true pleasure being the artistic director these past four years and I firmly believe we have made a difference in the lives of many in our Partners in Harmony program, our many musical collaborations both near and far, within the LGBT community and, of course, with and for our local patrons and supporters," Palant said in the prepared statement. "Each and every contact I have made over these years, in their own way, has changed my life, and I am grateful for the opportunities I've been given. I wish all the best for the Turtle Creek Chorale and its members."

■ CHORALE, Page 9

DMN publishes wedding ad



The Dallas Morning News published its first-ever same-sex wedding announcements on Sunday. Two gay couples — Mark Reed and Dante Walkup (above), and James Kreidel and Mark Pierson — had announcements appear under Weddings in Sunday's Celebrations section of The DMN (Page 11E). Reed and Walkup, who convinced the newspaper to publish same-sex weddings after filing a discrimination complaint with the city, were married in Washington, D.C., last year. Kreidel and Pierson were married in Massachusetts last year. Congrats to both couples.

— John Wright

More crosswalk problems

Last week we reported that the city of Dallas will install 45 new streetlights in Oak Lawn over the next 60 days, in response to Dallas Stonewall Young Democrats' Light Up Oak Lawn safety campaign. But speaking of lights, what about the crosswalk on Cedar Springs Road at Reagan Street, which has again stopped working? Well, a city official told Instant Tea that it will likely be October before the city can repair the broken lights in the crosswalk.

Alex Wong, the city's program manager for traffic field operations, said in response to complaints over the last few weeks, a city inspector went out to check on the crosswalk this weekend. What he found is that more than half of the ground-level, flashing lights have stopped working. This marks at least the fifth time the city has had to repair the crosswalk since it was first installed in 2004. It's the only crosswalk of its kind in Dallas, and it's proven to be a poor design, Wong said.

Each time it costs the city roughly \$5,000 to replace the lights, which are malfunctioning in part due to the uneven street surface. But it would cost \$30,000 or \$40,000 to replace the whole system, and that's money the city doesn't have.

"It's really a Catch-22," Wong said. "We really do not like the system, but what can I do? There's no funding available for us to go with another approach."

For now, the city will continue to repair the crosswalk, but first officials must identify a vendor for the parts and clear a backlog of other projects, Wong said.

— John Wright



Jesse Tyler Ferguson

Black Tie names 'Modern Family' star as 2011 Media Award winner

Jesse Tyler Ferguson, who plays gay father Mitchell Pritchett, gets 2nd Emmy nomination this year

FROM STAFF REPORTS
editor@dallasvoice.com

Officials with the Black Tie Dinner this week announced that Emmy Award-nominated actor Jesse Tyler Ferguson will be the recipient of the 2011 Media Award at this year's 30th annual dinner, set for Nov. 12 at the Sheraton Dallas Hotel.

The Media Award is given to those who have promoted positive, increased awareness of LGBT issues in the media.

The 2010 Media Award was presented to newly out country music star Chely Wright.

Ferguson — who starred on Broadway in the Tony Award-winning production of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* in 2005, where he originated the role Leaf Coneybear — stars as in the ABC comedy *Modern Family* as Mitchell Pritchett, who with his same-sex partner Cameron Tucker traveled to Vietnam to adopt their daughter.

Modern Family weaves together the interconnected stories of Mitch and Cameron's family, Mitch's sister, Claire Dunphy and her family, and their father, Jay Pritchett and his new wife and stepson, Gloria Delgado-Pritchett and Manny.

This is the second year in a row that Ferguson has been nominated for an Emmy as best supporting actor in a comedy for his role in *Modern Family*. He has also been nominated for a Screen Actors

■ FERGUSON, Page 9



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Peter Lyn Brown
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Peter Lyn Brown, 51, a long-time resident of Dallas, TX, passed away Sunday, July 17, 2011. Services are scheduled for 2:00 PM, Saturday, July 30, 2011, at Cathedral of Hope, followed by a reception.

Peter was born in Amarillo on April 28, 1960. He grew up in Adrian, TX, and graduated from Adrian High School in 1978. In 1982 he received his bachelor's degree in accounting from Texas A&M University and then went on to complete law school at Baylor in 1985.

He practiced law in Amarillo and Dallas and had been employed by Kreiss Collection in Chicago. He was currently employed as an Executive Loan Officer for Shelter Mortgage.

Perhaps his greatest accomplishment was his service to the community. Most notably he served on the Board of Trustees for AIDS Services of Dallas and on the Executive Board of Purple Foundation.

Through his years of service on several charity boards, his tireless volunteer efforts, and his generous spirit, Peter touched thousands of lives. This world is a better place because he was here. He was loved by many and will be deeply missed.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made in Peter's name to:
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or by visiting the Purple Foundation website and clicking Purchase.
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WINNER CROWNED



LOTTA TALENT | Lotta Pink is crowned Miss LifeWalk 2011 during the highlight of the annual pageant, held Sunday, July 17, at The Round-Up Saloon. Heather Thomas was first runner-up, and Mowlawn Rouge was second runner-up. The pageant, produced by the Guys and Dolls LifeWalk Team, raised \$18,000, which will go toward the annual LifeWalk event, set this year for Oct. 2 in Lee Park. Hosts for the pageant were Ima Lush and Victoria Weston, and Ivanna Whataburger made a special appearance. Lotta Pink also won the Miss Spirit of LifeWalk award, the Miss Money Bags award, the evening wear competition and the talent competition. Mowlawn Rouge was named Miss Congeniality.

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Cammie is lucky to be alive: She had run into the street and was hit by a car. The person who hit her brought her to Operation Kindness to be treated for her injuries, which turned out to be minor. After some cage rest, she has made a fabulous recovery and will make someone a wonderful pet. Please consider making Cammie a part of your family.

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A different kind of biker

As moto crew chief for Lone Star Ride, Deanie Sewell takes her job of keeping cyclists safe very seriously

M.M.ADJARIAN | Contributing Writer
editor@dallasvoice.com

It takes all kinds of people — and all kinds of bikes — to make up a Lone Star Ride Fighting AIDS.

Most riders prefer bikes that are lightweight — lean and fast. But others prefer something with a little more heft and horsepower.

Deanie Sewell is one such participant. She wouldn't dream of taking to the road on anything other than her Honda Shadow 750 motorcycle.

Sewell, an accountant, has been with the LSR as a member of the motorcycle — or “moto” — brigade since the ride began in 2001. She and her fellow bikers patrol the event route to ensure that their cycling counterparts travel in complete safety at all times.

“If bicyclists need help getting across an intersection, [the crew] will be their eyes looking behind them,” she says. “And if we see a rider out on the road having problems, we can usually stop and get to them quicker than a vehicle.”

Sometimes, though, what's called for is more along the lines of a pep talk. And brigade members are more than happy to slow down for a spell and oblige.

“You can ride right next to someone and give them a little encouragement,” says Sewell, who also serves as crew chief.

She adds, “Those cyclists really become your own; you get to know a lot of them out there, riding and watching out for them.”

Sewell knows very well how difficult cycling



Deanie Sewell

can be. She rode in the 1999 Texas Tanqueray AIDS Ride, a 300-plus-mile event that traveled across Texas and ended in Dallas.

“I rode all four days [of the TTAR] so I can say I did it. But after that, motorcycling was looking pretty good,” Sewell admits with a grin.

The moto crew chief and her merry band of bikers also help maintain route visibility. With cans of spray chalk carefully packed alongside the rest of their “road survival” gear, they make sure that all road markings — and especially the turns, which riders can easily miss — are clearly marked.

“We have a route-marking crew that goes out and marks the route,” Sewell explains. “After cars have driven over the chalk on the road, sometimes the markings can get a little faint. So we stop and re-mark them.”

Being able to cruise around for two days on her Honda in the company of other motorcycle enthusiasts is just one of the reasons Sewell loves



her job. Another is being able to participate in the mass ride-in that closes each day of the event.

“On both days, we wait for the last rider,” Sewell says. “Then we follow that person in [with all kinds of] fanfare. And then on Sunday, the last day, we get into formation and, with horns honking and lights flashing, we bring all the riders in for closing ceremonies.”

Like so many other LSR volunteers, Sewell has compelling reasons for getting involved. She's lost several close friends to AIDS and knows others who live with the disease.

“Most recently, I had another friend who moved back to Texas and who will be a client at the AIDS Outreach Center in Fort Worth. And I want to make sure that we can get additional funding that's unrestricted and can be used for clients [like him],” she says.

What's kept her coming back year after year, however, transcends any personal stakes she may have. For Sewell, the ride represents a manifestation of what's possible when people put aside ego and selfishness and work together for a common purpose.

“If you are too busy judging people,” says the moto crew chief, quoting Mother Teresa, “then you don't have time to love them.” And on this ride, there's no judgment, there's no us and them, there's none of that at all.

“For two days, everybody is taking care of everybody else — and that's just the way the world should 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.

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CHORALE

From Page 4

He also said that the upcoming chorale season will be "fantastic, and I should know because I planned it! I mean, where else can you get 'Messiah,' Laura Bush and Madonna all in one season?"

Taylor said he and other board members notified chorale members of Palant's resignation Monday and then released a statement, shortly before 9 p.m. that night, officially making the news public. Board members then met with chorale members in a "town hall" meeting Tuesday night, giving members the chance to ask any questions and air any concerns they had.

About 80 of the chorale's current total of 140 to 150 members attended, Taylor said.

"Many of them [chorale members] are grieving right now, and we certainly understand that. This is not where they expected things to go," Taylor said. "But I feel that by the end of that meeting they all felt like their questions had been answered.

"We are a flexible organization," he continued. "We are 31 years old. We survived the AIDS crisis. We have only had five artistic directors in 32 seasons. I think that's pretty unique.

"We are flexible and nimble, and when the season starts, we will be at our best. I think the news has settled in now, and the guys understand that Turtle Creek Chorale is bigger than one person," Taylor said.

Taylor also said that turnover in the top positions are not an indication of any financial problems for the chorale.

"In fact, we are in the best financial position we have been in in the last 10 years," Taylor said. "We are now debt-free, and that was not the case when I came on the board four years ago. The credit for that all goes to Stephen Tosha."

He added that the chorale's annual fundraising gala, held last month and this year called "Cirque," brought in \$100,000, and that season subscription sales for the 32nd season are "right on target."

Taylor also noted that he expects the chorale's financial good health to continue to improve under new executive director David Fisher. Fisher,

who takes over the ED position effective Aug. 15, has worked for the Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs since 1995.

During his tenure with the city, Fisher managed the Bath House Cultural Center and the Meyerson Symphony Center. While at the Bath House, he created the Festival of Independent Theaters and directed several productions that drew critical acclaim.

Fisher was a member of the 2004 class of Leadership Dallas and earned a masters degree in non-profit management from the University of Dallas in 2005.

In 2006, Fisher was appointed assistant director of cultural affairs for the city, overseeing operations at all the city's cultural centers and the city's grant programs.

He also led the budgeting and administration functions for the department.

Since last year, Fisher has done double duty as assistant director of cultural affairs and interim general manager of radio station WRR Classical 101.1 FM.

Fisher and his longtime partner, Duncan, live in Lake Highlands with their 7-year-old son, Bennett.

"I could not be more thrilled — or grateful — to be joining the Turtle Creek Chorale as its executive director," Fisher said in a statement released Wednesday evening.

"Since being part of the Meyerson team that helped produce the first 'Sing for the Cure' in 1999, I have followed the Turtles with admiration and appreciation. It is an amazing ensemble with an incredible history and, I believe, an incredible future."

Both Taylor and Fisher acknowledged that the chorale is in the midst of a time of transition, but both also said the chorale will continue to thrive.

"I am so excited to be on the board and part of this organization right now, and we are all so excited to have David join our staff," Taylor said. "I don't think the members of the chorale or our patrons and donors see as being in a time of chaos.

"It is a time of transition, yes. But it is an exciting time of transition. We are moving forward, and I see nothing but good things ahead for Turtle Creek Chorale." ■

"As one of the few openly gay, working actors, he has established a wonderful and positive image on network television. The story of Mitchell and Cameron's relationship is told with so much heart and love. Their storylines do not revolve around these characters being gay, but are instead about two new parents who are in a loving relationship and are trying to work their way through fatherhood together."

Black Tie officials announced earlier this year that comedienne and *Sordid Lives: The Series* star Caroline Rhea will be master of ceremonies for the 2011 dinner, and that Chet Flake and his partner of 45 years, the late Bud Knight, will receive this year's Kuchling Humanitarian Award.

Table Captain table sales are currently underway online at BlackTie.org/TableCaptains. ■

FERGUSON

From Page 4

Guild Award for outstanding performance by an ensemble in a comedy series.

Earlier this year, Ferguson, acting on behalf of the *Modern Family* cast, accepted the GLAAD Media Award for outstanding comedy series when his show tied for the award with *Glee*.

Ferguson's small-screen credits also include roles in *The Class*, *Do Not Disturb* and *Ugly Betty*. Among his film credits are roles in *Untraceable*, *Griffin and Phoenix* and *Wonderful World*.

Black Tie Co-Chair Nan Arnold, in a prepared statement announcing Ferguson as the Media Award winner, said the dinner is "thrilled" to present him with the award.

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Union Jack celebrates 40th anniversary

Cedar Springs store may be oldest gay-owned business still operating under original owner — who still retains British citizenship

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

In August, Union Jack, the clothing store on Cedar Springs Road, celebrates 40 years in business. To celebrate its 40th anniversary, the store will run weekly specials through August.

Owner Richard Longstaff said his business is the oldest gay business with continuous ownership under the same name. He said Club Dallas may have been in business longer, but the name has changed as well as the ownership.

Longstaff opened Union Jack in 1971 on Hillcrest Avenue across from Southern Methodist University. About a year later, he began looking for a new location and moved to Cedar Springs Road because gays started moving to the area and, he said, because it was just a nice place to be.

Union Jack's history

When Longstaff moved Union Jack to Oak Lawn, he said his was the only gay business on the street. Lobo bookstore was already there, but wasn't a gay business at the time, he said, adding that he isn't even sure if its owner was out yet.

But back then, Lobo, which in its later years was mostly known for selling gay porn videos and magazines, was originally a bookstore specializing in Texas history.

Other stores on the street didn't particularly welcome Union Jack, a store that always marketed to the gay community, Longstaff said.

At the time, surrounding businesses included a pool hall where TapeLenders now stands and the Old Warsaw restaurant, located approxi-

mately where the Round-Up Saloon is today.

Across the street were a laundry where JR.'s is, an office supply store, a grocery and Adairs.

"Adair's was a redneck bar," Longstaff said. "They had a hard time adjusting to the street turning gay."

As a gay Pride promotion, Longstaff once put two go-go boys and a drag queen in his store window. The folks at Adairs called the police.

The officers who answered the call thought the drag queen was a woman and realized the go-go boys were appropriately dressed, so Longstaff was allowed to continue his promotion.

Adairs finally gave up and moved, he said.

Back when Union Jack moved to the strip, a grocery stood where TMC: The Mining Company is now.

"There was never much on the shelves," Longstaff said. "The grocery was a front for drug dealers."

The grocery closed and reopened but was actually a Dallas Police Department drug sting operation.

Slowly other gay businesses moved onto the street. The Bronx opened in 1975. Under Arrest, which later became Nuvo, shared the space. Frank Caven opened his first Cedar Springs bar, called The Candy Store, in the mid-70s. TapeLenders opened in 1980, renting Beta tapes.

In 1989, a fire that began in the Gay Community Center next door to Union Jack destroyed much of that side of the street.

Union Jack moved to a temporary space next to Crossroads Market. Longstaff said that although the store was a total loss, regular deliveries continued arriving. Within two weeks, he had enough merchandise to reopen.

Rebuilding took about 18 months. He said the insurance company dragged its feet in paying claims, and that the Round-Up Saloon experienced the same delay.

Longstaff said both he and the building's owner were underinsured. His insurance barely



JUST JACK | Union Jack owner Richard Longstaff stands behind the counter of his Cedar Springs Road store, which celebrates its 40th anniversary in August. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

covered his loss, he said.

"We scurried around to buy used racks," he said. "The store looked like crap but we knew it was a temporary location. Business fell off 50 percent."

Longstaff would have preferred that the space be rebuilt with higher ceilings, he said, but insurance wouldn't cover that. He said that when the new store opened, for the first time it looked like a professional retail establishment.

During his 40 years in business, Longstaff has relied on his own marketing sense. The store sold bellbottoms in 1971. He became Levi's biggest vendor for 501s.

The farm and ranch line became popular in the

gay community.

"We were selling 1,000 pair a month," he said. "We were washing them before Levi washed them themselves."


He had a commercial washing machine in the back to preshrink the denims to fit.

By the time of the fire, Levi was pre-washing 501s so the new store wasn't outfitted with washers.

As 501s became common in mall stores, sales dropped at Union Jack and a few years ago, Longstaff said, he discontinued carrying the line.


Today, Longstaff likes to distinguish his store with products that are American-made by gay-

■ **UNION JACK**, Next Page




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■ UNION JACK, From Previous Page

owned companies. His store manager, Kim Johnson, said probably 18 of the brands they carry fall into that category including Andrew Christian, Pistol Pete, Guillermo and YMLA.

Longstaff's history

Longstaff was born in Great Britain and came to this country in 1965. He first lived in Norman, Okla., where a former boyfriend from England was teaching.

That boyfriend sponsored him for a green card, something impossible since immigration laws were changed in 1968.

"At the time, immigration was open to northern Europeans," he said.

Longstaff went to work for Braniff in the cargo department and moved to Dallas when he decided to open a retail store. For the first couple of years after opening Union Jack, he continued working for the airline.

Although getting his green card was easy, his attempt to become a U.S. citizen took more than eight years and went all the way to the Supreme Court.

Longstaff said he filled out the forms and went to immigration with two witnesses. The witnesses were interviewed and then Longstaff was questioned.

He said he was asked three times if he was a homosexual, each time louder and louder, the third time with a slam of the fist on the desk.

"Rather than perjure myself or show lack of candor, I answered," he said. "Then they tried to pin me down."

He admitted to having sex in Colorado — where it was legal — but had a sudden lapse of memory about where any other encounters may have taken place.

"Judge Joe Estes screamed and shouted at me," Longstaff said, and the judge told immigration officers to find some reason to deny him citizenship.

The case was appealed to the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, which upheld the denial of citizenship based on Longstaff having a psychopathic personality. Immigration law used the term and

AA endorses ENDA

FORT WORTH — American Airlines has again advocated the passage of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. The airline supported the bill in 2008 and 2009 in correspondence with congressional leaders. In its current letter of endorsement, American Airlines wrote:

"On behalf of our 80,000 employees, American Airlines is proud to express our strong support for S. 811 and H.R. 1397, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would extend basic job protections to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Americans. We are proud to have been the first major airline to implement same-sex domestic partner benefits, first to implement both sexual orientation and gender identity in our workplace non-discrimination policies, and first to have a recognized LGBT employee resource group — GLEAM.

"Our endorsement of ENDA is consistent with our longstanding 'Statement of Equal Opportunity.' The principles fostered by ENDA are consistent with our corporate principles in treating all employees with fairness and respect."

Allstate recognizes Long

Allstate Insurance Company has recognized Alex Long, one of its gay agency owners, with the Chairman's Award for high standards in customer satisfaction, customer retention and financial services sales.

Alex Long Agency is one of about 14 percent of Allstate agency owners and personal financial representatives in Texas to reach this level of achievement.

Long participates in the Lone Star Ride, is a member of the North Texas GLBT Chamber of Commerce and volunteers with Resource Center Dallas. His agency is at 2700 N. O'Connor Road in Irving.

meant it to include gays and lesbians.

The American Psychological association, however, had recently changed its definition, so Rep. Barney Frank co-sponsored a law with Wyoming Republican Alan Simpson to remove homosexuality from the legal definition of psychotic personality in immigration law.

Based on that new law, the case was appealed to the Supreme Court, which denied hearing the case on the grounds that it would affect too few people.

Rep. Mickey Leland, who represented the Montrose area of Houston where Longstaff's second store was located, challenged immigration officials. He asked if they were going to deport this business owner. He also had legislation prepared to keep Longstaff in the country if immigration officials did begin deportation procedures.

Immigration backed down and made a deal that they would return Longstaff's green card if he agreed not to apply for citizenship again.

The story made international news, which is how he came out to his family when the story appeared in British newspapers.

Although achieving the status of owning the oldest gay business still owned by its original owner, Longstaff maintains his British citizenship to this day. ■

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Sunday brunch in Dallas' LGBT community has evolved into much more than just a meal; it's a way to keep the weekend party going

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

Mad Men portrays the 1960s white businessman's three-martini lunch. The Golden Girls ate cheesecake late night around a kitchen table. Carrie always sipped cosmos with the girls during cocktail hour while gossiping at the local club.

But in gay culture, the ritual of a Sunday brunch has long served as a social nexus, a place where all the major deals are made — and the arbiters of local society convene to hold court in the sobering light of day.

Putting together the right crew is part of the finesse that comes with planning the ideal brunch experience. "Not all my friends get along so I have to juggle it," says one brunch regular.

"I usually have a herd of about five [regular brunch buddies]," says Joshua Welch, who manages the ilume property where two tenants — the restaurants Dish and Axiom Sushi Lounge — have recently initiated theme brunches. Today, though, it's just Welch and one other friend: "I was in a coma until 15 minutes ago," Welch said.

Nursing a hangover is definitely another purpose of the brunch trek: Where else can you have food and alcohol on a Sunday morning to satisfy the twin desires to ease your headache and fill your belly? But the hangover element can affect where you choose to meet your friends. A place with loud music isn't necessarily all that welcome when you're sound sensitive, one diner — wearing sunglasses inside — ruefully admits as the music strikes up.

And there's definitely music, highlighting the latest local trend in brunching: Turning the traditionally staid eggs-benedict-and-mimosa chatfest into something more like a nightclub bathed in sunshine.

The glam world of the party brunch is upon us. Gays, of course, have always made brunch more a social function than a dining one — at least in urban areas. (Out-of-towners visiting Dallas say the gay community in Northwest Arkansas does not gather routinely for brunch.)

While a hearty meal accompanied by some hair o' the dog is a reason for brunch, it is by no means the only one. Sunday in the gay community can be akin to a war room strategy session.

"You meet to plan your week — decide what you're going to do for Sunday Funday," says regular bruncher Eli Duarte.

"Where else can you find our community gathered in the daylight?" asks Tim O'Connor, another diner, with a hint of sarcasm. "There are not a lot of places to do that outside the Strip, though it can be a kind of continuation of the bar scene."

That social aspect has caught on in the broader

brunch meets nightclub



MIMOSAS AND DRAG | In gay culture, brunch is a major social and culinary event, where fancy eggs benedict (like that at Dish, above left) and bottomless mimosas are standard issue. But they are becoming more fun, with drag queens part of the morning's entertainment at Dish and Axiom Sushi Lounge in the ilume, and ZaZa's Sunday School brunch (above right and below) serving up sparklers, DJs and girls dancing on tables. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

community, and has even been raised a notch of late in Dallas.

At Dish one recent Sunday, 200 to 250 diners are expected to enjoy the morning's entertainment. It doesn't come from a pianist playing songs from "Your Hit Parade," but rather a dance-mix DJ spinning tunes louder than Grandma would probably enjoy. And that's not the half of it: Midway through the day's two brunch seatings (one at 11 a.m. another at 1 p.m.), Dallas drag divas Krystal Summers and Erica Andrews rend the control booth from the DJ to put on a full show for the Taste of Drag Brunch.

Taste of Drag doesn't take place every Sunday — on special occasions like Mother's Day a more traditional service is offered — but owner Tim McEnery says they try to do it once or twice a month. And it's not just for the gay community.

"It really is for everyone," McEnery says.

Anecdotal evidence tends to bear that out. When I mention to a middle-aged straight woman that I am headed to a drag brunch, she excitedly asks where. "I need to know where I can see a good drag show," she declares enthusiastically. At

Dish, there certainly is a mix of gay and straight folks, though queerer heads prevail.

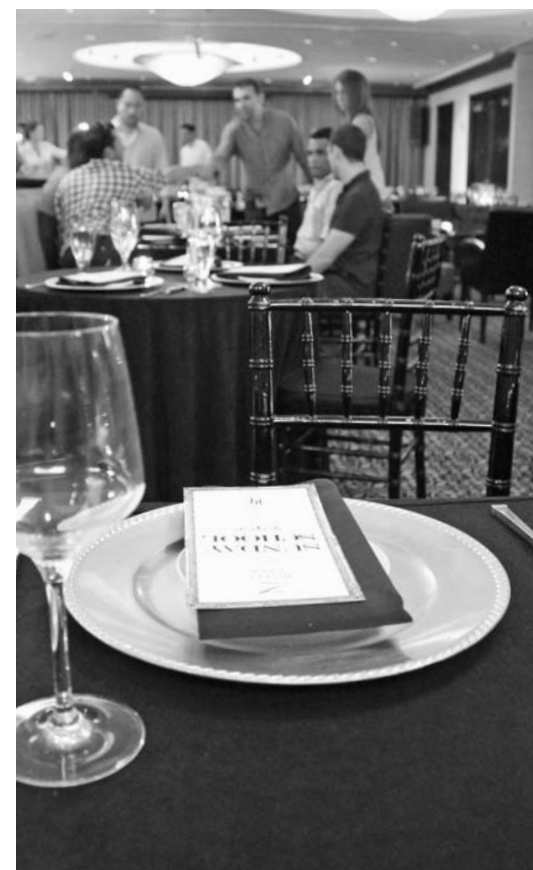
McEnery doesn't claim to have invented the drag brunch, but he thinks it's high time Dallas has one. It's been a staple in cities like San Francisco and New York for years, but has only recently gained currency outside the coasts.

On this particular Sunday, the first seating already has a nine-top (including two women — one, a former New Yorker who notes that brunch has burgeoned as a social event since she moved to Dallas); across from it, five diners, including four well-appointed women in sundresses and espadrilles, their makeup and hair obviously fussed over, have taken a prime location to watch the shows.

A decent-sized crowd fills in the 11 a.m., which is generally less well attended than the later — not surprising in the gay community, several brunch regulars quickly note.

"Part of the point of brunch is to see and be seen," acknowledges Welch, who is not at all surprised by the girls who turned up at 11 in full,

■ BRUNCH, Page 14



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CHAMPAGNE | ZaZa's Sunday School brunch serves up camp with their frittatas. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

■ BRUNCH, From Page 12

flawless makeup. "People dress up to come here."

Of course, gays and straights can mingle together or separately anywhere in town during brunch, though there is certainly a concerted effort at Dish — which is located along Cedar Springs — to make Sunday morning feel like an extension of Saturday night.

"Who went to church today?" asks Andrews of the Dish crowd. "I did, but I still smell like last night at the Rose Room."

Doing the Taste of Drag Brunch, she says, makes performing on the weekend almost run together.

"It's a different group than I see at the Rose Room," says Summers. "And we tend to do different music on Sundays — more classic drag. But it's a perfect time to catch up with friends, to talk about how your week went."

Over at the Hotel ZaZa ballroom, the third Sun-

day of every month morphs into Sunday School Brunch, where staff dress as nerdy bookworms and sexy Catholic school girls for a prix fixe menu that comes with a bottle of champagne per couple.

But it's not just the costumes and food that attract the crowd; indeed, many attendees pay the \$10 SRO cover just for the entertainment: Around 2 p.m., the lights dim, the curtain pulls back and the brunch room turns into a naughty discotheque, replete with sparklers, women dancing on the bar, mood lighting and a pounding dance beat.

Today's a mixed crowd — "about 50-50 [gay-straight]" observes one regular, "though it's often 'mo central.'"

The crowd is up and dancing before long, with muscular men in surplus among the attendees as the music gets louder and the lights dimmer. The sunglasses stay on. Gossip can wait; for now, there's still some partying left to do. ■



STEAK AND EGGS | Brunch is a social function, with friends attending in crews where they enjoy a little alcohol along with steak and eggs to keep the Saturday night party going like this group at Dish. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

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Senate holds hearing on bill to repeal DOMA

Franken shoots down anti-gay-marriage witness from Focus on the Family; Lewis compares DOMA to laws separating blacks and whites

LISA KEEN | Keen News Service
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U.S. Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga., a legendary civil rights activist, led off the historic hearing Wednesday, July 20, to discuss repealing the Defense of Marriage Act, likening it to laws decades ago that requires separate water fountains and restrooms for "whites" and "coloreds."

"I find it unbelievable in the year 2011," said Lewis, "that there is still a need to hold hearings and debates about whether a human being should be able to marry the person they love."

Republican Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa, the ranking minority member on the Senate Judiciary Committee, came well-prepared to do battle, bringing in a full complement of his allowed witnesses, minus one whom he said was afraid to testify

against repeal of DOMA for fear of being harassed.

But no other Republican senator showed up to ask questions and Democratic senators in support of the Respect for Marriage Act (SB 598) were also well-prepared to do battle.

Sen. Al Franken, D-Minn., called DOMA an "immoral and discriminatory" law and he challenged Grassley's chief witness, an official with the mammoth Focus on the Family group.

The witness, Thomas Minnery, had claimed a federal study found that children raised by a male-female married couple are happier and healthier than children raised by other families.

"I checked the study out," said Franken, referring to a 2010 study published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"It doesn't say what you said it does," he said as the hearing room erupted in laughter. "It says 'nuclear family,' not opposite-sex married families, are associated with those outcomes."

Minnery said he understood "nuclear family" to mean heterosexual.

"It doesn't," said Franken, bluntly. "It says 'two parents who are married to one another and are the adopted or biological' parents of their children.

I don't know how we can trust the rest of your testimony if you are reading studies these ways."

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., opened the hearing by saying he called the hearing to "assess the impact" of the law on American families. He said the 1996 law "goes well beyond the harm to a family's dignity," harming it economically, health-wise, and in other ways.

The hearing came one day after White House Press Secretary Jay Carney, during a routine briefing on Tuesday, said that President Obama supports the Respect for Marriage Act.

Carney, in response to a question, said Obama "has long called for a legislative repeal" of DOMA. "He is proud to support the Respect for Marriage Act... which would take DOMA off the books once and for all," said Carney.

Numerous LGBT groups issued statements, applauding the statement from Carney that the president supports the Respect for Marriage Act. They consider Obama's support for the repeal measure specifically to be a significant step forward in his position.

Ranking minority member Grassley was the

only Republican senator to comment and ask questions during the hearing, saying that DOMA is "not an expression of dislike for gay and lesbian people."

Whelan said repealing DOMA would "have the federal government validate" same-sex marriage and "require taxpayers to subsidize the provisions of benefits. And, he said, repealing DOMA would "pave the way" for polygamists and other polyamorous unions to be recognized under federal law.

Bill sponsor Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., who chaired the committee for a portion of the hearing, said DOMA denies rights and benefits to legally married same-sex couples. And she vowed that, "However long it takes" to repeal DOMA, "we will achieve it."

The hearing was covered live by C-SPAN and will be rebroadcast from time to time.

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Sen. Al Franken



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viewpoints

Orientation or illness?

Despite one reader's insistence that pedophilia is a sexual orientation, like being L, G or B, most in the community think otherwise

The very mention of the word pedophilia — defined as the abnormal sexual desire in an adult for children — can spark an emotional and angry response in many people.

I discovered that when I posted a question on Facebook recently seeking comments on what an anonymous reader had previously suggested to me about pedophilia.

The reader advised me that pedophiles comprise a minority group, and that pedophilia is actually a form of sexual orientation, like being gay or lesbian.

The reader reached out to me because I had described the LGBT community as the last minority group that is still considered a politically correct target for discrimination in some quarters. The reader claimed that pedophiles are similarly discriminated against in much harsher ways, and suggested that LGBT activists also engage in the discrimination against pedophiles because they are higher in the pecking order than pedophiles.

In response to a comment I made about his initial complaint, the reader wrote, "You are confusing sexual orientation with criminal activities. There is abundant evidence that most child molesters are not pedophiles (not primarily attracted to prepubescent children), and that most pedophiles are not molesters. I would hope that the people in your community [the LGBT community] would be able to understand the difference."

Well, I not only did not understand the difference, I was bewildered, to put it mildly.

I asked the reader to send me an email giving me more explanation about his argument, but I never received a response.

So my next step was typical for me when I don't quite know what to say: I started doing a little research on the Internet.

What I found first was an essay, "The Pattern of Sexual Politics: Feminism, Homosexuality and Pedophilia," by Professor Harri Mirkin, published in 1999 in an academic journal.

The essay made headlines in 2002, while Mirkin was chairman of the political science department at the University of Missouri's Kansas

City campus, according to a New York Times story. The essay gained widespread attention because of the sexual abuse scandal that enveloped the Roman Catholic Church. In the essay, Mirkin compared the "moral panic" over pedophilia to the outrage that erupted when the feminist and gay rights movements took hold. Reaction to Mirkin's essay, even though it was a few years old, apparently was equally hostile and panic-stricken. From there I moved on to an essay written for the Journal of Sex Education and Therapy, written in 1989, by Joan A. Nelson, who is listed today as an American Board of Sexology certified sex therapist practicing in San Rafael, Calif. The essay, "Intergenerational Sexual Contact," gave me a more clinical name for what I was researching and defined it as "any behavior between a minor and someone at least five years older that is perceived by either participant or by society as sexually stimulating or intended to be sexually stimulating."

It examined both the "adult participants" and the "child participants" in great detail. In one passage it noted, "In the face of age-old taboos and horrors of child abuse, it is hard for educators, research designers and other shapers of social policy to be nonjudgmental about intergenerational sex."

It goes on to say that scientists should basically approach this type of sexual activity clinically to avoid misleading results. One of the more surprising points made in the essay was that the child participants appeared to sometimes be "indifferent" to the experience rather than traumatized.

Advocates of legalizing sexual relationships between adults and pubescent minors apparently argue that it is usually consensual, it has occurred throughout history and that it causes no harm to the younger partners.

I searched to see if there were any groups actively promoting the interests of people who think they should have the right to engage in sexual activity, but all I found was the North American Man/Boy Love Association. To the best of my knowledge that group and its interests have been condemned by most LGBT activists, law enforcement agencies and mental health professionals, and its small membership has disappeared underground.

I became aware of some advocacy for lowering the age-of-consent laws for sexual activity, but I don't think those are particularly relevant to the issue of so-called intergenerational sex. Most of

what I've read concerning that issue appears to be related to teenagers who become involved in consensual sexual relationships with others relatively close to their age.

Finally, armed with this new body of knowledge, I went to Facebook to do my unofficial survey. I asked for input from my friends — and boy howdy, did I get it.

My Facebook friends represent a pretty good cross-section of straight and gay people, conservatives and liberals and people all ages and backgrounds, many of whom are part of our community in some way.

Most appeared to be outraged by the very idea of even considering pedophilia to be a sexual orientation.

One commentator noted that LGBT activists should have had the foresight long ago to "rail against" any classification of our community in terms of sexual orientation, sexual preference or any other sexual terms. In our community, we are building relationships, raising families and doing all of the other things in which our heterosexual counterparts engage.

She asked why we should always be classified in sexual terms, rather than for whom we are and what we accomplish?

So I would say in conclusion that I learned a lesson. And to the anonymous reader who thought that our community should be better able to understand pedophilia and be more sympathetic, I'd have to say, "Sorry, but we don't get it."

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



David Webb
The Rare Reporter

A beautiful day for a (gay) wedding

Friday, July 15, was a beautiful day to get married in Provincetown, Mass. The sun shone in a nearly cloudless sky, and a light breeze blew in from the water.

I hadn't planned to attend a wedding that day, in the waning moments of a Provincetown vacation. In fact, if the original plans had held up, I would have been in Canada. But the chance to

ORIENTATION, Next Page

■ **ORIENTATION**, From Previous Page

spend time with friends and fellow bears at P-town Bears Week proved too strong a pull.

Just before noon, I'd walked out onto a granite jetty in far west Provincetown. In front of me was Pilgrim's First Landing Park, where a crowd of bears gathered. In their midst, two men wore matching red shirts, khaki shorts and flip-flops. Later, I would learn that they were Daniel Boone and David Moore of High Point, N.C.

As a bell rang in the distance, the Rev. Vernon Porter arrived to conduct the ceremony, blending secular and religious traditions. Several of Daniel and David's friends were crying, and to my surprise I found myself softly tearing up as well.

Why?

I've been to many weddings in Texas involving my gay and lesbian friends. I've even been a member of the wedding party several times. Two men or two women pledging their love, commitment and honor is old, old news.

It had to be something different, something deeper. And then, I realized it. This was the first wedding I'd attended involving the LGBT community where the union was sanctioned by the government.

This must be what respect feels like, and that's why I cried.

I cried for those no longer with us, who could have never hoped or dreamed to marry and have it count in the eyes of the law, for those afraid to step out into the light of true acceptance, and for those LGBT community members whose marriages have been challenged, negated or disrespected by those who purport to govern.

I also cried because I've never seriously considered the idea of me ever getting married. I've dated and been in relationships with several wonderful men. But here were two fellow bears, who met six years earlier at a bear-sponsored group dinner in North Carolina, having the wedding of their dreams in one of the gayest places on Earth.

If it could happen for them, it could happen

for me — someday.

The wedding ceremony ended traditionally, with an exchange of rings and a passionate kiss. Here's what Daniel said about those rings, made from an anniversary ring owned by David's mother: "When she passed away, she had seven of the diamond stones to go to me, seven to go to David and (the final seven stones) go to his brother. She told David and me to take the stones and make our wedding rings with it. That way, she will always be there with us."

A small crowd gathered to witness the wedding, and burst into spontaneous applause as the ceremony ended. Somebody in the crowd shouted "Mazel tov!" Two lesbians, who had been riding along the edge of the sand dunes, stopped to watch and spontaneously pulled out their camera to take pictures. I did, also.

And then it happened. I became part of the wedding party. One of the attendees asked if I would take a group picture. I said, sure. Then a second person asked, and a third, and a fourth. Before I knew it, I added "wedding photographer" to my resume.

All too soon, the parties dispersed, and I prepared to leave Cape Cod.



Rafael McDonnell
Contributing Columnist

TO SEND A LETTER | We welcome letters from readers. Shorter letters and those addressing a single issue are more likely to be printed. Letters are subject to editing for length and clarity, but we attempt to maintain the writer's substance and tone. Include your home address and a daytime telephone number for verification. Send letters to the senior editor, preferably by e-mail (nash@dallasvoice.com). Letters also may be faxed (214-969-7271) or sent via the U.S. Postal Service (Dallas Voice, 4145 Travis St., Third Floor, Dallas TX 75204). All letters become the property of Dallas Voice.



Yet, all weekend, weddings remained on my mind. I'd heard several bears from New York discussing the merits of marrying at Niagara Falls versus the top of the Empire State Building, once weddings start this weekend in New York. When I returned to Texas on Monday, I read Mark Reed-Walkup and Dante Walkup's wedding announcement in the Dallas Morning News.

Both are significant steps toward making our marriages the norm, instead of a novelty.

Someday, in the near future, it won't be unusual to mark an LGBT wedding. But I will always remember where I was, who and what I saw, and how I felt the first time I witnessed our community's love sanctified, recognized and deemed legal in the eyes of the state. ■

Rafael McDonnell is strategic communications and programs manager for Resource Center Dallas. He is also an active member of the bear community in North Texas.

Feedback

On Cedar Springs crosswalk repairs

Let's add this up shall we. Fixed five times at \$5000 per repair. Wong: "But it would cost \$30,000 or \$40,000 to replace the whole system." If they had figured out the poor design and the cause early on, the city would have already have had almost all of the money for a replacement system.
Desmond S., via Instant Tea

Honestly, they should bite the bullet and just build an elevated crosswalk above the road, or install a similar stop light on the corner like the one located on Throckmorton and Cedar Springs. Cars tend to not understand the meaning of the blinking lights anyway.
Jesse J., via Instant Tea

I still think there should be a drag queen crossing guard.
Downtown Worker, via Instant Tea

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135 Votes cast

Travelin' man

Ryan States did what most people just dream about: He ran off to join the circus. But he still wants to make music of his own

RICH LOPEZ | Staff Writer
lopez@dallasvoice.com

Ryan States has his future set — good (and rare) for a musician. Where others work day jobs and try to book gigs by night, States might have the best gig of all. As the keyboard player in the Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey circus, his day job *is* as a musician. And when he had time on the side, he used it to record and release an album.

All in a day's work for States — or in his case, two years.

"Yeah, it took that long to put together," he says. "It's hard to say when I really began, and other projects come up."

Two years for an album isn't abnormal, but for States, working around his grueling schedule called for creative ways to finish his 2009 CD, *Strange Town*. (The circus stops in Dallas July 27, performing 21 shows in 11 days.) In doing so, it even has its own unique claim to fame.

"This is the first record ever completely made on a train," the out singer brags. (Yes, the circus does still travel by train.) "I experimented with remote recordings. Sometimes I'd have musicians in my train room, other times I'd get their tracks via email. I was putting music and musicians together without any kind of network out there."

The result was an 11-track CD of singer-songwriter rock that recalls the likes of Jackson Browne or Michael W. Smith and sounds beautifully cohesive in its production value. Recording has moved beyond the studio, but States pulled off a polished package considering his unconventional approach to *Strange Town*.

"I'm really happy with it," he says. "It turned out to be simpler to collect tracks and work from my computer on the train. I could be there working, tracking and editing music all I want. With our work schedule of shows and rehearsals, time was the biggest challenge for me."

Although the *album* is available, if you want to hear States live, the circus is the only place to do it. At 37 — seven of those years with Ringling — States is clearly a seasoned performer, but he's yet to perform his own music.

"I did make my debut performance on *Queer Voices* in Houston performing live, but I realized I hadn't performed my own stuff outside of my living room or a talent competition," he says. "Plus, I really didn't think I could do that on the road."



SIDE PROJECT

Even with the hectic schedule of performing musical accompaniment for the circus, Ryan States managed to release a CD and gear up for his own time in the spotlight.



Pitching a tent

Eight years ago, Cristian Zabala received the phone call that would change his life forever. Following a 2002 audition for Cirque du Soleil that seemed to go nowhere, Zabala had assumed he wasn't what they were looking for. But then came word that the casting director wanted him for the *Alegria*, performing as an acrobat. He had the athletic prowess for it, but what the Argentine-born performer really wanted to do was sing.

"When I was 17, I was doing musicals and dancing in school," he says. "For me it was good enough to just be in the show, but they asked me to sing and because I'm a countertenor, I've been the only male singer in that show."

Now Zabala can be seen in *Dralion*, the production from Cirque that fuses Chinese traditional circuses with more contemporary themes. Zabala's character, L'Âme Force, threads together the four elements depicted in the show. He's also living the proverbial dream, but he wouldn't say that it was all by accident.

"I've always had that luck to do what I love to do. I believe in the law of attraction," he says.

He means that in more ways than one. Zabala's significant other is also the artistic director for *Dralion*. They first met while working on Cirque's *Quidam*. By the time the stint was over two years later, they were full-fledged boyfriends. When this show opened up, offering them

the opportunity to work together, they took it. The decision was not lost on the rest of the cast and crew.

"I get some teasing from everyone for being the first lady, but it's funny," laughs Zabala. "I joke about it, too. Since I am from Argentina, I always say they call me Evita Peron."

When the timing is right — and they are in one place long enough — the couple plans to get married. Hopefully the wedding will take place in Buenos Aires (where same-sex marriage was recently legalized), although he says they are still considering their options.

Although excited to pursue that chapter, Zabala isn't in a hurry. His gig with Cirque is artistically fulfilling — he even hesitates to call it work, but more a calling.

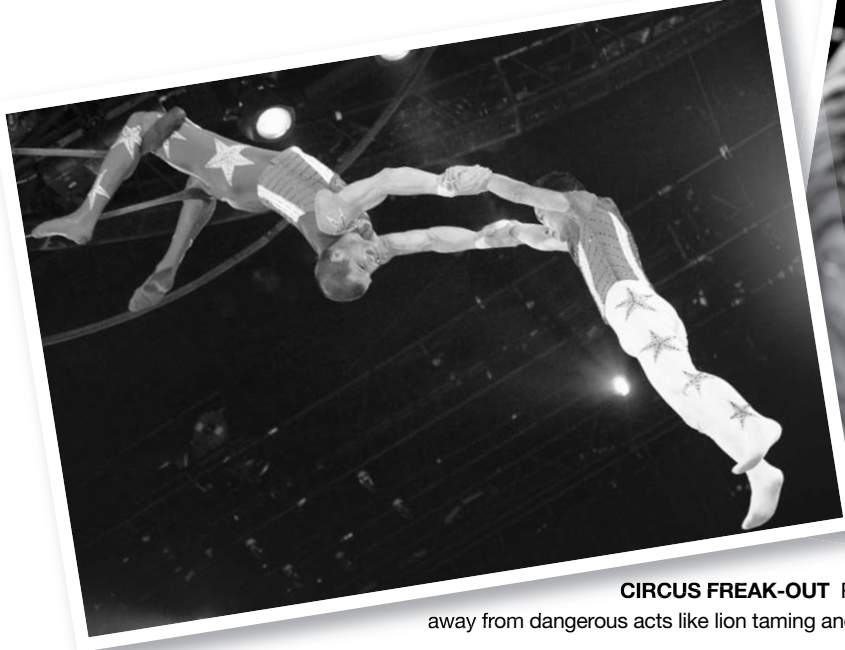
"This has never had that connotation of work to me," he says. "I know it's always my choice. Sometimes I could call in sick but even when I don't wanna go, the show brings me back to a certain reality. I'm not religious but I am very spiritual. My purpose is to entertain and give it to people. It's wonderful."

And when all is said and done, Zabala isn't too worried about the future. He has another year with the show.

"This one thing I know. I will always work. It's a weird feeling but because I want to be singing, somebody will give me the chance."

— R.L.

Cirque du Soleil: *Dralion* at Dr. Pepper Arena, 2601 Avenue of the Stars, Frisco. July 27–31. \$40–\$95. Ticketmaster.com.



CIRCUS FREAK-OUT Ryan States is safely sequestered away from dangerous acts like lion taming and trapeze, but keeps up musically. (Feld Entertainment)

The logistics behind booking shows while touring is daunting, but expanding to individual venues is on his radar. And while Dallas has plenty of venues where he *could* perform (he'd like to perform at a place like the Vixin Lounge, he says), States — who used to live here — didn't book one. He felt he wasn't prepared.

He first needs some back-up musicians: His album was recorded with an amalgamation of musicians culled from across the country via the Web. But could there be some lingering insecurities about going at it alone — even with a backing band? Hard to say. States wants to perform his own gigs, but his reasons

for the delay come off somewhat as a case of the nerves.

"I've not yet performed in front of an audience I could see," he laughs. "I look forward to getting something bigger together. I am preparing for it, though. I think I should be ready with everything by fall."

In the meantime, he has plenty to keep him busy at the circus.

"We're not playing a song because there is really no end," he explains. "It's rock, it's circus music and people are surprised it's live. But we have to keep an eye on the show. If something happens or gets off course, we have to keep up

or slow down. I've never had a gig like that and because anything could happen, we have to be ready at the drop of a hat."

States is clearly stimulated by his work with the circus. He has all of life's necessities: A place to live (albeit on wheels), a good musical gig and time for his own work. He even has his traveling circus family. So to say his future is set is likely an understatement.

"I'll be here for a while, at least another year. It's nice to have steady work and just show up," he says. "I don't really like a lot of attention, but as for my music, it is a new challenge to be pushed up to the front. I've always been a side man, but I know now I can be whatever I want to be." ■

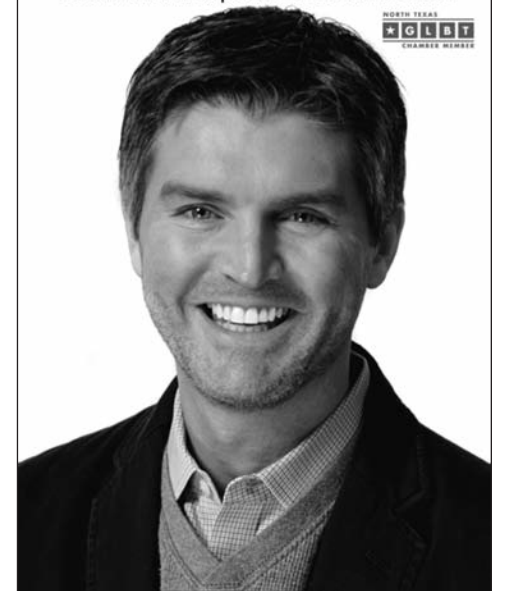
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Friends of Dorothy

If only DTC's 'Wiz' had a heart. And I got yer horse right here, 'Guys & Dolls'

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Life+Style Editor

jones@dallasvoice.com

If there's one thing a gay guy can be counted on to know something about, it's *The Wizard of Oz*. After all, the death of Judy Garland sparked the Stonewall Riots, and even before that, being a "friend of Dorothy" was code for practicing The Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name. You wanna change it? Be prepared for theater queens to take note.

And so it is with **The Wiz**, the 1975 funk-ed-up, all-black musical that serves as the Dallas Theater Center's season ender.

The appeal of Dorothy's adventure has always been the exploration of self-understanding with heavy doses of psychology. (The folks she meets in her reveries about Oz mirror real-life people she knows in Kansas.) This rushed 90-minute kiddie show so trims the classic structure of the film (it's closer in plot to the book, but that's not a good thing), it feels more like a series of unrelated vignettes than a mythological journey of personal discovery. Dorothy gets to Oz, meets a good witch (*not* Glinda), hooks up with three buddies (*sans* Toto, who is only heard barking offstage in the opening), dispatches an evil witch in about six minutes then presumably makes it back home (we never see Kansas again).

DTC is marketing it as a "family musical," and I suppose it is in the sense that we might start referring to Michele Bachmann's husband as "family." The show — even in this abridged version — is gayer than *Liberace* on Halloween. The Lion, always the nelliest of the bunch, basically admits he's gay due to an absent father and strong-willed mother; so many men are obsessed with Dorothy's shiny shoes (here silver as in the book, *not* ruby like the movie), I expected one of the Munchkins to be Stanford Blatch; and director Kevin Moriarty employs lithe, half-naked

dancers from Dallas Black Dance Theater to gyrate their moneymakers — is this Oz from the book or the gay club on Bourbon Street?

Still, this version of *The Wiz* is just children's theater without much heart, brain or courage (it's difficult to tell if that's the fault of the book by William F. Brown or the direction, which feels rushed). The style is presentational and flat, with the actors projecting broadly to the balcony with exaggerated emotions.

Although the set famously includes moving "pods" of seats that move the audience around

the space, the main actors rarely perform as in true theater-in-the-round, except when the dancers jump into them. I counted a dozen repositionings, but the sense of movement only genuinely grabs you once; during the cyclone, which should make you feel dizzy and excited, the

Pods move lumberingly around dancers portraying winds. It's all oddly unsatisfying: It's there, it ends.

What's surprising is that there's not more magic considering how balls-to-the-wall strong most of the singers are. The Tin Man has never been my favorite character — face it: He's never been *anyone's* favorite ... until now. Sydney James Court delivers the only truly wrenching musical performance on his solo "To Be Able to Feel," just moments after the juiced-up eroticism of "Slide Some Oil to Me." It's a sexy, charismatic turn in sharp relief to David Ryan Smith's hilariously flamboyant Lion and James Tyrone Lane's limber goofing as Scarecrow.

Liz Mikel hams it up, both as good witch Ad-daperle and her wicked sister Evillene, which gives her the chance to seethe and gnash her teeth at the youngsters in between belt-'em-out anthems. But Trisha Jeffrey as Dorothy makes lit-

ON THE BOARDS

THE WIZ at the **Wyly Theatre**,
2400 Flora St. Through Aug. 7.
DallasTheaterCenter.org
GUYS & DOLLS at **Fair Park
Music Hall**, 901 First Ave.
Through July 31.
DallasSummerMusicals.org



EASE ON DOWN | The Tin Man (Sydney James Court, above left) steals the show in 'The Wiz' at DTC, while over at Fair Park, Megan Sikora, right, gives 'Guys & Dolls' its jolt.

tle impression. In this construct, without Toto to talk to, the character is a cipher with little to do but watch the rest of Oz upstage her, wondering "Why, oh why can't I?"

Over at Fair Park, the national tour of **Guys & Dolls** does a good job of reminding us how gosh-durn terrific a songwriter Frank Loesser was. The score plays like a master class in Broadway hits, with standards (the most famous, "Luck Be a Lady," isn't even the best) that convey character through complex harmonies with toe-tapping brio. It's ironic that "Sit Down You're Rockin' the Boat" makes the audience want to jump to its feet.

If only the production were quite at the level it needs to be to showcase those numbers at their best. Four of the five leads — Ben Crawford (Sky Masterson), Steve Rosen (Nathan Detroit), Megan Sikora (Adelaide) and Glenn Rainey (Nicely Nicely) — have great voices, with Sikora stealing the show as the squeaky-voiced stripper. (Erin Davie never rises above the confines of the show's least interesting role, missionary Sarah Brown.) The book, based on Damon Runyon's caricatures of New York low-lives, still has some zingers (and Crawford is especially good at mak-

ing the dialogue feel contemporary), but it hasn't aged well.

It doesn't help that director Gordon Greenberg cleaves closely to outmoded conventions, like a long introductory ballet (danced only serviceably by a disappointing chorus) and extended, stylized sequences throughout that do little to advance the plot. And with the show clocking in just shy of three hours, there is plenty of room to trim.

Sikora, though, makes it worth a look-see alone, and the songs have more energy and have endured better than those of *The Wiz*. Given a choice, it's a crashout between the Loesser of two Evillenes. ■



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TRAVEL DIARY

Anyone who has ever been trapped in an airport during flight delays knows the madness can become infectious, but being balanced and serene is worth the effort. Here are some tips to get your Zen on.

Exercise. You might be on vacation, but your body is not. Exercise in your room, in your hotel's gym, outside (run on the beach!) or find a nearby gym. Investing an hour in working

out can reduce stress, improve sleep and increase energy.

Choose the right attitude. If you approach traveling with the attitude of, "Ugh! I hate to fly/drive/sit," you've already decided it's going to be a terrible experience. Instead, make the decision to enjoy the journey. Find a good book or download some interesting movies on your iPad. A long flight can be hell... or six hours of scheduled "me" time. The choice is yours.

Eat right. There's no such thing as "vacation" calories. A calorie is a calorie and unhealthy options are as unhealthy at the beach as they are at home. Make food choices that nourish your body and you'll feel strong and you'll enjoy your vacation even more.

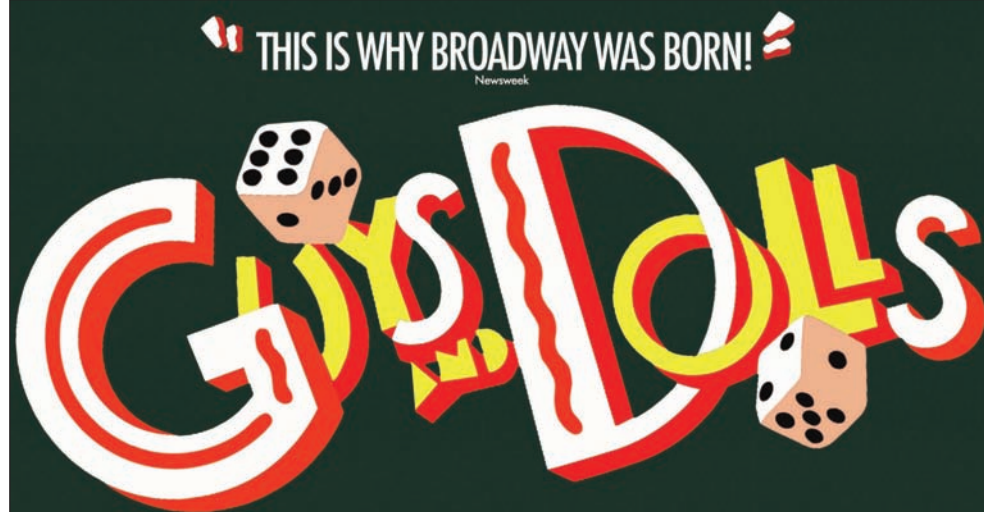
Do less, accomplish more. Many treat vacations as narrow windows into which they cram in as much "fun" as possible. While tempting, it can result in *seeing* a lot but experiencing nothing. Instead, do a few things you'll actually enjoy rather than constantly looking at your watch.

Stay hydrated. Planes have notoriously dry air; make it a point to get some water whenever the stewards or stewardesses offer it. After going through security, buy a large bottle of water. It makes your body infinitely more comfortable, especially on longer flights.

Meditate. Even if you don't normally meditate, taking 10 minutes a day to sit quietly is refreshing. Ideally, meditation is best in a quiet room, but even on a packed plane you can make it work. If there is chaos around you, make it part of your practice! Tune it out and find your center. Among other things, it will help reduce tension, relieve stress and improve your mood.

Wash your hands. Restaurants and public transportation facilities are rife with germs. Vacations are more enjoyable when you're healthy, so minimize your risk of getting sick by washing your hands often.

— Davey Wavey



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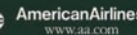
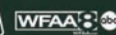
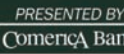
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Electric slide

The Chevy Volt hybrid boasts green technology, but it's also a blast to drive



CASEY WILLIAMS | Auto Reviewer
crwauto@aol.com

After running errands one night, I drove my Chevrolet Volt electric car into my garage, plugged its charger into a standard outlet, connected the other end to a receptor on the side of the car and went inside for the night. According to the dash read-out, it would be fully charged before my first cup of coffee. Then, my mother texted me and invited me to lunch at their house — 50 miles away.

"If I go lightly on the throttle," I think, "the Volt just might make it."

I rarely go lightly on throttles and didn't this morning, either. I rode gently through the Starbucks drive-through, but after that, I made myself giddy accelerating with whooshing abandon and cruising along at 70 mph.

Exactly 41 miles into my amusement, the battery pooped out. And I didn't care. The car changed its display screen priority from battery range to a gas gauge, woke the 1.4 liter, four-cylinder engine, and kept whirring along. When other electric cars, including The Holy Tesla, run out of power, you walk or call for a flat bed. I click to Elvis Radio and enjoy a sunny drive. Welcome to the future.

Anybody of my generation who drives the Volt will instantly transport themselves to the '80s and the movie *Back to the Future*. In case you've lost track of time, the DeLorean is now as old as the '50s cars were then; we're only four years from the future depicted in *Part II*. Wall-sized televisions have come, we can video chat anywhere and libraries are obsolete. If you could have told Marty McFly about the Internet, iPads, or this car, his head would have spun off. Volt looks the part of a sci-fi star.

No other General Motors product spent more time in a wind tunnel than the Volt, which explains its perfectly honed, streamlined shape. It may not be as sexy as the original 2007 concept car, but it is much roomier, persuades wind with Chevy's trademark crossbar grille, looks sharp in its creases, rolls on 17-in. polished alloy wheels, and pays homage to the original concept with a black strip under the windows.

A front splitter, spoiler on the hatch, and motorized grille shutters divert air with a minimum of drag — all important when attempting to inch up electric range. Some call it ugly, but I think it is handsome.

On a continuum from pure electric vehicles like the '90s GM EV1 and Nissan Leaf to full gasoline models like the Corvette is a wide middle band. A Toyota Prius is towards the 'Vette side since it is a gas vehicle, assisted by batteries. The Volt is on the other half of the middle: An electric car, backed by gasoline.

Charging the Volt's lithium ion batteries is easy. Connect the included charger to a standard outlet, open the little portal near the driver's door by key fob or door release, plug in, and wait about 10 hours. Or install a 240v charger and cut it to four hours. (The cost per charge is about \$1.50.) Regenerative per-charge brakes put some juice back into the batteries during deceleration. Chevrolet claims an all-electric range of 35 to 50 miles, but total range including gas is about 380 miles — very sizeable.

In 100-degree Texas heat with and the A/C running at full blast constantly, expect less battery range. The EPA rates the Volt 93-MPGe on electricity and 37-MPG on gasoline. Expect 60-

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That's all cool and stuff, but I'd buy a Volt just for the driving experience. Step on the forward motion activation pedal and the car accelerates eerily smoothly, with ample torque and no gear shifts, up to 100 mph. A Sport mode makes the throttle more responsive, but eats power. Outside of tire noise and faint motor whine, the car is silent. Even with the gas engine running, there is only a distant rumble from under the hood. Since the engine powers the electric system and virtually never drives the car directly, Volt remains an electric car. Steering feel is near perfect, the chassis likes to play, and the car feels tomb solid with its 3,781 lbs. of weight. It makes some big name hybrids feel like science projects by comparison.

I couldn't resist blasting "Power of Love" by Huey Lewis and the News through the Bose audio system. Beyond sweet sounds, Volts come with options like heated leather seats, USB input for iPods, Bluetooth phone connectivity, automatic climate control, and front knee airbags. Navigation, audio, and climate are adjusted through a touch-sensitive center control panel. LCD screens display audio/NAV, MPH and a summary of energy usage during trips. It sounds complicated, but is as easy to use as an iPad.

Fold down rear seats and a big hatch makes it more practical than the Chevy Cruze with which it shares a basic architecture. A rear center console was necessitated by the battery pack, limiting passengers to four.

About 75 percent of us travel less than 40 miles per day, and in the Volt, we would never burn gasoline. However, if you want to drive to California, or just your parents', fill up and go! Perhaps best of all, the Volt drives not like some cobbled-together prototype, but a fully-developed, completely-realized version of the future. This car is real, and it is a delight. To my dreadful sadness, the Volt has gone home and I am back from the future. But I know driving has forever changed.

Prices start under \$35,000 after a \$7,500 federal credit and include an 8-year/100,000-mile battery warranty. (Prius PLUS Performance Package, available on the Volt, is the first wave of PLUS-branded upgrades coming from Toyota in the coming months. Through relatively simple enhancements, drivers concerned about efficiency and ecology can also have a lot of fun driving their green rides. The PLUS package is priced at \$3,699 for Prius Two, Three and Four models and \$2,999 for Prius Five.) ■

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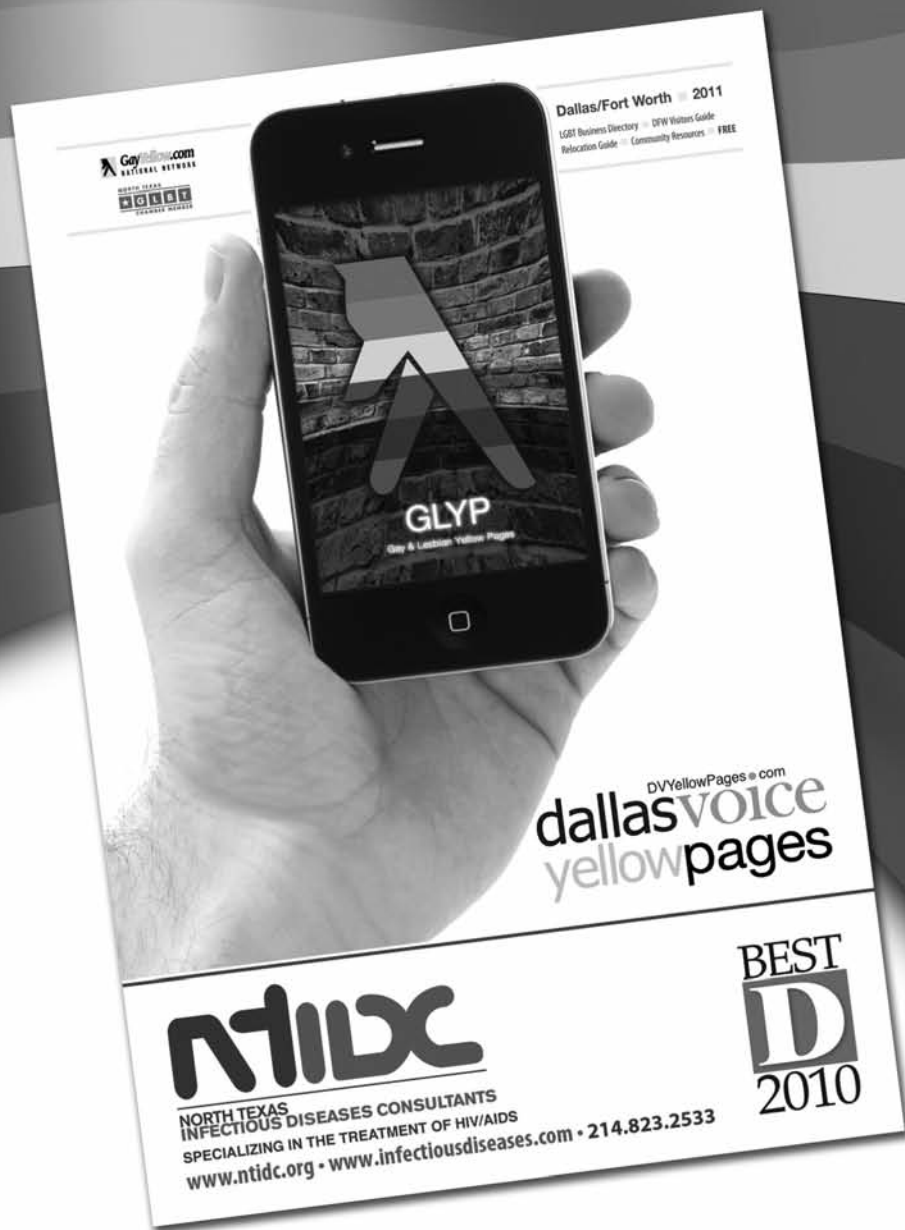
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'America' first

Throwback actioner 'Capt. America' is more classic war film than sci-fi orgy

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Life+Style Editor
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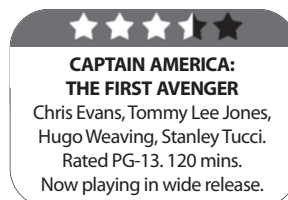
With three weeks of 100-degree days and counting, summer feels like it's in full force, but for Hollywood, it's nearly the end of its useful life. Only one more weekend in July, giving films a month to earn money before kids go back to school and their free time gets absorbed with homework. And that means the end of the Summer of the Super-hero.

It has definitely been that. Starting with *Thor* on May 6, there has hardly been a weekend that didn't see the debut some movie based on a comic book and/or featuring mutant, alien, magical or robotic heroes: *Priest*, *X-Men: First Class*, *Green Lantern*, *Transformers*, *Harry Potter*, *Cowboys and Aliens* and *Conan the Barbarian* are on their heels.

That puts this weekend's big release, **Captain**

America: The First Avenger, in the middle of the pack, but really, it's pretty well above it. Although part of the Marvel Comics heroes universe, Steve Rogers (aka the Cap'n) is ideally part of a different era: A World War II pin-up boy who fought the Germans with old-fashioned American muscle, wielding a symbolic red, white and blue circular shield. He doesn't shoot fire from his fingers, he shoots bullets from a pistol. His herodom is oversized, but still on a human scale, and still relateable.

In many ways, the film is freed up by its period roots and the fact the hero is one of the least well-known in the Marveldom (at least among those getting their own franchises). You go to *Spider-Man*, you expect to see Aunt May and J. Jonah Jameson and Mary Jane. Capt. America



'Tabloid:' A pale London Confidential

When the scandal over Rupert Murdoch's media empire broke last week, Errol Morris must have been licking his chops. In the midst of intense media coverage over tabloid journalism, the documentary filmmaker — who gave Dallas (deservedly) a bloody nose with the endlessly fascinating *The Thin Blue Line* and dove into the effects of unpopular wars with both *The Fog of War* and *Standard Operating Procedure* — has a new film out titled, serendipitously enough, **Tabloid**. Every *Daily Show* bit is as good as free advertising.

If only the film warranted more intense attention. *Tabloid* isn't anywhere near his best work, although when it comes to Errol Morris, even mediocre is event-like filmmaking. It's stylish and stylized, from the titles (in fonts to make them look like National Enquirer headlines) to Morris' signature interview style to the historic montages and moody, investigative score. But the focus isn't there; it's as if he had to make a mortgage payment and this is all he could come up with.

The subject is actually only tangentially related to journalism; it's really about Joyce McKinney, a former Miss Wyoming who in the 1970s became romantically involved with a Mormon, only to later be accused of kidnapping him (even though it was really the Mormons who abducted and brainwashed him). McKinney recounts how the British press turned her into a maniac — labeling the scandal "the Manacled Mormon," publishing naked photos of her that were doctored (she says) — while simultaneously she was using the press for her own purposes.

There's a lot of fascinating stuff going on here, especially barbs tossed from a gay ex-Mormon activist at the craziness of the LDS church (magic underwear? No shit!) and a post-script about how McKinney eventually made news again years later



in a bizarre story involving immortal housepets, but ultimately, it's all unfathomable. Not a lot of questions are answered — it's all an elaborate he said/she said/they said — although there's something undeniably interesting in seeing Morris work his way through it, like seeing a great actor appear in an ad for orange juice: You know he's capable of so much better, but can't help but admire the talent he brings to such a minor work.

— A.W.J.

Two and a half stars
Now playing at the Angelika Film Centers in Dallas and Plano



FOLLOW THE FLAG | Chris Evans makes a charismatic star-spangled super-soldier — and is pretty easy on the eyes out of costume, below.



films, including *The Rocketeer*, *October Sky* and last year's *The Wolfman*.

The former two — as well as the TV show *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* (he even won an Oscar for his special effects on *Raiders of the Lost Ark*) — served him well on *Captain America*. In addition to being generally of the same era, they have an art deco look that sets them apart visually from the excessively CGI'd flash of something like *Green Lantern*.

Not that there isn't a lot of CGI — most notably, keeping hunky star Chris Evans looking like a 90-lb. weakling during the 45-minute lead up to the creation of super-soldier Steve Rogers. I don't pretend to know how they did it; I can only report, admiringly, that the effect is flawless. (The downside is that it necessarily means you get less time to stare at the yoked slab of man-meat that is Evans.)

A weakness in the film is that it spends so much time setting up Steve to *become* Capt. America, it eventually rushes through his actual exploits fighting Red Skull and his evil corps Hydra. It's under two hours but could afford another 15 of his heroics. The denouement feels rushed and not wholly satisfying.

Still, in a post-bin Laden U.S., there's something primal and patriotic watching a man in a flag-colored costume charge boldly into danger, facing off against a flat-out villain. Even when he was originally created, Capt. America was as much a war bonds salesman as a fantasy hero, a representative of the Greatest Generation. Surely, 70 years later, we've outgrown such two-dimensional rah-rah jingoism.

Like hell we have. Just ask Seal Team 6. ■

has a nemesis — the evil Nazi Red Skull (brilliantly played with a Werner Herzog accent by Hugo Weaving) — and an iconic costume but is otherwise not tied to a strong supporting cast. You can fiddle with his origin story and not have the blogosphere inundated with sniping. You can, in short, make a superhero movie that looks more like a traditional war picture. And that taps an entirely different lobe on the male action-movie-loving brain.

Joe Johnston, the film's director, is hardly an A-lister, having churned out lowbrow pabulum like *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids*, *Jurassic Park III* and *Jumanji*. But he's also proved himself a stylish and occasionally sensitive director of period

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Indie, airy

Self-releases from Dallas' Brandon Hilton, Laura Ainsworth, others show indies in a post-iTunes age

RICH LOPEZ | Staff Writer
lopez@dallasvoice.com



Nocturnal

Brandon Hilton

Two and a half stars

Followers love him; others love to hate, but Dallas-born Brandon Hilton backs up his faux-lebrity with some surprises in his second CD, *Nocturnal*. Although it's not a concept album, Hilton keeps a proper tone befitting the title. The songs are dark, sometimes seedy, keeping true to his vision.

"Heartbeat" and "Heartbreaker" are catchy enough not to skip. Recalling '80s New Wave sound, he has the earnestness of a modern Limahl from Kajagoogoo. (An obscure reference, maybe, but trust me.)

The beat kicks in on "Shadow," but is completely overproduced and Hilton's delivery is uninspired. Yet the track is the liveliest and sticks out above many of the other 14 tracks. The same is true with "So Ready," though he feels more present here. The song has a silliness hovering with lyrics like *your kiss is like a total eclipse / tak-*

ing over my body/ makes me feel so naughty.

Despite those higher moments, the album misses marks on production and writing. The title track should have more impact, but is a key example of how the rest plays out. Hilton straddles a line between singing and talking and comes off lazy. He seems like he's trying to skate by rather than let loose.

"Photoshop Friendship" and "Glamour Zombie" have nice ideas behind them with content, but despite pseudo high-energy beats, the songs drone. Hilton needs to work on not just building his songwriting, but painting the right picture musically to go with the words.

Production values are all but absent. What could have been a decent track, "Need Your Love," suffers by putting Hilton's voice slightly under the music levels. I don't hear what he's singing — a mistake that is really only forgivable on a debut.

Hilton has some ways to go before superstardom, but I am admittedly surprised by what he has in his back pocket in *Nocturnal*.



Aerials

Ariel Aparicio

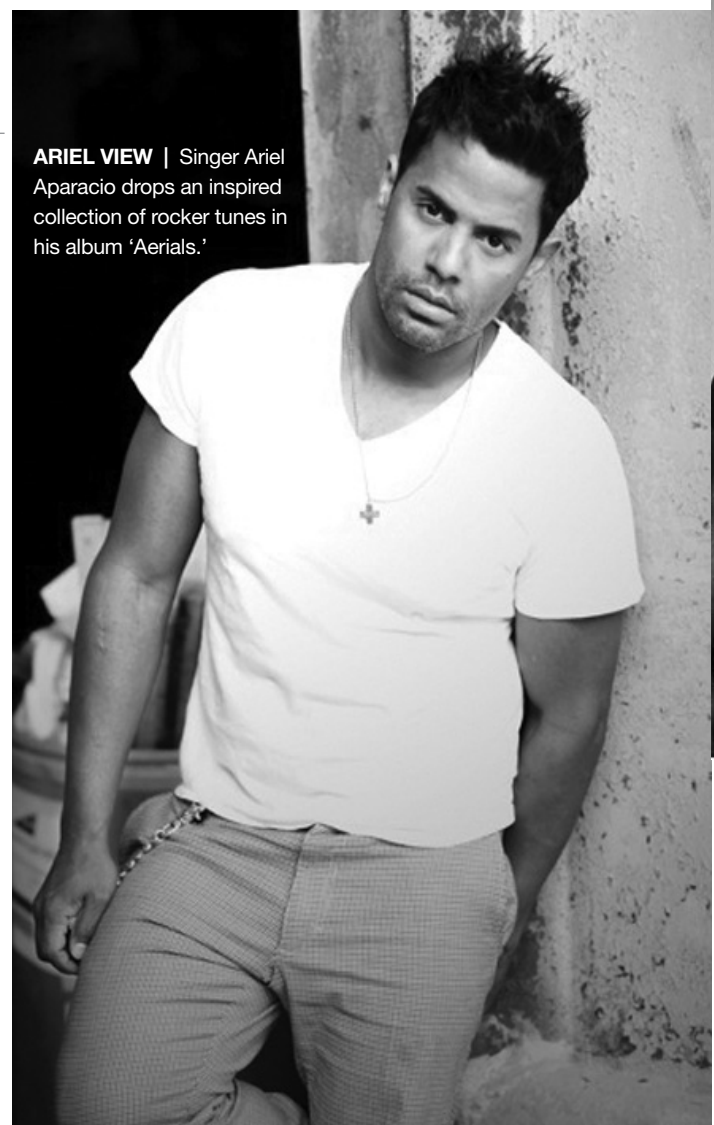
Three and a half stars


Recent OutMusic award winner Ariel Aparicio has opted to release *Aerials* on CD in August, following up positive response to his digital download album that dropped in March. A wise decision: *Aerials* wins with a lot of heart and clear

talent and the more people know about it, the better.

A minute-long intro immediately takes the listener on a ride as he ventures into the U2-ish "Love Left Bleeding." Aparicio can rock but with beautiful sophistication — he's not trying to blow our ears out. The attention to detail on the guitars here tickles

ARIEL VIEW | Singer Ariel Aparicio drops an inspired collection of rocker tunes in his album 'Aerials.'





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IN A BLUE MOOD | Hercules and Love Affair fall big time with sophomore album 'Blue Songs.' Even queer singer and Bloc Party frontman Kele Okereke couldn't save the day with his guest appearance.

them instead.

The gentleness in "Flowers" mixes a bit of Paul Simon and The Doors into his sound, but doesn't suffer by losing to it. He brings in his own ethereal quality with his mysterious, raspy voice and floating backgrounds.

He displays his Latin roots on "Amor Sangrando" which isn't his highest moment here. Although it doesn't feel forced ("Look at me singing in Spanish!"), it's ill-constructed. The music works, but his lyrics don't seem to fit and as a closer, it plays as a gimmick.

But the album succeeds on many levels. *Aerials* isn't just an album, it's a book of songs that had me longing for the next track.



Keep it to Yourself

Laura Ainsworth

Three stars

Not so much queer as queer-based, Dallas' Laura Ainsworth provides lush material for any drag queen. Her

jazzy cabaret collection in *Keep it to Yourself* is a little kooky at times, but a unique gem by the local cabaret performer.

The title track opens and immediately transports us to a posh dinner and dancing club with fancy-dressed women and men with cigars.

Ainsworth and band play gorgeously together creating a charming, classic sound that would fit in any '50s film with that club scene. I expected Rosemary Clooney or Bing Crosby to appear somewhere.

Props to producer Brian Piper and mixer Kent Stump for tying up package that gives due respect to Ainsworth's voice while never faltering on the instruments, either. The horns are crisp and each drumbeat or guitar pluck is as obvious as it is subtle.

But Ainsworth is clearly the star. What she does with Johnny Mercer's "Skylark" and Cole Porter's "Love for Sale" is magic. She gets a little derailed with obvious tracks "La Vie En Rose" and "Personality," but it lends to a whimsical

charm rather than detracting from the overall feel.

With Ainsworth's flair for the dramatic and a sexy, sultry voice, if I don't hear any of these tracks in any of the umpteen pageants coming up, I may just have to do one myself.

Not.



Blue Songs

Hercules & Love Affair

Moshi Moshi

One star

The one signed band in this round-up, Hercules & Love Affair, not only dropped the ball with their second release

Blue Songs, they weren't even looking at it. *Songs* is such a disappointment compared to their impressive 2008 self-titled debut. This is a collection of dancey tracks intended for the dollar bin at used CD stores.

After the smash of "Blind," with its muscular beat counterbalanced by Antony Hegarty's delicate voice, my hopes were high for what H&LA's mastermind Andy Butler would deliver here. But instead of going forward, he looked way back to all the wrong inspirations. The first single, "My House," sounds like the bastard baby of LCD Soundsystem and Technotronic as told through the talent of a teenager. With dated samples and rejected house beats, it's simply sad.

Kim Ann Foxman's vocals add nothing with a phoned-in performance of dullness. Even with guest vocals by Mark Pistel of Meat Beat Manifesto and gay singer Kele Okereke of Bloc Party, nothing is saved.

"Step Up" starts with a strong beat, but Okereke's usually sexy voice is lost on ridiculous lyrics and a repeated backing track. As if just pressing the play button, the song only frustrates.

This is repeated throughout the 14 tracks. The expired sound of *Blue Songs* brought nothing back from the glorious house music of a few decades back, but instead it just irks with its abundance of mediocrity. ■

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Ink monster

'NY Ink's' Robear adds a queer twist to the straight tattoo universe

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

When Robear, the manager of the tattoo parlor at the center of the TLC series *NY Ink*, began to be recognized as a reality TV star, the first thing his friends noticed was that he didn't use his last name.

"Who do you think you are, using one name — Cher?" he says in a heavy Noo Yawk accent, repeating the allegation leveled good-naturedly at him. "It wasn't that, I just didn't want to use it!"

But the man born Robert Chinosi ("Robear" was a nickname given to him by a girlfriend 20 years ago, reflecting his furry body) doesn't have much to hide. As one of the employees on the show, which aired its season finale Thursday, Robear stands out for being a contradiction of stereotypes — as he puts it: "A big, burly, masculine but slightly feminine gay guy, heavily tattooed in the straight culture."

Robear came to tattoo culture fairly recently. He held jobs in the corporate world in design and construction until 2007, when he was laid off. A girlfriend who owned a tattoo parlor on Long Island "did me a favor and asked me to run her shop," he says. He got his first tattoo at 17, so it wasn't wholly new to him, though immersing himself in the culture was eye-opening.

"Tattoo art is a small niche in the art community, but they are so famous in this world!" he says incredulously of his co-workers.

Robear ended up on the TV show almost by accident. His employer heard about the casting call and wanted to audition for *NY Ink*; he agreed to come along for moral support only.

"The casting agent loved my looks, and took my hand and threw me in the [audition] room. I had no head shots or applications filled out but they didn't care. It was destined to happen in a weird, funky way."

A few weeks later, TLC showed up at his doorstep. Before long, he found himself filming 14 hours a day.

"I never watched reality TV, even *Miami Ink* or *L.A. Ink*, so I thought, 'How could this possibly be real?' But it's not scripted — you're spending so much time with these people, more even than your own family, every day for three months. I've had a lot of positive responses, though I really am just being who I am. My parents and friends watch it and when I say something, they say, 'That's you.'"

The gay community, he says, has been especially supportive: He's been recognized at Gay Pride events in New York, and was recently

MERCURY RISING | Although Robear claims not to see it, the heavily tattooed gay reality star says many in the gay community say he looks like Freddie Mercury.

asked to do an appearance at a Chelsea gay bar. Oddly, he doesn't understand fully *why* gays are attracted to him ... though he has a few theories.

"I've been more embraced by the gay demographic because people say I look like Freddie Mercury, though I don't see," he says. (They're right — he's a dead ringer.) "Maybe it's because I'm breaking some stereotypes. I'm a secondary character [on the show], but a rarity in this straight, macho world: I'm 6-foot, 245 lbs. and heavily tattooed but I have a swish in my walk. Some of the [straight men on the show] test me emotionally and physically, because straight men still think since you carry a man-bag and talk with a higher voice that that's a type of weakness. But I grew up with two older brothers and a dad right off the boat from Italy, so I was surrounded with a lot of testosterone. I have a high tolerance of pain and I won't take shit from anybody."

Trust us, Robear — you're the last gay we wanna meet in a dark alley — man-bag or not.



'Diva' goes gay with lesbian prom-isode

Lifetime's series *Drop Dead Diva* — a body-switching comedy where a zaffig female lawyer Jane (Brooke Elliott) secretly holds the soul of a hot blonde — already enjoys a strong gay following, what with Margaret Cho in a supporting role. But it's aiming for even deeper appeal with the upcoming episode "Prom." In it, Jane agrees to represent two teenaged lesbians whose high school refuses to let them attend prom as a couple.

The episode (airing Sunday) pulls out all the stops, with a guest cast that includes Clay Aiken, Wanda Sykes and Lance Bass, pictured left, as well as a subplot about modeling that includes some beefcake. In typical *Drop Dead Diva* fashion, though, the plotting is two dimensional and the storyline fairly tamed down (the lesbians may love each other but they never kiss). Nevertheless, it's great to see a show on the "Network for Women and Gay Men" get political about gay issues in a (serious-for-them) way.

— A.W.J.

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Friday 07.22

Green thumbs beware

When a good idea turns into a blood-craving monster plant — well, lives get turned around. WaterTower Theatre premieres the fun and frantic *Little Shop of Horrors*, where Seymour, a lowly florist, tries to turn his fortune around and ends up with a big mess. Alan Menken and Howard Ashman's songs only add to the wacky flair of it all.

DEETS: WTT, 15650 Addison Road, Addison. Through July 31. \$30. WaterTowerTheatre.org.

Saturday 07.23

Who are those masked men?

The Dallas Eagle knows how to throw a bash. As part of Leather Pride Week (who knew?), the club hosts Masquerade: A Night of Men, Leather, Fantasy and Intrigue. OK, you got us — we're intrigued. The leather and fetish ball assures no Cinderellas on hand. Gear and masks are encouraged. Just don't be *that* guy without one.

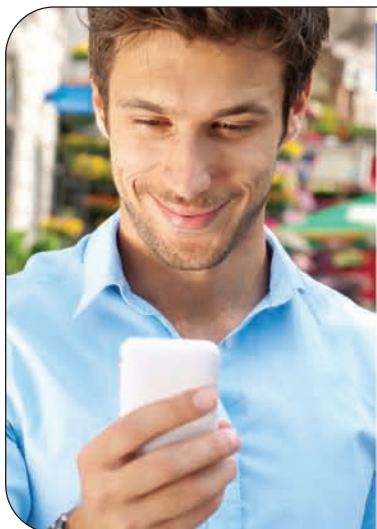
DEETS: Dallas Eagle, 5740 Maple Ave. 10 p.m. DallasEagle.com

Thursday 07.28

Is she your teenage dream?

Katy Perry is either brilliant or ballsy. Her radio hits will carry her show into party mode, but having the dynamic Robyn as an opener could put Perry into a corner. She'll likely come out swinging. The audience definitely wins this night.

DEETS: Verizon Theatre, 1001 Performance Place, Grand Prairie. 7:30 p.m. \$45. Ticketmaster.com



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FRIDAY 07.22

COMMUNITY

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

Business Network Collin County luncheon. Fox Sports Grille, 5741 Legacy Drive, Plano. 11:30 a.m. \$20. BusinessNetworkCC.org.

Youth First Texas groups for ages 14 to 22. 3918 Harry Hines Blvd. Fridays–Saturdays and Tuesdays–Wednesdays at 6 p.m., Thursdays at 4 p.m. YouthFirstTexas.org.

THEATER

Satyricon. Stone Cottage Theater, 15650 Addison Road, Addison. Through Aug. 13. 8 p.m. \$18–\$22. MBSProductions.net.

The Wiz. In collaboration with Dallas Black Dance Theatre, the Dallas Theater Center presents this urban retelling of The Wizard of Oz. Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through Aug. 7. \$10–\$80. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

FILM

The Rocky Horror Picture Show presented by Amber Does Dallas. The late night movie screens with prop packs available to partake in traditional interactive fun. Lakewood Theater, 1825 Abrams Parkway. 11 p.m. \$11. LakewoodTheater.com

SATURDAY 07.23

COMMUNITY

Dallas FrontRunners fun run. Runners and walkers at all levels welcome. Meet on the patio of the recreation house at Sunset Bay at White Rock Lake Park. 8 a.m. FrontRunnersDallas.org.

DFW Prime Timers Prime Brunch and planetarium visit. The group meets for brunch at The Mecca, 10422 Harry Hines Blvd. at 11 a.m. Following brunch, the group will DART to the Planetarium at Fair Park. The group convenes later for bingo at 7 p.m. Call 972-504-8866 for info.

Fuse: Core Group for men 18–29. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. 2 p.m. DFWFuse.com.

ART

Synclines features new works by Cabe Booth, Kevin Obregon and out artist Robb Conover. Ro2 Art, 110 N. Akard St. (in the Kirby Building.) July 23–Aug. 13. Opening reception at 7 p.m. Ro2Art.com/Synclines

MUSIC

GirlShow 2011. ArtLoveMagic's annual show dedicated to women features visual artists, poets, live music acts. Life in Deep Ellum, 2803 Taylor St. 8 p.m. \$15. DeepEllumFoundation.org.

SUNDAY 07.24

COMMUNITY

Mr. and Miss Big D Continental. Proceeds of the event benefit Resource Center Dallas. The Brick, 2525 Wycliff Ave. 8 p.m. BigDContinental.com.



MASTER & SERVANT | The salacious Greek comedy 'Satyricon' plays at Stone Cottage Theatre in Addison.

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

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

Resounding Harmony holds weekly rehearsals at Oak Lawn UMC, 3014 Oak Lawn Ave. 7 p.m. Resoundingharmony.org.

30/40Something social group meets weekly. Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 10 a.m. CathedralOfHope.com.

CONCERT

Sade, John Legend. American Airlines Center, 2500 Victory Ave. 8 p.m. \$65–\$170. Ticketmaster.com.

MONDAY 07.25

COMMUNITY

Log Cabin Republicans. Mattito's, 3011 Routh St.

this week's solution



6:30 p.m. 214-346-2115.

PFLAG Denton. Trinity Presbyterian Church, 2200 Bell St., Denton. 7 p.m.

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

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

TUESDAY 07.26

COMMUNITY

Youth First Texas Collin County Pizza Fundraiser. Every fourth Tuesday, 10 percent of sales go to the organization for LGBT youth and allies. Dine-in or pick up. Durkins Pizza, 8930 Highway 121, Suite 594, McKinney. YouthFirstTexas.org.

JEWEL Writing Discussion & Exchange meets on the fourth Tuesday. ilume, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. 6:30 p.m. Visit website for the discussion topic and assignment for the month. RCDallas.org.

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

WEDNESDAY 07.27

COMMUNITY

Firedancers Dallas Tribe club night the fourth

Wednesday of each month at the Hidden Door, 5025 Bowser St. 7–10 p.m. Free.

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

BROADCAST

Lambda Weekly. LGBT radio for North Texas. This week's guest is Democratic senate candidate Sean Hubbard. 89.3 KNON-FM at 7 a.m. LambdaWeekly.com.

THURSDAY 07.28

COMMUNITY

Breaking Point to Turning Point speaker series hosted by CONTACT. This one-hour lunch presentation features Fort Worth councilman Joel Burns. Communities Foundation of Texas, 5500 Caruth Haven Road. 11:30 a.m. \$35. ContactCrisisLine.org.

Hugs and Love happy hour event benefits Kidscapes Foundation for children living with HIV/AIDS. Kenichi Dallas, 2400 Victory Park Lane. 6 p.m. KidscapesFoundation.org.

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

CONCERT

Katy Perry, Robyn, DJ Skeet Skeet. 1001 Performance Place, Grand Prairie. 7:30 p.m. \$45. Ticketmaster.com.

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CELEBRITY BIRTHDAY

By Jack Fertig



Kevin Spacey turns 52 on Tuesday. The two-time Oscar winner battled gay rumors by blatantly not talking about his personal life. Apparently he had enough when he told both *Playboy* and *Gotham* magazines that he is not gay. Currently starring in *Horrible Bosses*, his latest cause is fighting for freedom for the people of Belarus with fellow celebs Mick Jagger and Jude Law.

LEO Jul 23-Aug 22

What's most important to you? Being fabulous only works when it serves a deeper purpose. That's what you need to get clearer on. When it's all over, what do you want to be remembered for?

VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

Self-criticism promotes self-improvement. Taking to heart every negative piece of crap around you is another thing. Filtering is your forte. Consider the intent behind remarks aimed at you.

LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Let friends distract you from your worries, but let a few help you sort out the real problems from the pointless head trips. Helping others worse off also helps you keep perspective.

SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

As your artistic vision turns to deeper directions, friends lead you to new possibilities. Let go of logic. Inspirations for your career also defy logic, but think ahead before acting on them.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 20

To know where you're going you need to know clearly where you've been. Deep affection and new understandings are great, but don't lose perspective.

CAPRICORN Dec 21-Jan 19

Nothing is quite right. Some mad, flashy display like a drag show or surrealist art exhibit should put you in the state of acceptance to make more intuitive connections.

AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Sometimes you can't even connect with your most beloved, adoring partner on what's sexy. Relax and hold on to your self-confidence. It will pass.

PISCES Feb 19-Mar 19

When you lose track of yourself, trust your partner to tell you. Throw yourself into your work. The tasks you take greatest pride in will get you back on track.

ARIES Mar 20-Apr 19

Pay attention to details. Don't obsess. When you find yourself losing perspective, stop and breathe. Take your work seriously, but not morbidly so. A little fun and relaxation is necessary.

TAURUS Apr 20-May 20

Change a few things around the house. If you don't live alone, your frenetic aesthetics could be disrupting. Talk with your roommates or family members. They help you develop a plan.

GEMINI May 21-Jun 20

Family chats get very dramatic. Is your sibling helpful or a provocateur? You do need to talk, but be more careful about what you actually say. Also, be very careful to listen.

CANCER Jun 21-Jul 22

Remember what's important. Advance ideas to provoke discussion to learn from others. Facts and figures aren't everything, but when using them, make sure they're accurate.

THIS WEEK

Mercury and Neptune are in opposition, creating a struggle between rationality and irrational, artistic passions. Religion and atheism are articles of faith that cannot be explained or proven. Artistic appreciation is subjective. You can explain and describe how you feel about all those things especially well now, but there's no winning any arguments there.

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

Kyle's Bed & Breakfast by Greg Fox

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DAVE, COULD I GET A LIFT TO WORK WITH YOU? YOUR BOYFRIEND'S STILL WORKING ON MY CAR.

NO PROB, MORGAN.

YOU GO TO WORK... LOOKING LIKE DIS?

IS THIS LIPSTICK TOO SEVERE?

NOT JUST DE LIPSTICK. IN JAMAICA, A MAN GOING OUT INTO PUBLIC DRESSED LIKE A WOMAN COULD BE BEATEN OR KILLED.

YES, WELL... WE'RE NOT IN JAMAICA, KRISTIAN, AND I'M NOT DRESSED AS A WOMAN, PER SE.

A TRANSGENDER TRANSCENDER?

HAHA... I LIKE THAT, DAVE!

YOU WOULD NOT BE MAKING JOKES ABOUT DIS HAD YOU EVER BEEN CHASED TRU DE STREETS OF KINGSTON BY A BLOODTHIRSTY, HOMOPHOBIC MOB.

WHOA. LIGHTEN UP, DUDE.

I'D LIKE TO THINK I... TRANSCEND GENDER.

KRISTIAN... I REALIZE THAT'S NO JOKING MATTER. I'M WELL AWARE OF WHAT'S GOING ON IN JAMAICA.

WELL, I'M NOT. WHAT'S GOING ON IN JAMAICA?

I THOUGHT IT'S A BEAUTIFUL, TROPICAL ISLAND PARADISE THERE...

YAH, MON... UNLESS YOU ARE GAY. DEN YOU FIND OUT HOW FRIENDLY DEY ARE IN DE "TROPICAL ISLAND PARADISE".

HE LEFT? WITHOUT EVEN TOUCHING HIS GINGER-BREAD PANCAKES?

THAT MAN'S HOLDING IN A LOT OF PAIN, KYLE.

YOU CALL THAT "HOLDING IT IN"?

... WITH LOTS OF FRIENDLY PEOPLE LISTENING TO REGGAE MUSIC.

EXCUSE ME. I NEED TO GO TO WORK NOW.

LIM... I'LL TAKE THOSE PANCAKES, KYLE...

Website - www.kylecomics.com E-Mail - KylesBnB@aol.com

bitter girl

my fancy's feast

HERE'S TO YA. ROSE... IS SOMETHING BOTHERING YOU?

I CAN'T LET YOU KEEP PAYING FOR DINNERS OUT THIS MONTH, JESS!!!

HEY, YOUR HOURS GOT CUT WAY BACK. THINGS WILL PICK UP IN THE FALL. MEANTIME... LET ME TREAT!

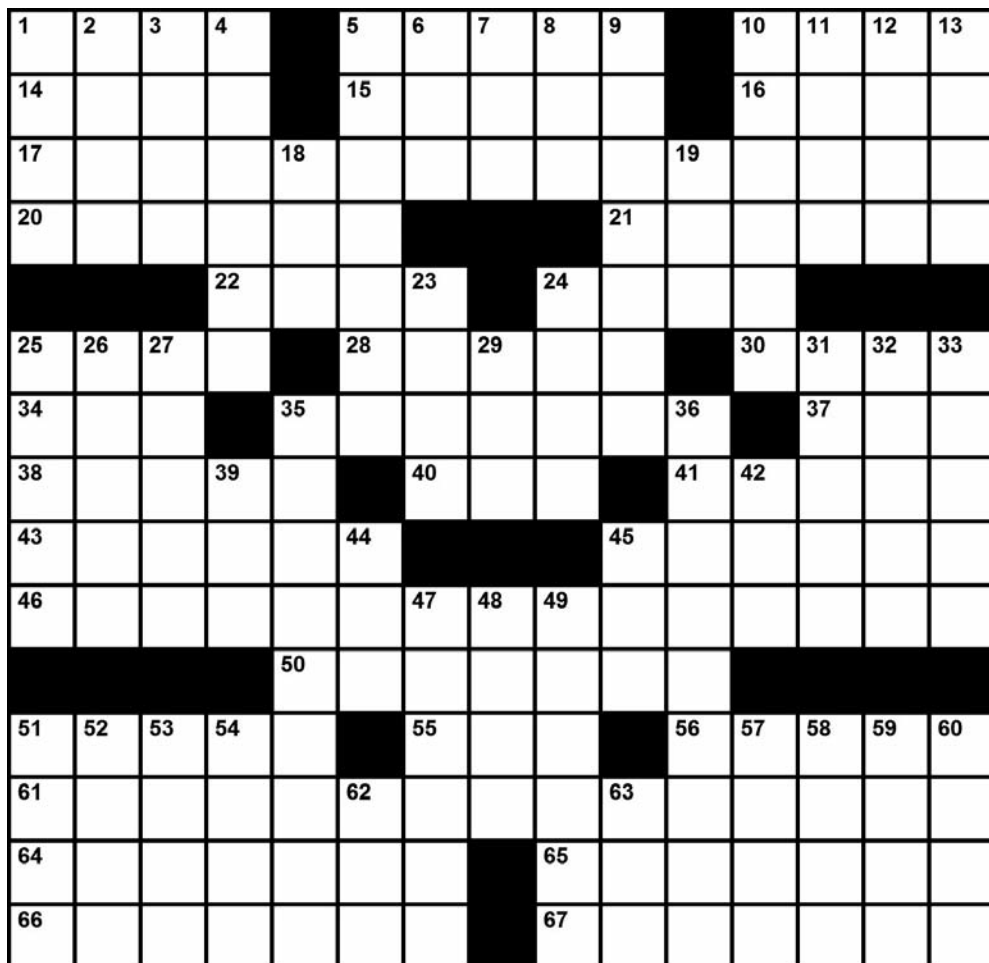
YOU ALWAYS TAKE ME TO MY FAVORITE PLACE. IT'S TOO MUCH!

IT'S REALLY NOT.

BUT I GOT THE WHOLE BUCKET THIS TIME.

YOU'RE WORTH IT, BABY.

email: bittergirl@qsyndicate.com www.joanhilty.net JOAN HILTY ©2011



Good and Irritating

Solution on page 37

Across

- 1 Not nuts
- 5 Safari master
- 10 Emulates Eminem
- 14 Word on a gift tag
- 15 Put into law
- 16 Slumlord's declaration?
- 17 With 28-Across, allegedly good individuals
- 20 Like Hans Christian Andersen
- 21 Top of the world
- 22 Screw royally
- 24 Title used by Uncle Remus
- 25 Bedroom slipper
- 28 See 17-Across
- 30 Help with the heist
- 34 WWII command
- 35 Keyboard instrument
- 37 Mate in Montreal
- 38 Gay Men's Friendships author
- 40 Above-ground trains
- 41 Thief's customer
- 43 Lovers hit them
- 45 In greater need of Viagra, maybe
- 46 What 17- / 28-Across probably have
- 50 Not like a breeder
- 51 Gold measure

55 Ill. neighbor

- 56 Celery serving
- 61 Source of the observation in this puzzle
- 64 Proves false
- 65 Kenya's capital
- 66 Turn tail
- 67 Where tops like to put it?

Down

- 1 Force in Milk, for short
- 2 Lot measurement
- 3 Time for cowboys to shoot off
- 4 Gore Vidal novel
- 5 Queen's abode
- 6 Opposite of ESE
- 7 Pleased sound
- 8 USMC barracks boss
- 9 Wanting water
- 10 Kahló's husband
- 11 Baldwin of Talk Radio
- 12 Elizabeth of Transamerica
- 13 Margaret Cho's Can't ___ Dancing
- 18 Tigers of the NCAA
- 19 One of the decks
- 23 Aida backdrop
- 24 Pastor, I Am Gay author Howard
- 25 Head-oriented group
- 26 WNBA Starzz fan, often
- 27 Grumpier Old Men star Sophia
- 29 Beauty and the Beast film frame
- 31 African tongue
- 32 Mike holder
- 33 Stadium sections
- 35 Athens, in Socrates day
- 36 Previously mentioned
- 39 To God, to Caesar
- 42 Little amphibian
- 44 Pose for pix
- 45 "Please respond" part, in Vivien's tongue
- 47 Most like Mr. Right Now
- 48 Sand inside a shoe, e.g.
- 49 Hindu deity
- 51 Smith of Dawson's Creek
- 52 Toward shelter
- 53 Diplomacy breakdown
- 54 Côte d' ___
- 57 Model Banks
- 58 What little things mean, in a Cher song
- 59 Place for a stud
- 60 Charlie's Angels role
- 62 Gravel-voiced actor Arthur
- 63 Dance noisily



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Brenda and Ronnie at Drama Room.



Lisa and Christian at Station 4.



Josh and Ron at Pekers.



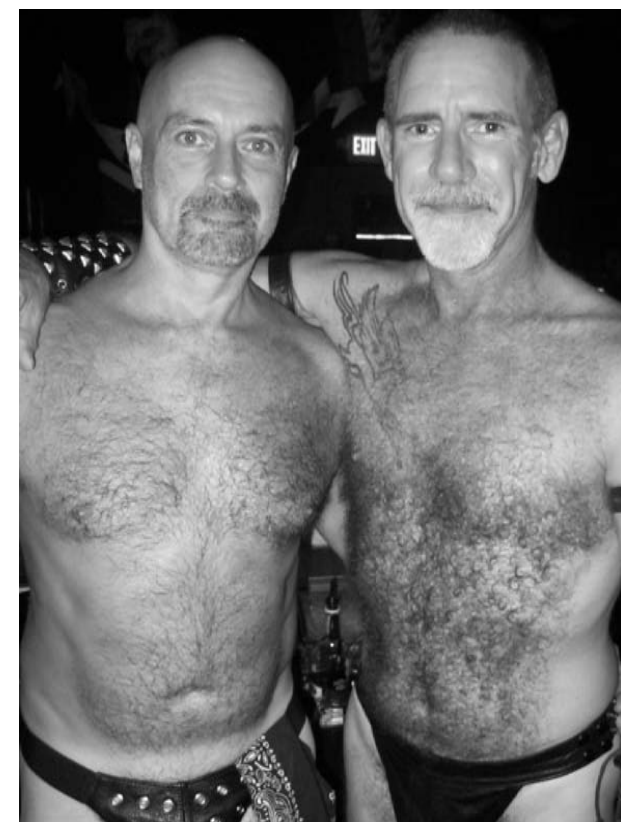
Josh, Trent, Nolan, Jake, Isaac, Joe and Jennifer at Alexandre's.

Find your sweltering spot at any of these places. Just don't drip sweat into our drinks. Yuk! ... Check out **Sonya Jevette** performing as part of **GirlShow 2011** hosted by the collective **ArtLoveMagic**. The show includes live music, art, poetry and more and happens on Saturday at **Life in Deep Ellum** Cool off at the **Sunday Swim & Spin** with **DJs Sober** and **Tyrone Smiley** doling out the music on the **16th Floor Wet Deck** of the **W Dallas**. The event benefits the **MDA** The **Dallas Diesel softball team** invites everyone to their fundraiser at **Ghengis Grill**. Proceeds help send the team to the softball **World Series** in **Chicago** Our team is doing the same thing on Saturday. Head to the **Round-Up Saloon** parking lot for the **Dallas Voice Drillers** car wash as they raise funds to head to Chi-town **Sue Ellen's Vixen Lounge** will light up with **The Bright** onstage Friday night. **Mi Vida Loca** performs Saturday night and **Anton Shaw and Trouble** play Sunday **DJ Mike Evens** spins Saturday at **Klub Wet** after piano men **Paul Allen** and **Gary Poe** perform in the early evening **Woody's** and **Jack's Back Patio** brings **Gary Floyd** in to play Friday night. Then it's the **Roast of Shegotta Mustache** on Saturday. Somehow we foresee a legendary night of hilarity. **Kathy and Bella** perform on Sunday And **Dish** wants you **Tardy** at the return of their Friday nightlife event. ■

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



Lindsey and Melissa at Sue Ellen's.



Joe and Major at Dallas Eagle.

tran-si-tion

- a movement, development or evolution from one form, stage or style to another



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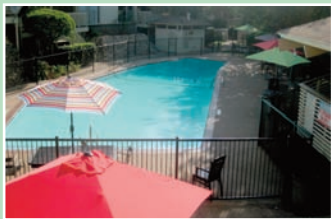
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