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■ SCREEN, Page 30



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Established 1984 | Volume 28 | Issue 17

FREE | Friday, September 9, 2011

Patti AT 25

Rodd Gray's drag alter ego, Patti Le Plae Safe, has helped raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for AIDS and other causes

Read the complete story on Page 12



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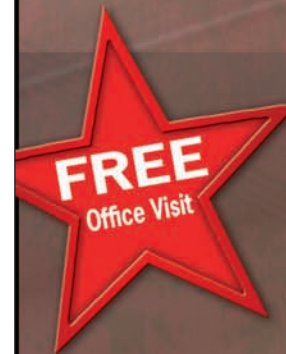
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headlines

- TEXAS NEWS
 - 4 Professor sues TC College
 - 4 Two events set to benefit Legacy
- HEALTH
 - 10 Uptown Psychotherapy turns 15
- LIFE+STYLE
 - 22 Patti LuPone sings at the Meyerson
 - 25 Iraq memoir of a gay soldier
 - 26 Nice is a tres gay getaway
 - 30 Yen Tan launches *Pit Stop*

■ COVER ART
 Rodd Gray as Patti le Plae Safe
 Design by Michael Stephens

departments

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|-------------|
| 4 | Texas News | 20 | Life+Style |
| 6 | Pet of the Week | 38 | Starvoice |
| 8 | LSR Journal | 40 | Scene |
| 18 | Viewpoints | 42 | Classifieds |

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Teacher accuses TC College of discrimination

Gill says English Department chair at Northeast Campus told her the state and the school 'do not like homosexuals'

TAMMYE NASH | Senior Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

HURST — Jacqueline "Jackie" Gill filed suit Wednesday, Sept. 7, against a professor and a dean at Northeast Campus of Tarrant County College in Hurst, claiming that she was denied the opportunity to apply for a permanent, full-time teaching position there because of the English Department chair's bias against what he perceived her sexual orientation to be.

Tarrant County College adopted a nondiscrimination policy prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation on March 9 of this year.

Frank Griffis, director of public relations and marketing for Tarrant County College, said it "would not be appropriate" for school officials to comment on pending litigation. He also said school officials had not yet been served with papers and therefore had not read the complaint.

Gill said she had worked as a full-time temporary English professor for about a year at the Northeast Campus. But when the position was to be made permanent, English Department Chair Eric Devlin refused to allow her to apply for the permanent position.



Jacqueline "Jackie" Gill

Gill said when she complained about Devlin to Northeast Campus Humanities Division Dean Antonio R. Howell, he initially seemed to side with her, but after speaking to Devlin, Howell refused to communicate further with her. Gill said although she is a lesbian and has never tried to hide that fact, she had never talked about her orientation with Devlin or anyone else at the school.

Both Devlin and Howell are named as co-defendants in the lawsuit.

Gill is represented in the lawsuit by Lambda Legal South Central Region staff attorney Ken Upton, joined by pro bono counsel Benjamin D. Williams from the law firm of Gibson, Dunn and Crutcher.

Gill and Upton held a press conference Wednesday to announce that the lawsuit had been filed earlier that morning in U.S. district court in Fort Worth. The press conference was held at a Hurst hotel located just a few blocks from the Tarrant County College campus where Gill had taught.

According to the complaint filed Wednesday,

and statements Gill made during the press conference, Gill was first hired on a full time, temporary basis as an English professor on Aug. 21, 2009. A little more than a month later, at the end of October, a female "dual-enrollment" student — a high school student who was also taking college classes — in Gill's distance learning class cheated by stealing an exam and skipped some classes.

The student's high school counselor told Gill that the student has a history of disruptive behavior, and when the student dropped the class, Gill was told the situation was closed.

On Nov. 9, however, Devlin called Gill into his office and told her the student had accused Gill of "flirting" with female students. Gill denied the accusations, noting that there was always another teacher in the class at the same time.

That's when Devlin responded with "a lengthy diatribe about homosexuals and how the Texas public views them," according to the complaint. Gill said Devlin went on to say that Texas is a conservative state and TCC is a conservative school, and that "Texas and Tarrant County College do not like homosexuals."

Gill continued to teach at TCC, receiving high praise and compliments from students and staff alike, including from Devlin. Then in May 2010, she and other full-time temporary professors were told by Howell that all seven temporary full-time positions were being made permanent, and that they were being re-designated as adjunct

■ GILL, Page 9

Fundraiser moved from Republican's HP home

A fundraiser for British rugby star Ben Cohen's anti-bullying foundation has been moved from the home of a Republican Texas lawmaker, after an Instant Tea post about the event stirred controversy last week.

Jeff Hickey, a gay Dallas resident who's organizing the Sept. 16 fundraiser for Cohen's StandUp Foundation, said he chose to move the event from the Highland Park home owned by State Rep. Jim Pitts, R-Waxahachie.



Rep. Jim Pitts

Cohen's foundation is focused on combating anti-gay bullying, and two days after the fundraiser Cohen will be a special VIP guest at Dallas' gay Pride parade. Rep. Pitts, meanwhile, has an anti-gay voting record and supported an effort to ban LGBT resource centers from college campuses in Texas earlier this year.

"It created a firestorm politically," Hickey said of the Instant Tea post, written by Daniel Williams. "Within one day, it was diverting all the attention and resources."

"Within the course of just a couple hours, it made its way to London and Austin and all over the place," Hickey added. "The entire message was lost, and that was extremely disappointing to a lot of people."

Hickey said the post prompted Cohen's representatives in London to contact him, and at one point the rugby star's entire four-day visit to Dallas was in jeopardy.

"Ben's got a very sensitive brand and a very popular international brand, and they're not interested in that brand being messed up in Texas politics," Hickey said.

Hickey said it was an "unfortunate situation" and he understands both sides of the issue, including Instant Tea's desire to report on the issue. He also said he was "very honored" that Pitts offered to host the event and noted that the state representative voted in favor of two anti-bullying measures backed by Equality Texas in this year's session.

Asked how Pitts came to host the fundraiser in the first place, Hickey said, "I was approached by some people that said we could possibly do it at his house." But Hickey declined to say who those people were or elaborate. Pitts hasn't returned a phone call seeking comment.

Hickey said the fundraiser will now be held at a private residence in Oak Cliff. Anyone interested in attending can email info@dallasstandsup.com.

— John Wright



HEAVENLY DEMONS | DFW Sisters Kerrianna Kross, left, and MaeLyn Hanzment have a heavenly plan to cheat their way to victory against Dallas Diablos Todd Hopkins, center, David Whitehead and Molly Whitman.

Events to benefit Legacy Counseling

Angels battle devils in kickball game; Be An Angel brings Christmas in September

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Two fundraising events this week benefit Legacy Counseling Center: The DFW Sisters have challenged the Dallas Diablos rugby team to a Sunday game of kickball. Then on Tuesday, Be An Angel takes place in Deep Ellum.

What do the rough-and-tumble Diablos and the ever-so-spiritual Sisters have in common? The Diablos, who play one of the roughest team sports, compete in the not-gay Texas Rugby Union and participate in the International Gay Rugby Association. Part of their mission is to forge friendships and celebrate differences.

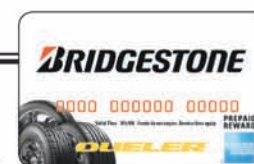
And nothing in Dallas could be more different

■ LEGACY, Page 9

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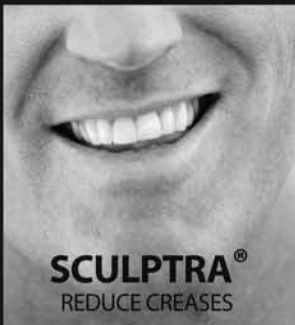
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localbriefs

Miller to speak at GLFD event

Former Dallas Mayor Laura Miller will speak at the Gay and Lesbian Fund for Dallas membership kickoff event at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 13, in the Fifth Floor Owners' Lounge at The House at Victory Park, 2200 Victory Park Ave.

GLFD raises money to support local organizations outside the LGBT community to raise the visibility of and awareness of philanthropy in the LGBT community. Among previous GLFD beneficiaries are The Women's Museum, Parkland Hospital, the Latino Cultural Center, the Dallas Symphony and Southern Methodist University.

Until now, money was raised through donations and events. Now, GLFD is soliciting memberships. A basic annual membership fee is \$50. For \$200, the "Advocate" level also includes two invitations to an annual member appreciation event. The \$500 "Philanthropic Partner" level also includes optional website recognition.

Anyone who would like to attend should email Keith Nix at knix@keithnix.com.

UUCOC offers grief workshop

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Oak Cliff, 3839 West Kiest Blvd., will begin a grief workshop series and a speakers forum next week. The workshop series is for those coping with loss, whether from the death of a loved one, the end of a relationship or termination from a job.

Hosted by the Rev. Mark Walz, the workshops will be lead by the Rev. Xolani Kecalala, chaplain and affiliated minister of UUCOC.

Interested parties should call 214-337-2429 to reserve a space. The workshops take place Sept. 15 and Oct. 13.

The Second Wednesday Speaker's Forum kicks off on Sept. 14 with Garrett Mize, Texas Freedom Network's youth advocacy coordinator.

Mize's efforts focus on engaging young people to become leaders in advocating for evidence-based, comprehensive sex education.

Light refreshments and discussion begin at 6:30 p.m. Mize's presentation begins at 7 p.m. followed by a service from 8 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. focusing on the evening's topic.

Austin Pride to help wildfire victims

Austin Pride events scheduled for Saturday will continue as planned, despite wildfires that have ravaged surrounding counties this week. But in response to the fire, Pride organizers said they are organizing a clothing and non-perishable food drive with GoingUpDay.org to help those displaced by the fires, which have destroyed more than 1,300 homes, many in Bastrop County, just east of Austin.

Austin Pride takes place Saturday, Sept. 10 in downtown Austin at Riverside Drive and South 1st Street at 8 a.m. For more information, visit AustinPride.org.

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New friends and a new commitment

Ana-Maria Baker started out last year as a LSRFA cyclist because she saw it as another way to get fit. Then she made friends with riders who were HIV-positive, and her view of the ride changed

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

The Lone Star Ride Fighting AIDS may have been born in the Dallas-Fort Worth LGBT community. But as second-year cyclist Ana-Maria Baker well knows, the HIV/AIDS epidemic affects everyone — and you don't have to be gay to care.

Baker, a revenue management professional for Hilton Hotels, came to participate in LSRFA the same way that so many other people do: through the suggestion of a friend who happened to have been affiliated with the ride.

"He [the friend] knew that I was into fitness," Baker says. "And I thought it would be a good challenge for me, so I signed up."

Although Baker was a runner and a regular at her local gym, she was totally new to cycling. But once in the saddle, she became happily addicted to the two-wheeled experience.

"It's awesome!" she raves. "With working out, you can get bored because your body gets used to it. But every time [I go cycling], it's something new."

The fact that she was doing something she adored in service of a good cause made it that

much easier for her to keep up with her new-found hobby. But it was the relationships she established along the way that made her want to commit to LSRFA long term.

"I made a particularly good set of friends last year," recalls Baker. "On the morning before the ride, I noticed they all had the same jerseys on. And I said, 'Hey, how come I didn't get the message about the matching jerseys?'"

"One of them made a joke and said, 'Honey, you don't want to wear this jersey,'" she continues. "[Then I found out] that the jersey stood for the Positive Pedaler team — my [new] friends were all HIV-positive."

In the blink of an eye, what for Baker had just been a fitness event suddenly became much more personal.

"These were people I had gotten to know really well," she says. "[But] I had [had] no idea that they were impacted by the disease. It stopped me in my tracks and made me realize what I was riding for."

The event has now become a family affair. This year, Baker's husband, a paramedic, will be serving on the LSRFA medical team.

"He's gotten to know some of the friends I made last year, so he really wants to be part of it, too," Baker says. "He wants to help out because he thinks the LSRFA is such a neat thing."

As straight supporters of the ride, the Bakers know they are in the minority. But this fact doesn't faze either one of them.

"Nobody makes you feel any different because [ultimately] you aren't," says the sophomore cyclist.

Her participation in LSRFA has also given Baker insights that have deepened her under-



Ana-Maria Baker

standing of the friends and community on whose behalf she — and now her husband — volunteer.

"I feel that the gay community is a lot more accepting than the straight community," Baker remarks. "And for them to be so accepting of me —

well, it just makes me sad for the straight community and how we treat [LGBT people]."

■
Lone Star Ride Fighting AIDS will be held Sept. 24-25. To donate to an individual rider, to a team or to the Ride itself, go online to LoneStarRide.org.

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GILL

From Page 4

faculty until the permanent positions were filled.

Gill said Howell also encouraged her and the other temporary professors to apply for the permanent jobs. Gill applied for all seven but was the only one of the seven temporary professors not hired for the permanent positions. Gill said that she was, in fact, not even allowed to interview for any of the positions, even though her experience and credentials were as good as or better than those who were hired.

Gill said she met with Howell and told him about Devlin's anti-gay comments and refusal to allow her to interview for the permanent positions. She said Howell promised her to discuss the situation with Devlin immediately, but that he never got back in touch with her.

She said she also got no response when she tried to discuss the situation with the vice president and president of Tarrant County College.

Gill continued to teach as an adjunct professor at the campus through December 2010, although, she said, Devlin's attitude toward her became "even more hostile."

LEGACY

From Page 4

than The DFW Sisters, a mission of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. But that group is also dedicated to respecting diversity. And both groups include fundraising for community organizations as part of their core mission.

So what else could the Diablos do but accept the challenge when The Sisters invited them to play a game of kickball for charity?

"What a fun and zany way to raise money for Legacy," said Legacy Executive Director Melissa Grove. "I applaud their ability to create a new and fresh event. I've been doing this a long time and this is the first time I've seen anything like this."

James Maggard, also known as Sister MaeLynn Hanzment, acknowledged a possible physical advantage that favored the Diablos.

"The only way we're going to win is if we cheat," he said. "So we're fully intending to do that."

But there are rules — established kickball rules. And kickball is actually played in Dallas with official referees keeping things honest. If one of those referees is on hand, as Maggard hopes, he may just have his hands full.

That would just add to the fun, Maggard said, fully intending to get around any attempt to keep the game honest.

An attendance fee of \$5 is requested to watch the game. Additional donations will buy wild cards. Bigger donations may help one team or the other.

"Wild cards can add points, score outs, replace the ball or turn a Diablo into a Sister," Maggard said. For a larger donation, a Diablo will switch teams and play for the Sisters in full makeup. Maggard admitted that the makeup would be a rush job.

Dallas Diablo Paul Ryan said the idea for the event came from friends in Seattle where the Seat-

And she said that although she was originally assigned classes for the 2011 spring term, as she was preparing for those classes she discovered she had been removed as the professor. When she inquired about the status of the class, Gill said, she was told that Devlin had specifically instructed that those classes be taken away from her.

Upton said that Devlin and Howell violated the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution by refusing to allow Gill to apply for the permanent teaching position. He said Gill's suit is asking that she be allowed to complete the application process and that she be compensated for the time she has been unemployed.

Gill, who is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Texas at Arlington, said she would love to get a teaching job with TCC, and while she would prefer to work at another campus, she is willing to go back to the Northeast Campus and work again in Devlin's department.

"I worked hard. I earned it," Gill said of the permanent position. "I have nothing to be ashamed of. If it [her working in Devlin's department again] would be awkward for anyone, I think it would be awkward for him [Devlin] because he is the one who was in the wrong." ■

tle Quake rugby team played the Seattle Sisters in a game of kickball and raised several thousand dollars.

He expects to have a good showing from both the men's and women's Diablo teams.

And if The Sisters do cheat, Ryan had a perfect solution: "We'll cheat ourselves," he said.

The game takes place at Glencoe Park between Ellsworth and Martel avenues near Central Expressway and Mockingbird Lane.

A victory party at the Hidden Door follows the game. Victory? Both teams figure they've won if they raise some money for Legacy.

Be An Angel

On Tuesday, Sept. 13, the 17th annual Be An Angel auction returns to Monica's Aca y Alla on Main Street in Deep Ellum. The evening features dinner, a live and silent auction and music by Vince Martinez.

Jazzy baritone Martinez was a regular performer at Ciudad on Oak Lawn Avenue and has since performed around the United States.

Clear Channel Radio Public Affairs Director Anna De Haro hosts the event.

Be An Angel began in 1994 just before Christmas with an auction. Although moved to earlier in the year this time, the evening will still have a holiday theme.

Among the auction items this year are a signed guitar from Rascal Flatts, a dinner party for 10 prepared by celebrity chef Joanne Bondy and a cocktail party for 20 from Hudson Ferus Vodka and Bar10.

Grove said the event is a great way to get some Christmas shopping done early while helping out a good cause at the same time. ■

Kickball at Field No. 1, Glencoe Park, 5300 Martel Ave. Sept. 11 at 2 p.m. \$5.

Be An Angel at Monica's Aca y Alla, 2914 Main St. Sept. 13 at 7 p.m. \$40.



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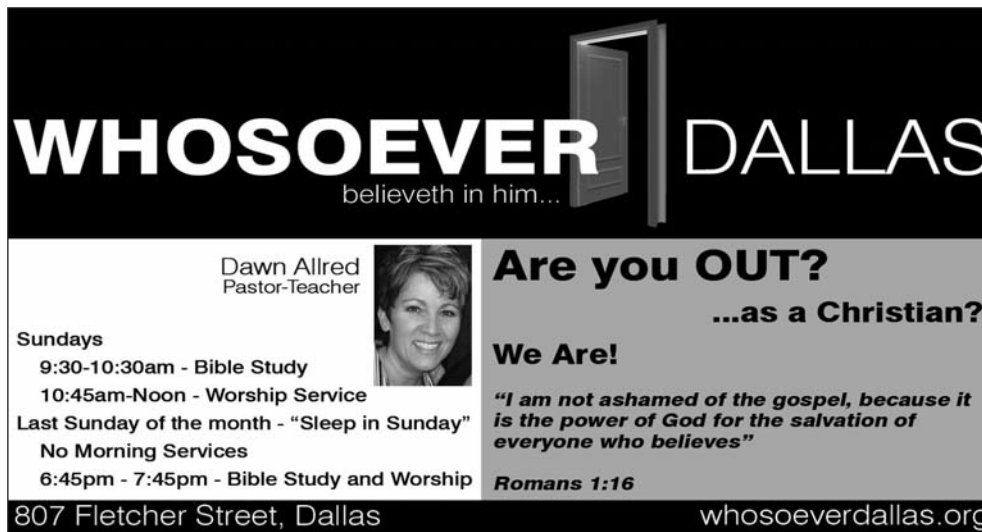
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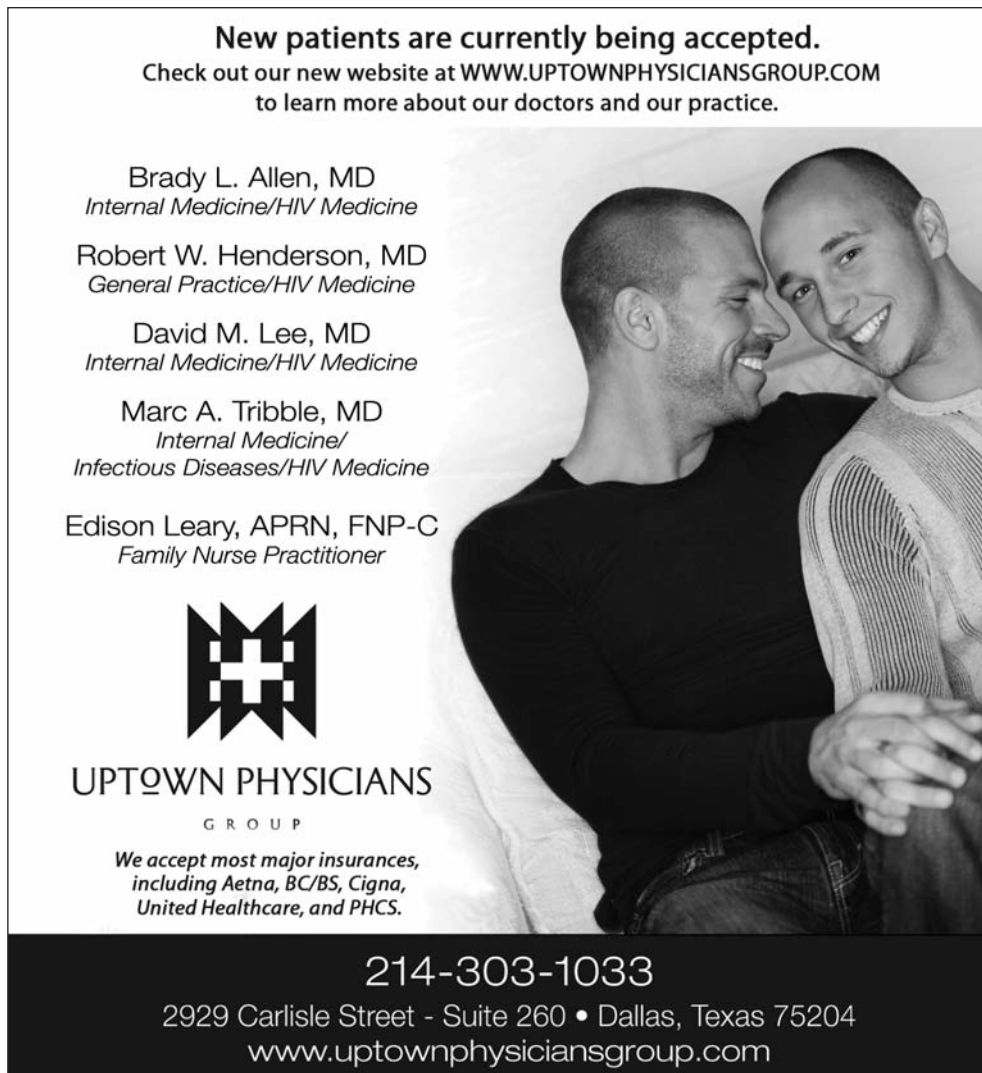
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Uptown Psychotherapy celebrates 15 years



SHRINK | Deborah Beckman, left, Will Handy, center, and Tim Myrick say that over 15 years things have changed for their LGBT clients. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

Therapists say that focus has changed over the years from being primarily on HIV to things like marriage and parenting

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

When Deborah Beckman and Tim Myrick registered the name Uptown Psychotherapy Associates in 1996, fewer than 10 other businesses were using the term "Uptown."

When they renewed their name 10 years later, more than 600 businesses had it as part of their registered name.

But that's not all that's changed during Beckman and Myrick's 15 years in business together.

The two met in 1994 when they were interning at Legacy Counseling. When they opened their private practice, the main issue they continued to confront was AIDS.

Will Handy, who joined Myrick and Beckman a few years after they started their practice, still works at Legacy while maintaining his private practice at Uptown.

"In the old days, it was about helping people deal with the end of their lives," Handy said.

Beckman said that now she works with her HIV-positive clients on issues of aging, supporting stability and incorporating taking medication into

a routine that's as normal as brushing your teeth.

Uptown and Legacy still have a good working relationship.

"If someone calls Uptown and cannot afford private therapy, we refer them to Legacy and know they'll get good care," Handy said. "Legacy will sometimes refer to us if a private setting will help a client more."

Uptown has the only private HIV-positive support group in the area, Handy said, adding that although members have changed, the group has been around since the practice opened.

That gives the group and the therapists the collective wisdom of 15 years' worth of members, Handy said.

Today, Beckman said, only about a third of her clients list HIV as their main concern. She said she hears a lot of relationship issues. And with the current economic crisis, she speaks to many people trying to make decisions about their careers.

Beckman said one of the most common questions she hears is, "What do I want to do next?"

One thing that hasn't changed much, both Beckman and Handy said, is how people talk about their relationships.

Over the past 15 years, same-sex marriage has been legalized in a number of states, but both therapists said gays and lesbians have always taken their own relationships seriously. It's just that now, with marriage equality becoming a more high-

■ **UPTOWN**, Next Page

DCHHS now offering seasonal flu vaccine

FOM STAFF REPORTS
editor@dallasvoice.com

Dallas County Health and Human Services Director Zachary Thompson announced this week that the department has, as of Thursday, Sept. 8, begun offering the seasonal flu vaccine for adults and children. Flu vaccines for children are \$5, and the adult vaccine is \$20. The vaccine is free for pa-

tients covered by Medicare.

Thompson the vaccine is recommended for almost everyone except children younger than 6 months and people who have severe allergies to eggs, according to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. DCHHS will also have the high-dose flu vaccine available for seniors 65 years and older at a cost of \$40. This vaccine is also covered under Medicare.

The flu vaccine will only be offered in the child and adult immunization clinics in the DCHHS building at 2377 N. Stemmons Frwy. The children's immunization clinic, located on the first floor, is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesdays. The adult immunization clinic, also located on the first floor, is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. ■

UPTOWN

From Previous Page

profile issue, other people are taking those relationships more seriously, too.

Myrick, Beckman and Handy said they work with many people whose original religious foundation was punitive.

"Some are in a state of reaction to what amounts to religious persecution," Handy said. "Others haven't reacted to that enough."

Beckman said that the difference over the past 15 years is that now so many churches have adopted an attitude of "Who's gay? Who's straight? Who cares?" She said that when she

started in practice, she could hand out a very short list of churches that would welcome the LGBT community.

"Now people really can find a church that fits," she said. "We can give directions on how to go church shopping."

More and more gays and lesbians are deciding to have children. And Beckman and Handy discuss with their clients what parenting means and why they want to be parents.

Are they doing it "to prove they're super parents, or are they doing it for the kid?" Beckman asked.

Handy added that it is the therapists' job to make sure that couples and individuals want to be parents for "all the right reasons." ■

Handy and Beckman both agreed that the best change over the past 15 years has been among some of their youngest clients:

They have some need to come to therapy but they've been OK about being gay since they were young.

They've had gay role models, had other friends who were out in school and watched gay characters on television.

Handy said it was a big difference from when he was the first and only out licensed therapist in Madison, Wisc.

"It's truly heartening. A joy to experience," he said. And he's learned a valuable lesson from those younger clients: "Don't go looking for trauma when it isn't there," he said. ■

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Patti AT 25



coverstory

Rodd Gray's drag alter ego, Patti Le Plae Safe, has helped raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for AIDS and other causes

TAMMYE NASH | Senior Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

For 25 years now, Rodd Gray has lived a double life: By day, he is mild-mannered hair stylist Hott Rodd the Hair God, but by night he transforms into Patti Le Plae Safe, fundraising super hero.

OK, so Gray isn't really an undercover super hero who slips into phone booths to change into some blue tights and a red cape. And his drag alter ego, Patti, doesn't have an invisible jet or a golden lasso.

But since he moved to Dallas 26 years ago, Gray has made an indelible mark on the city's LGBT community, as both Rodd and Patti.

Destined for Dallas

Gray was born in West Memphis, Ark., and grew up on a farm in tiny Lonoke, Ark. But even as a small child, he knew he was destined to live in Dallas.

"My mama used to tell the story about how she

would make me a peanut butter sandwich, and put it in a bag. Then I would take that bag and get on my tricycle and tell her I was leaving for Dallas," Gray said. "She would stand at the end of the driveway and watch me — she watched me the whole way — and I would pedal down to the end of the lane. Then I'd hide behind the bushes and eat my peanut butter sandwich."

After awhile, he said, little Rodd Gray would pedal his tricycle back down the lane to his house, where he would "make up some excuse, like, 'I don't think the headlights would get me all the way to Dallas in the dark. I'll just have to get up real early in the morning and leave then.'"

He did, obviously, eventually make his way to Dallas. But it was a roundabout trip.

After graduating from Lonoke High in 1976, he studied business at the University of Central Arkansas, before heading to the University of Maine Presque Isle where he studied computer programming.

Gray ended up enlisting in the U.S. Air Force in 1979 where he worked as a computer programmer. When he got out, with the rank of staff sergeant, he stuck with what he knew and took a job as a civilian employee computer programmer at the Army base in Fort Hood, Texas.

But by 1985, Gray could no longer resist the siren call of Big D. And in May of that year he took

■ Continued Next Page

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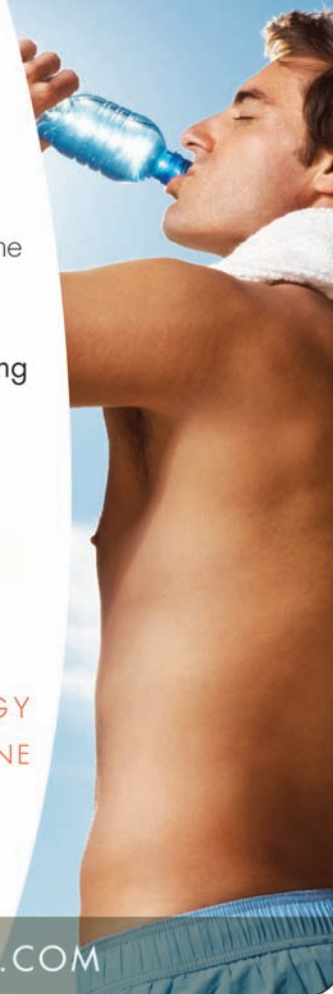
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■ From Previous Page

a job, again as a computer programmer, with an insurance company in Dallas.

Almost immediately after moving to Dallas, Gray started looking for ways to get involved in the LGBT community.

Thrilled to have found a church that "accepted me as I was," Gray said he started attending Cathedral of Hope, located at the time in the building that is now Resource Center Dallas. One day, members of the Dallas Gay Alliance — now the Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance — spoke during a church service, talking about the ways that people could get involved by volunteering in the various programs at the new AIDS Resource Center.

Gray said he quickly decided he wanted to work with the visitation committee, headed up by Dr. Douglas Crowder, where volunteers would visit people with HIV, helping them with chores, bringing them food and sometimes even taking them to doctor's appointments.

Gray said he soon realized that the visitation committee wasn't the job for him.

"One day, I had just finished changing one man's diaper — a diaper that obviously had needed changing for quite a while. When I finished, I went outside and sat down and just started crying. I knew I couldn't do it anymore," he said.

But what could have been a quick end to Gray's time as a volunteer was instead the beginning of a quarter-century — so far — of service.

The birth of Patti

Crowder encouraged Gray to turn his efforts to writing for the AIDS Resource Center's monthly newsletter, suggesting that Gray write about safe sex practices and how gay men could have fun without exposing themselves to the risk of HIV infection.

But first, Gray remembered, he got tricked into doing drag for a benefit.

It was 1986, and DGA was organizing the War on AIDS benefit show to be held at Arlington Hall in Lee Park, and some of his DGA colleagues asked Gray to help "choreograph" the show.

"The first number was 'Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy,' with Phil Johnson and Richard Sink. They asked me to help choreograph it, and I said I wasn't a dancer, but sure, I'd help," Gray recalled. "But what they were really doing was tricking me into being in the number."

Gray said that Bill Nelson, Terry Tebedo, Mike Rogers and others not only talked him into being in the number, but they loaned him the clothes, shoes and makeup he needed, "and I was pretty!"

At first, Gray said, he was reluctant. But then, Tom Davis tipped him with \$20, "and I thought, 'Wowee! They really like me!'"

And that's when Patti Le Plae Safe was born, although the name didn't come along until later, when Gray and others in DGA were trying to come up with a name for his column in the Resource Center newsletter.

They considered Connie Condom and Patti

Prophylactic — but those just didn't have the right ring to them. As they considered a name, they would write it down, then when they decided against it, they would tear it up and throw it on the floor.

At one point, Gray said, he looked down at the floor and saw two pieces of paper that had fallen together: Safe Play.

"That was a new term, a new idea back then, 'safe play,'" he said. "So we thought about it, and came up with Patti Le Plae Safe."

And so Patti Le Plae Safe began writing the regular "Ask Patti" column, giving advice on things like "how to put a condom on a man without him even realizing it" and other ways to "play safe" and keep the AIDS virus at bay.

And for a year, "Patti" remained, in essence, anonymous; no one knew that Patti was actually Rodd Gray. And he liked that just fine.

"I didn't want to do drag; it was painful! It makes your feet hurt!" he declared.

But then the United Court of the Lone Star Empire asked for Patti to appear at a fundraising show so the court could give her an award.

"I told them I didn't do drag, that I didn't have any of the clothes or anything. And they told me not to worry about it, they would help me," Gray said. "And once again, Mike Rogers dragged clothes out of his closet for me to wear."

Within a year, Patti Le Plae Safe was the United Court empress, and was traveling to court events all around Texas — and the country — as a missionary spreading the play safe message and raising money for AIDS causes.

Patti stayed busy at home in Dallas, too. Patti and Dallas Voice gossip columnist Heda Quote — Rex Ackerman, who specialized in camp drag to raise money for charity — used their columns to needle one another, taking jibes back and forth, as a way to raise interest in the various charity events they each participated in.

"Back then, we were doing shows almost every night," Gray said. "Sometimes, we'd do seven shows in one night, keeping on the same clothes and taking our CDs from one bar to the next."

He laughed as he told how he drove a Mazda pickup at the time, and more than once, "We'd finish a show at one bar, then all the drag queens would pile into the back of my truck and we'd head off to the next show at the next bar."

Pageant girl

Although Patti had plenty of experience on stage in charity events as the 1980s came to a close, Gray still had not tried his alter ego's talents on the pageant circuit, where it wasn't enough to be entertaining and raise money.

On the pageant circuit, drag queens had to be much more polished to succeed.

"The pageant girls always looked down on the charity girls," Gray said. "They would tell us, 'Oh no, you just need to go back to your benefit shows and leave the pageants to us.'"

But in 1990, Patti entered the Miss Gay Texas pageant "on a dare." She didn't place well that year, so she went back the next year — and then

■ PATTI, Page 13



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coverstory

PATTI

From Page 13

the next.

With the United Court standing behind him, Gray said, he continued to improve.

"That third year, I placed 13th, much better than the first two years," Gray said. "These pageants, they get in your blood. You want to win. But mainly, I wanted to prove that the charity girls were just as good as the pageant girls. I had to prove that I was equal, and that if I was equal, so was everybody else."

But while Gray was proving himself to the pageant girls, he said he was also learning how to improve Patti.

"After I started entering the Miss Gay Texas pageants, I started becoming a better performer. I grew as a performer," he said.

In 1995, Gray entered the Miss Gay America pageant for the first time — and he was named first runner-up, placing just behind the winner, Ramona Leger.

Just a few months later, however, Leger passed away, and Patti Le Plae Safe became Miss Gay America.

"She only got to attend one pageant" after her win, Gray said of Legere, "and then I finished out the rest of the year as the titleholder. But I knew it would have been really unfair for me to take that crown, throw it up on my head and pretend that I won it out right, that Ramona had never been there. She had wanted to be Miss Gay America so very much."

So as Patti traveled the country that year as Miss Gay America, attending pageants and events from coast to coast, she always took Ramona's crown with her, carrying it on a pillow to represent the man who had won the title but did not live to enjoy it.

"I didn't want people to forget Ramona. I didn't want her to be erased" like a previous titleholder from the 1970s, Shan Covington, who had her title removed because the pageant owner didn't like the way Shan had seemingly disrespected the crown during a parade appearance.

"When I was entering Miss Gay America, I didn't even know Shan Covington. But he came up to me and said he wanted to help. He helped me prepare for the interview. And I didn't even know he had been a Miss Gay America!" Gray said.

"I didn't want people to forget that anymore. I didn't want people to forget Ramona. I know that I wouldn't be where I am today without the help of so many people; none of us would be. We're a big village here, and I want people to remember that."

Home for the Holidays

While Gray may be best known for his onstage performances as Patti, he has always done more than just perform. Back in the late 1980s/early 1990s — "I'm not sure of the date anymore" — he also "adopted" an apartment at AIDS Services of Dallas' Revlon House, helping decorate and furnish it for a resident with HIV.

Because of Gray's bold choice of bright pink walls and accessories, the apartment became well

known around town as "the Bubblegum Apartment."

Through that effort, Gray learned of the many AIDS patients who had relocated to North Texas before becoming ill and who no longer had the means to get back home to be with family.

So Gray and John Gordon, his best friend at the time, established Home for the Holidays, an organization whose sole purpose was to raise money, through events like the Miss Charity America pageant established in 1992, to send those people home.

In those early days, David Taffet — then co-owner of Travel Source travel agency and now a staff writer for Dallas Voice — helped out by arranging the lowest fares possible and getting the tickets, Gray said.

Recently, Gray appeared on Lambda Weekly, the LGBT radio program Taffet also co-hosts on KNON 89.3 FM — to talk about Home for the Holidays' current projects. A woman Gray called "Miss Lucy" called in that day to thank Gray and Home for the Holidays for the time the organization paid for her to go home to see her family.

"Miss Lucy said she had actually lived in the Bubblegum Apartment, and she said that she had never known who to thank for that trip home," Gray said, adding that Miss Lucy was one of the rare beneficiaries of the program's early days who returned to Dallas, began a new regimen of medications and saw her health improve.

"For most of them, that trip was a one-way ticket. They weren't coming back; they were going home to spend their last days with their families. So we never had a lot of people who were able to come to us afterward and say thanks," Gray said. "So it was really nice to hear from Miss Lucy."

For several years, Gray said, Home for the Holidays went through some hard times. The board of directors dwindled to just five members, and fundraisers weren't bringing in as much money as they had before. Often, he said, when a client asked for help, one of the board members would use his personal credit card to buy the plane tickets, and then wait til the coffers were a little more filled to be reimbursed.

"But we never turned anyone away," Gray said.

Then last year, for the first time, Home for the Holidays was chosen as a Black Tie Dinner beneficiary. The \$24,000-plus the organization received allowed the board to plan and stage bigger and better events — like the recent hand-painted underwear auction and an art auction — that brought in many times more the amount of money that previous, smaller events had raised.

The board has also grown, with 10 members. And Gray said that while the organization has to change with the times, "We're not going away."


A new career — and beyond

Just before Patti earned the Miss Gay America crown, Gray said, the insurance company he worked for decided to move its office and relocate its employees to Indianapolis.

"I raised my hand and said, 'Does it snow there?' When they said yes, I said I would just take

Continued Next Page

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2008 AWARDS

■ From Previous Page

my severance package and stay in Dallas. It was enough for me to live on for two years."

That gave him the chance to spend a year traveling as Miss Gay America, and to go to cosmetology school and become a licensed hair stylist.

Today, Hott Rodd the Hair God does all right for himself. He has his own salon, located on Royal Lane at Preston; he has a car; he owns his own home.

And while Patti's schedule has slowed down considerably from the hectic "seven shows a night" times of the early days, she still keeps busy, too. For the last eight years, Patti has co-hosted GayBingo, benefiting Resource Center Dallas, with Jenna Skyy at Station 4. And more recently, she took on emcee duties for the monthly Viva Dallas Burlesque shows at the Lakewood Theater. The shows, while not the first place you might think to find a drag queen, have given Patti the chance to take her message to a new audience, and audiences, Gray said, have responded well.

Gray described himself as an independent person who can take care of himself, and who also wants to try to help take care of others, too. It's a philosophy that grew, he said, from his Orange Power, the name he has for his personal spirituality that grew out of a blend of what he saw as the best teachings from more traditional teachings.

"I just think of it as this warm, orange glow that

surrounds me and protects me, and that makes me want to keep doing the right thing," Gray said. "That's what it's about, really: doing the right thing. Paying it forward."

"I watched that movie, *Pay It Forward*, back when it came out, and it really changed my life," Gray continued. "That's what I had always tried to do anyway, but that movie really made me think about it, really made me recommit myself to that."

Gray said he "stopped counting" years ago, but that he estimates that Patti Le Plae Safe, in all her incarnations and at events around the country, has raised "well over \$1 million" for charity through the years. But he is also quick to add that it's not the amount that's important; what's important is that he tried.

"That's what I tell everybody who asks me: It doesn't matter how much time you give, just give some time. It doesn't matter how much money you raise, as long as you contribute something. There's a spot out there for everybody who wants to do something. You just have to try to do the right thing, try to pay it forward."

Gray said if he has one regret, it's that he has yet to find that special someone to share his life with, and he admitted that maybe Patti was a big reason for that.

"I'm married to Patti, really. And there's not much I can do about that," he laughed. "It's going

■ PATTI, Page 16

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DOUBLE LIFE | By day he's Hott Rodd the Hair God, right, but by night Rodd Gray morphs into Patti Le Plae Safe.

PATTI

From Page 15

to take a really special guy to put up with both me and Patti." After a pause, he added, "He's Keanu Reeves, by the way!"

But despite the disadvantages of leading his double life and the demands of his alter ego, Gray said he has no plans to change.

"I'm not about to give up Patti. I believe Patti saved my life. I wouldn't be here today, healthy and not HIV-positive, without her," he said. "Patti rules the world. I'm just the host." ■

DONATION



PURPLE PARTY PEOPLE | The executive board and associate board of the Purple Party presented Don Maison and Mary Beth O'Connor, center, of AIDS Services of Dallas a check for \$50,000 at Revlon House. The money was raised at the April 28-May 1 event and was donated in memory of Peter Brown, a long-time board member who died in July. Purple Party is one of the largest all-volunteer charity circuit parties in the country and has donated a total of more than \$400,000, board members said. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

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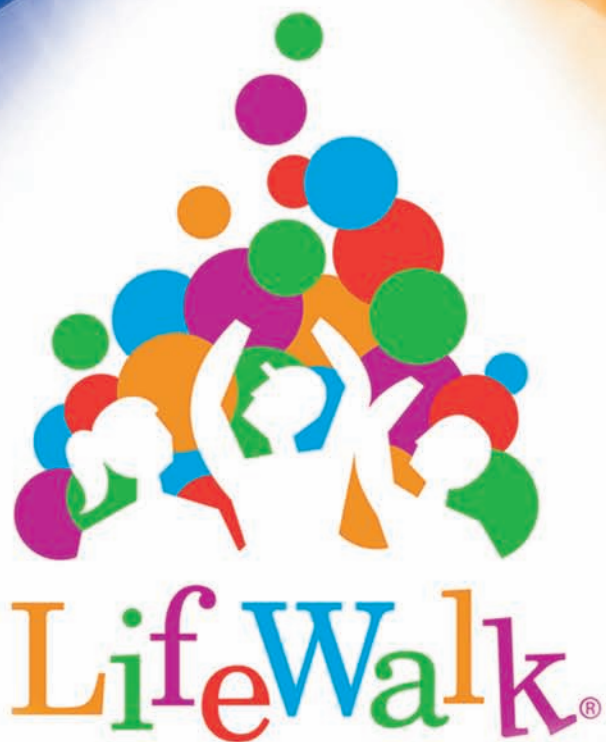
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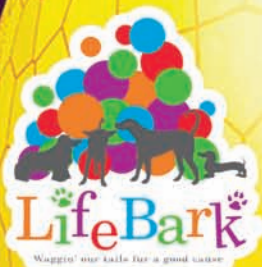
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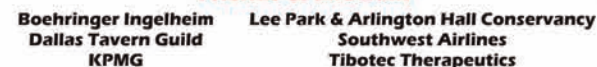
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Terry Thompson Promotions Manager | 116
Jesse Arnold Office Manager | 110

news&opinion

Tammye Nash Senior Editor | 128
Arnold Wayne Jones Life+Style Editor | 129
John Wright Online Editor | 113
Rich Lopez Staff Writer | 118
David Taffet Staff Writer | 125
Draconis von Trapp Intern | 130

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Unequal in life, equal in death

As we remember the victims and heroes of 9/11, we should remember that LGBT people were part of each group

As our country commemorates the 10th anniversary of the tragedy of 9/11, we will be bombarded with endless images of the World Trade Center's Twin Towers ablaze and lots of handheld video of people in terror. From the standpoint of the effect of the attack, it caused the terror it was designed to cause, and moreover, it focused us on frightening images of explosions and disaster.

Great media stuff, but not very good for getting perspective.

Yet, the whole event has become part of the American portrait. It was history and as such it will always be with us.

Aside from the terror, 9/11 did draw the country together. One of the most encouraging things about Americans is how we react when the going gets tough: We pitch in and try to help. We act with a selflessness that is a heartening example of what is best about our country.

And part of that American portrait are the LGBT people who fell victim to the attack, as well as those who stepped up and become heroes that day.

Most of us are now familiar with Father Mychal Judge, chaplain for the New York Fire Department. He rushed into the World Trade Center that morning and he not only helped the victims, he administered last rights for many.

He selflessly did his job, ignoring the peril until debris from the North Tower crashed into the South Tower, killing Father Mychal instantly.

Judge was lauded in the media but only later did anyone mention that he was gay.

Equally familiar is Mark Bingham, who was among the passengers on United Flight 93 that were not content to sit and wait while terrorists turned the jet into a guided missile. Mark was a gay rugby player, and his efforts, along with a small band of passengers, prevented a much greater catastrophe when they rushed the cockpit. Flight 93 crashed in a field in Pennsylvania instead of into Washington, D.C.



Less well known was David Charlebois, the first officer of American Airlines Flight 77. He was killed by the hijackers on their mission to crash the jet into the Pentagon. Even less publicized was the fact that David was a member of the Gay and Lesbian Employees of American Airlines group and helped carry that group's banner in the March on Washington in 2000.

In such an appalling tragedy, there were many victims. Most were never mentioned in the media, but their loss was just as great to their families.

What's worse is that many had partners who had to go through arduous court battles to receive the compensation that was freely given to the families of the straight victims.

Some of the LGBT Americans who died will never be known. They may have been closeted, or maybe their families refused to share details of their personal lives with officials or the media.

Whether they are named or unnamed, they are irrevocably woven into the fabric of our country's history, and we should not forget them.

Like most folks, I have become numb to the horror of that day. I was attending a leather conference in the woods of Michigan and was just having a cup of coffee as I watched the news reports of a plane crash in New York City.

Then along with several friends from New York I watched the second plane slam into the World Trade Center towers, and almost at once, cries went up all around the campgrounds.

I suspect the same kinds of anguished voices were heard around the country from LGBT and straight Americans alike. It was a moment that bonded us into one people.

It's sad that today we seem to be splitting apart as never before.

I know a lot of it is the whole media circus that surrounds the current election cycle, and its candidates making points with anti-gay rhetoric.

Still, it would be worth reminding those shrill voices that on Sept. 11, 2001, we all cried out together in shared pain and anguish.

So next time you hear someone arguing against LGBT rights, ask them why they would be so vindictive to the brave heroes of 9/11, and worse, why they would be so hateful to those innocent LGBT people who died.

This Sept. 11, I will recite the names of those people I know were LGBT. It is a short list so far, but I suspect as the stories of the victims finally come fully to light, it will inevitably grow.

Until then don't forget: David Charlebois, Father Mychal Judge, Mark Bingham, Renee Barrett, Angela V. Lopez, Waleska Martinez, Patricia A. McAneney, Catherine Smith, Eugene Clark, Jeffrey Collman, Michael A. Lepore, Eddie Og-nibene, John Keohane, William "Tony" A. Karnes, Pamela J. Boyce, Luke A. Dudek, Seamus Oneal, Wesley Mercer, James Joe Ferguson, Sheila Hein, Graham Berkeley, Carol Flyzik and Daniel Brandhorst and Ronald Gamboa, and their son David Gamboa-Brandhorst.

Hardy Haberman is a longtime local LGBT activist and a board member of the Woodhull Freedom Alliance. His blog is at <http://dungeondiary.blogspot.com>



Hardy Haberman
Flagging Left

Feedback

Valuing our human infrastructure

For years, politicians have talked about the under-funded public infrastructure like highways, water lines, sewer systems and basic transportation.

There is another infrastructure that is being under-funded in this city and state in particular: our "human infrastructure."

In educational terms, we are regressing.

When I was growing up, my school district supplied the basics for a well-rounded education. I took what I learned and then expanded my knowledge at my local county-funded library, and went on to graduate with honors at Angelo State University.

Today's children receive a poorer quality education because Texas no longer properly funds public schools K-12, and our public libraries are being starved of resources. A university education that cost me \$4 a credit hour has now increased 10 times or more since I went to school.

While libraries are being destroyed by budget cuts, the need for a strong library is greater than ever. The population that our schools serve face greater challenges since so many come from homes where English is not the first language in the home.

Despite this challenge for children and adults, ESL class funding has been slashed. Dallas Independent School District has a 50 percent dropout rate, and GED class funding has been slashed.

The state of Texas has eliminated funding for the online databases for K-12 and DISD has reduced the number of school librarians.

Each of these reductions by other government agencies has increased the demand by citizens of Dallas and other Texas cities to use public libraries; however, the city of Dallas has reduced our library spending by approximately 40 percent over the last three budget years.

We would be lucky were our library merely "decimated," i.e. reduced by a tenth. We now spend less money per capita on libraries than Fort Worth, Austin, Houston or San Antonio. Despite this lack of funding, demand at Dallas Public Libraries has increased.

In the 2006 bond program, the voters approved approximately \$60 million in funding for eight new or replacement libraries; unfortunately, those buildings are now short staffed and short of materials.

Each branch except for Hampton Illinois has only a branch manager for 2 ½ days a week since the branch managers cover two branches. The

branch manager for North Oak Cliff also is responsible for West Dallas. By dividing their time, they barely have time to manage their branch, let alone get to know their neighborhoods.

Many branches no longer have children's librarians even though it is critical to encourage children to love reading if they hope to succeed in life. Texas prisons are filled with men who read at a fourth grade level.

Our city is filled with unemployed men and women who lack the necessary job skills to compete in our global economy. If we do not invest in our children, our future as a community is doomed to failure.

It does not matter how much money we give in tax breaks if our citizens cannot read the English language. Companies may locate here but employ suburbanites who have better funded schools and libraries.

The choice is clear: Either we as a city invest in our library system, our cultural institutions where children and adults learn, or we are known as a city with beautiful monuments and a high unemployment rate.

If you want to change this situation, I would encourage you to contact your City Council member and the mayor of Dallas. The proposed

budget can still be changed. If you would like to help improve the Dallas Public Library System, you can join the Friends of the Dallas Public Library or your local branch Friends Group. If your branch does not have a Friends group, I can help you start a group.

Stan Aten, president, Hampton Illinois/Oak Lawn Library Friends

Republicans won't help economy

Why did the president of Dallas chapter of Log Cabin Republicans give no evidence in his commentary ("Why I will vote Republican in 2012," Dallas Voice, Sept. 2) as to why the GOP will help your pocketbook?

He couldn't. They won't. They never have.

Take stocks, the way many generate retirement, as well as current income:

DJIA up 223 percent during Clinton's eight years, down 25 percent during the George W. Bush eight-year reign of error, and up only 46 percent during his daddy's four-year term.

Jobs? More than 11 percent increase annualized during the Clinton presidency, under 1 percent when George W. Bush was in the White House.

How do I know the above information? I googled it.

Don't be misled by Republicans who talk about being better on pocketbook issues. You only have to check with Google to know the Democrats have consistently done better.

Dave Gershmer, Dallas

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RESULTS FROM LAST WEEK'S POLL:

Should the federal government make deeper cuts in other programs to preserve funding for HIV/AIDS services?

- Yes: 52 percent
 - No: 30 percent
 - Depends: 18 percent
- 125 Votes cast

Do you Peru?

LIFE+STYLE

comedy

Even as fans rallied to help **Coco Peru** get her next film off the ground, the drag goddess still likes her comedy live

RICH LOPEZ | Staff Writer
lopez@dallasvoice.com

Expect a lovefest when **Coco Peru** comes back to Dallas for Pride weekend. With memories of a responsive audience, shopping and beef jerky during her last go-round here nearly two years ago, the drag goddess is hoping for a repeat performance. Sort of. She's back on the road with a new show, but that's not all the legendary queen has going on.

"Well, we've filmed *Girls Will Be Girls 2* already," Peru (aka Clinton Leupp) says. "Right now the writer/director is busily editing. It's just one of those things: You film it and hope for the best."

Peru has garnered a significant amount of film work over the years, usually with notable cameos in films like *Trick*, but occasionally as the star, as with *Girls Will Be Girls*. But she admits live performance is where she's at her best.

"I like to think my show is like watching a theater piece," she says. "I love film acting, but it's exciting on a whole other level. There's not that energy of a live audience and no feedback. So often, comic timing is how the audience is reacting to you. With acting, you mentally feel it out, try it and mostly trust the director. I find sometimes I rehearsed a line so much in my head, it takes me a few times to take direction on it."

For *Girls 2*, Peru discovered just how much her fans appreciated her work. As a micro-mini indie, the film went on the website Kickstarter to raise funds. As word got out that the film was in production and that Peru was in it, the money rolled in.

"The movie was completely funded by fans," she exclaims. "It was just incredible that they would want to pay money! And I must say, most of it came from my fans. I'm just putting that out there."

Along with funds from Kickstarter, the crew itself was almost all-volunteer. People would just



DRAG QUEEN SIPPY CUP | Coco Peru would love to tease the Lone Star State, but says her last visit here was too fun to be mean to queer Texans.

show up, willing to help out. It turned into an actual labor of love.

Along with donated help, the production even received a donated green screen. All the generosity reminded Peru that people are that genuinely kind and that it's all right to ask for things, which usually embarrasses her. She saw this particular filmmaking experience as a good lesson on many levels.

"Let's just hope the movie's funny," she laughs.

Dating back to the "early '90s" — that's as specific as her website will get — Peru gives much credit to her fans along the way for the success of her career. Even if they come up to once again mention her role in the film *Trick*, Peru takes

none of it for granted. Perhaps it's cliché for any type of celebrity to appreciate their fans, but she talks at length about how her fans have kept her driven.

"It's so overwhelming, whether it's a movie or my own shows, that they will take time to contact me to tell me whatever it is they are feeling," she says. "I feel lucky and blessed when they reach out to me and I strive to answer every email. I remember those days that felt so lonely and sad. Growing up gay and feeling rejected doesn't make a happy life. But when you get over 800 birthday messages on Facebook, it's amazing!"

She'll meet a new slew of fans on her current End of Summer Tour, as she'll visit Tampa and Las Vegas for the first time as a performer. Even with her experience onstage, Peru is still daunted

by a new audience, the same way she was before playing Dallas the first time early last year.

"The first time, I was nervous and I didn't know what to expect," she recalls. "I felt that audiences came wanting to have a great time. You go to certain cities and they have a bit of an edge, but in Texas, it was an immediate love fest on both ends."

In her new show, *There Comes a Time*, Peru talks about getting older and reminiscing about her life. Fortunately, Dallas isn't a punch line in her monologue. The city left a good impression on her and she only hopes to make another one of her own.

"Well, I'm happy to be coming back and they took such good care of me last time," she says, "but I don't wanna jinx myself. You never know." ■

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'Gypsy' in her soul

B'way legend and gay icon **Patti LuPone** brings her powerful pipes to Dallas

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

You might not have seen her name above the title on a movie or welcomed her every week into your house via the boob tube, but when it comes to the stage, there are few contemporary performers who rival Patti LuPone.

"I'm not a movie actress — I think I'm a hard sell in the movies," LuPone says matter-of-factly. (She is, however, about to shoot a film in New Orleans, playing J-Lo's mom.) While the Juilliard-trained actress has met her greatest success in musical theater, it's her acting chops that have transformed songs like "Don't Cry for Me Argentina" (from *Evita* — her first Tony Award) and "Rose's Turn" (*Gypsy* — her second Tony). The latter was a career highlight: The most ferocious role for a woman ever written for an American musical. Two years after it closed, she's still happy to talk about it.

"It was great," she beams. "Arthur [Laurents, the director and writer] assembled a spectacular cast — we really were a triumvirate. I don't think you can act alone. You need partners on stage."

That the production took place "was really done as a tribute to Arthur's partner of 50 years, Tom Hatcher," she says. "Tom had just died, and he's the one who told Arthur to do *West Side Story* and *Gypsy*. Arthur agreed to do it basically to keep him alive. He wanted it to be different than the last one and really have an *acted* show."

Although the entire principal cast won Tonys, Laurents did not. "How could the director not win!" LuPone says, voice filling with outrage. You sense it's such emotional readiness that has made her a Broadway icon.

LuPone brings that legendary power to the stage of the Meyerson this week, with what she calls a "piano and voice only" concert (no or-

chestra), titled *Gypsy in My Soul*. "It's a collection of songs including some showtunes," she says.

When an actress so identified with certain composers, especially Stephen Sondheim, performs in concert, she can run the risk of being compelled to perform songs that no longer interest her. That's simply not the case with LuPone.

"Songs never become old hat to me," she says categorically. "Because audiences want to *hear* one, so I *do* one — not even because I have to; I *want* to. If they are really good songs you want to sing them."

LuPone has, in one venue or another, run through almost the entire Sondheim repertoire:

Mama Rose, *Passion, Company*, Mrs. Lovett from *Sweeney Todd* (another Tony nomination — "I actually got rotator cuff problems from carrying around that tuba"). Really, only two have eluded her.

"I wanted to play Desiree [in the revival of *A Little Night Music*, which closed earlier this year on Broadway]. I contacted Trevor [Nunn, the director], who didn't contact me back," she says, with a sting. "Really the last Sondheim role for me is the Witch in *Into the Woods*, which I was originally offered! After it left San Diego they offered it to me; I said I'd like to play Cinderella, so I came in and auditioned for that. Then they said, 'We still want you to play the Witch.' Then negotiations fell apart."

Her resume is littered with shows — some huge hits, some personal triumphs.

"I loved *Women on the Verge*," she says of her last Broadway venture, which closed quickly last year (though not before landing her a sixth Tony nom). "I think there's a lot of creativity [on Broadway] now, but I'm sick and tired of the spectacles. My biggest complaint is the sound level: I'd rather be brought to the stage than

PATTI LUPONE

Meyerson Symphony Center,
2301 Flora St. Sept. 13.
8 p.m. \$19-\$85.
MeyersonSymphonyCenter.com



MAMA'S TALKIN' LOUD | The perpetually frank LuPone says she loves performing the songs her audiences want to hear — and even at 62, still has the energy to belt out the big numbers.

pushed back in my seat."

And she's always looking ahead. "Mandy [Patinkin] and I are coming to Broadway for nine weeks [soon], then we will go out on the road both together and separately. Then there's stuff happening that I can't say because I'm not supposed to," she teases.

You might expect she'd find a pace more suitable for a 62-year-old, but LuPone denies that the demands of eight shows a week wear her out.

"I have Italian peasant energy," he says. "Even at my age, there is this abundance of energy, especially songs that are physically demanding. I am exhilarated by them." ■

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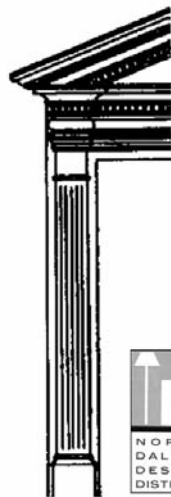
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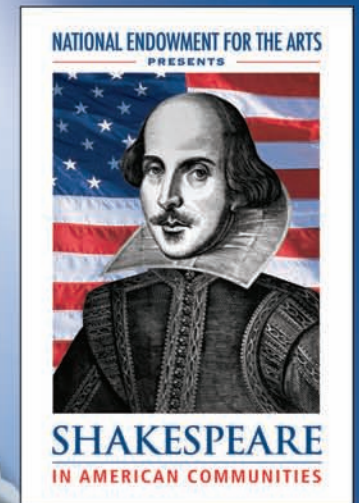
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GDMAF fundraiser brings Sweet Savage back to Dallas

David Hearn doesn't come off like your usual party promoter. He has a little bit of Texas twang mixed with some quiet reserve. You might never believe Hearn is the guy behind the annual Metro Ball and Friday's Gaga-a-Gogo party at the Brick.

"Well, I hosted what had always been known as the Virgo Party and that started 22 years ago," he says. "It got too big for my small Plano house so I moved it to Dallas."

But Hearn isn't just a guy throwing parties — at least not anymore. Now, both annual events are for a reason and that's the Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund, named after his partner, whom he lost to the disease in 1994. Two years later, the fund was created and over time, the fund has helped those with unique needs.

"We step in and help with issues that are a bit different," he explains. "We helped replace one person's tires so he could travel to his doctor. We worked to get one man a refrigerator because he had medicine that needed to be kept cool. Where agencies can't quite help, we can."

But with funding cutbacks and a troubled economy, GDMAF works to keep up through special events. Friday's Gaga-A-Gogo party fulfills that, but also brings back the iconic Dallas drag queen Sweet Savage as Lady Gaga, pictured.

"We're glad she's coming to do this," Hearn says. "I know many of the people will remember her from days before."

Dressing up in costume was a big part of Hearn's old parties and with a nod to that, he encourages those to partake in the Gaga "hat and hair" contest. While Savage goes all out with her



look, guests can get their own bad romance on with a Gaga-esque hat or 'do.

"We tried to make this event a little smaller, but with plenty of fun things to do," he says. "We know it's hard to continue to give, but we just hope to up the level of donations and continue to help relieve some of the stress people inevitably face."

— Rich Lopez

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How 'bout DADT?

Memoir about being gay in the Army resonates with timeliness, vivid prose



They've become familiar sights: Auditoriums filled with uniformed, spine-straight soldiers on their way to deployment, or smiling men and women, arms full of family, on their way home. No matter what auditorium they're in, no matter which

small town or big city, you can bet that the first group is wondering what the second group has seen.

They may never know, though, because much is buried and more is classified. But military secrets aren't the only secrets kept in times of war. In *The Last Deployment*, you'll learn one of them.

Bronson Lemer was "probably the last person anyone expected to join the military," he writes. But as the oldest of six children, he wanted to get

away from North Dakota, and the Army "happened to be at the right place at the right time."

Lemer was still in high school when he joined the National Guard; five years later, on Jan. 20, 2003, his cell phone rang. Though he was months away from getting out of his Guard obligation and was "tired" of service, Lemer learned that he was being deployed. What he calls his "horrible decision" to join the National Guard was turning into something he never thought he'd have to worry about: Lemer was a gay soldier under the "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

In going to Iraq, he knew he had to learn to rely on his fellow soldiers, and vice versa. He tried to relax as he traveled with them to Colorado and, later that spring, to Kosovo, then to Iraq. Lemer went along with the jokes, the girlfriend talk and the adolescent behavior. He participated in anything that banished the boredom of guard duty, cleaning duty, outhouse duty. He emailed a former love and longed for home.

As a few months' tour of duty stretched into a year, Lemer began to notice something: Deployment was taking its toll on everybody. The men and women who left the States were not the

same people who came home from Iraq. And neither was Lemer.

Over the past decade, you've undoubtedly seen lots of TV and read many words about the war in Iraq. But just wait until you get your hands on *The Last Deployment*. Lemer's memoir of being a gay man in the military is half-sassy, half sad with a few heart-pounding moments though no blood and guts. His story moves between idyllic memories of his growing-up and warm feelings for his bunkmates and co-soldiers, while readers

are also placed in the center of the boredom of waiting, the frustration of not knowing and the dismay of hiding in order to be accepted. Lemer's is a wonderfully descriptive, wryly humorous, heart-crushing story, and I couldn't put it down.

With the repeal of DADT effective this month, this is timely and definitely worth a read. If you love a soldier, your country, or both, *The Last Deployment* is a book you'll want to tell everybody about.

— Terri Schlichenmeyer

★★★★★
THE LAST DEPLOYMENT: HOW A GAY, HAMMER-SWINGING TWENTYSOMETHING SURVIVED A YEAR IN IRAQ, by Bronson Lemer. University of Wisconsin Press (2011). \$25. 223 pp.

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A Nice getaway

The tres gay town of Nice along the French Riviera is a chic playground

The French Riviera, or Côte d'Azur, ranks among Europe's most enduring — and alluring — gay playgrounds. While this stretch of rugged Mediterranean coastline at the southeastern tip of France doesn't generate quite as much buzz with LGBT travelers as Sitges, Ibiza or Mykonos, the sunny and sophisticated French Riviera is ideal for a romantic getaway, and the most gay-popular communities — we're covering Nice this month, Cannes next — abound with beautiful beaches, chic shopping, exceptional art museums and atmospheric cafes and open-air markets.

The largest city in the region, with about 350,000 residents and an international airport with direct flights from North America, Nice supports an active gay organization, AGLAE, which sponsors Gay Pride each July and produces a gay guide that's distributed free

at many businesses. The city is also home to several fine museums, including the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art and the Matisse Museum of Nice. This is also a fine town for shopping, with dozens of upscale boutiques set along Rue Pastorelli and Rue du Marechal Joffre, including the famous Galeries Lafayette department store.

For great views of the city and harbor, climb the stairs to Castle Hill and stroll among the botanical gardens and medieval ramparts, soaking up the views of the bustling port neighborhood — you can see for miles up and down the coast. At the base of the hill, bustling Old Town's narrow streets, classic architecture, esteemed galleries and open-air flower and food markets contain a number of the city's gay-frequented businesses.

Old Town fringes the city's shoreline, where you can stroll along the broad, palm-shaded Promenade des Anglais, which lines the miles of pretty (but pebbly) beaches. A couple of the many beachside restaurants along here fly rainbow flags to welcome their sizable gay clientele: the beach at Castel Club, which lies in the shadows of Castle Hill, and the beach club run by the trendy HI Hotel, a favorite see-and-sun spot of the Nice A-listers. The clothing-optional section of rocky shoreline right below Restaurant Coco Beach, a short walk beyond the Port of Nice, is



SUMMER COTE | Nice, along France's Cote d'Azur, provides breathtaking views of the Riviera — and lots of gay nightlife.

another favorite gay hangout.

Continue east around Cap de Nice to reach the exclusive village of Villefranche-sur-Mer, immortalized in the Bond movie *Never Say Never Again*. It's also home to St-Pierre Chapel, whose restored interior contains murals painted by famed gay novelist Jean Cocteau. Across the bay is one of the world's wealthiest enclaves, Saint Jean Cap Ferrat — everybody from Tina Turner to Bill Gates have homes around here. Head farther toward the Italian border, and you'll reach the ancient cliff-top village of Eze and beyond that the Principality of Monaco, with its exclusive casinos and ritzy shopping.

The French Riviera enjoys a fabled culinary reputation — you'll find no shortage of superb restaurants in every town, plus markets and gourmet shops specializing in local olives, oils, cheeses, pastries and every other imaginable treat.

In Nice's pedestrianized Cours Saleya district in Old Town, you'll find dozens of sidewalk cafés, most of them specializing in local seafood and pizzas, among the flower and food markets. If you make it around the Cape to Villefrance, do not miss the wonderful seafood restaurant La Mère Germaine, which has tables right on the bay. If you're seeking a lunch spot in Vallauris, try cozy, gay-owned Le Clos Cosette, which

Continued on Page 29



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■ From Page 26

turns out traditional Provencal cuisine, or fashionable Cafe Marianne. The interior village of Saint-Paul de Vence is one of the country's finest small towns for dining — it's home to a handful of Michelin-star restaurants.

Gay nightlife in the region is relaxed and very friendly. In Nice, consider Bar Le Fard, a snug spot on Promenade des Anglais — it's a good place to start the night. Other good bets include centrally located Le 6 Bar, which draws a stylish mix for cocktails, conversation and dancing; and Le Glam club, a small but lively spot for dancing to pop tunes. Fairly near the harbor is the Eagle, a typical leather-oriented and cruise bar, and the fetish/sex club called Le Block.

Nice also has a few very popular gay saunas, including the small but quite clean and attractive Les Bains Douches, and the large and always-crowded Sauna du Chateau.

Nice has the best variety of lodging options, which include reasonably priced gay B&Bs like

Blue Angels and ThyJeff Guesthouse, both of which are close to the train station — the owners of the latter also run a cheerful gay café nearby, Le ThyJeff. Also consider the upscale four-room guest house, Mas des Oliviers, a gay-owned retreat set amid quiet gardens in the foothills above Nice — amenities include a pool, fitness room and two terraces with lovely views.

Among larger properties, the chic and artfully designed HI Hôtel — with its bold color schemes, rooftop pool and stellar sushi restaurant — is a favorite of trendy and discerning gay travelers. The hotel also operates the previously mentioned HI beach club and restaurant. Other Nice favorites include the opulent Hôtel Palais le la Méditerranée, a grand dame with a magnificent Art Deco facade overlooking the sea, and the elegant and smartly updated L'Hôtel Beau Rivage, an 1860s beauty overlooking Promenade des Anglais — it's been a favorite accommodation of such arts and literary figures as Matisse and Chekhov. ■

— Andrew Collins



Sitcomy and shrill, 'Cheaters' revives the '80s with failed farce

As someone over 40 myself, my suspicions are raised when a 22-year-old writes a play that purports to parse the mindsets and peccadilloes of middle-aged couples. But Michael Jacobs — who has since created such execrable sitcom dreck as *My Two Dads* and *Charles in Charge* — couldn't even rent a car when his play **Cheaters** had a justifiably brief run on Broadway in 1978. It's about two sets of bickering, faithless 50-somethings and a young couple (Danielle Pickard and Andrews Cope, above) who are trying to decide whether to marry. The plot probably says more about Jacobs' issues with commitment than it does the titular marrieds.

For its current production, Contemporary Theatre of Dallas has updated the timeline to the mid-'80s — the height of miserable sitcomomania and intrusive laugh-tracks — as if to justify how shrill and unpleasant all the characters are: It's the Reagan Era, after all, you can't expect people to behave civilly. Aside from that, all this change means is that we have to endure stylized scene changes where chambermaids re-set the hotel room while listening to *Love Connection* and *The Facts of Life* drone on the TV. It was impossible to stomach that detritus on its first run; who wants to endure it as a captive?

There are more coincidences — and non-coincidences — than even the most forgiving of audiences will likely accede to willingly. Each cheating pair is the parent to one of the young lovers; even though they have lived together for two years, none of their folks have ever met before the awkward family dinner where all secret infidelities are revealed. It's meant to be a French farce, though it replaces nuance and wordplay with mugging and shouting: Call it *La Cage aux Fail*.

It might be tolerable if anyone onstage were remotely likable; alas, the women are all shrill, the men controlling and angry. And they are all clad in ugly costumes, the worst of which is Marcia Carroll saddled with wearing a flight suit that makes her look like something that would get you booted off *Project Runway*. Ted Wold at least has his signature snarky attitude, which allows him to spit out the contrived dialogue with an inherent sense of humor, though that's just rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Greenville Center for the Arts, 5601 Sears St. Through Sept. 24. ContemporaryTheatreofDallas.com

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For his upcoming 'Pit Stop,' Texas filmmaker Yen Tan tackles another gay romance

THE BUSINESS OF SHOW

Yen Tan hopes to raise money for a spring start date to shoot 'Pit Stop,' about small town gay life in Texas. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

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

Writing coaches often tell authors, "Write what you know." But for Yen Tan, the more interesting assignment is, "Write what you can't get out of your head."

Back in 2004 — when he was still living in Dallas, Tan wrote a draft screenplay called *Pit Stop*, about two gay men in small-town Texas who begin a romance. It wasn't anything he knew about from personal experience.

"It's hard to pinpoint what drew me to the story," he says. "I have a tendency to pick up on things that don't register with others. Being gay and middle class in small-town America is very foreign to me — it's odd there are gay people who choose to live in small towns. What's the decision behind that?"

He liked the script, but he couldn't seem to get it off the ground financially or creatively. Instead, he made *Ciao*, which became his biggest hit as a filmmaker (it scored an honorable mention at the AFI Dallas International Film Festival in 2008). But *Pit Stop* drifted around in the back of his head until 2009, when he submitted it to the OutFest L.A. screenwriting lab.

"Hearing the comments by other filmmakers, I knew I had something and had underestimated its potential," he says. Tan immediately started in on rewrites, including making the cast more diversified.

"The big change in the script is that two major characters are Latino now. It was all-white originally, but that was not entirely accurate of the Texas landscape," Tan says. He also consulted with colleagues to make sure he got the feel of Podunk, Texas right.

"Thankfully I'm a bit paranoid about those things," he laughs. "I would verify and re-verify [what I wrote about small-town Texas and gay Latinos]. I'd ask my friends who know, 'Is this right or just totally made up?' And I usually rely on my actors to put it right — is this what an American would say or is it totally ESL [English as a Second Language]? But I am also trying to make these elements work within the framework of my ideas."

The issue now isn't the script — it's getting the film made. He

hopes to begin filming in the spring, either around Austin or in the DFW area, but needs to raise money first. Tan was lucky enough to snag a grant targeted to Texas filmmakers, but he also wants to raise money from individual investors. That's why this week, he's teaming with OutTakes Dallas and the Texas Theatre to showcase his movie and allow people to contribute via United States Artists, a high-prestige donation site that

allows people to make tax-deductible contributions and comes with matching grants.

"We'll be showing clips from *Ciao* and do a staged reading of some scenes from *Pit Stop*," he explains. "We're also trying to set up Internet stations so people can donate on the spot. But

to me it's not about raising all the money at one time — just to kick it off." He's still trying to set up his goals for the fundraising, but Tan estimates something less than \$20,000 would make a huge difference. In fact, he's learned how to do more with less ever since moving to Austin last year.

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He's looking forward to finally getting the cameras rolling.

"After making films all these years, the most gratifying part is production itself," he says. "Once a film is finished and you're going to the festivals... it's fun but it gets old quickly. I know enough by now that that's really the part that makes me *not* want to make another film." ■

QUEER CLIP: 'Warrior'

There are worse ways to spend two hours in a movie theater than watching hulking, half-naked man-meat wail on each other — in fact, it's hard to imagine a better way. That's at least part of the appeal of *Warrior*.

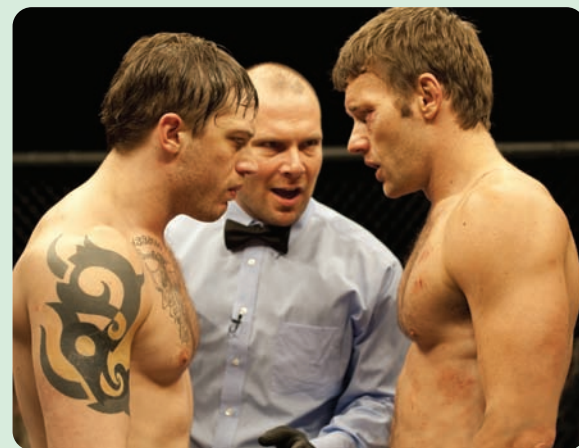
Set in the world of mixed martial arts, it's a fiction film (it's from Gavin O'Connor, the director of *Miracle*, about the real-life 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team) about two estranged brothers who face off for the ultimate glory: One (Joel Edgerton), a family man in financial straights, the other (Tom Hardy), a troubled Gulf War veteran with something to prove. If that *sounds* clichéd, just try watching it.

No really, do — because, as predictable and manipulative as *Warrior* is, it's also damned entertaining, in the way only the hokiest of sports movies can be. I grew up in a sports household, so have long held a soft spot for movies like *Million Dollar Baby*, *Rocky III* and *The Fighter*, all of which this resembles more than passingly.

Hardy, a brooding slab of muscle, has Brando stamped all over his performance, and O'Connor effectively evokes the overcast, aimless depression of the Rust Belt occupied by contentious Irishmen. Add a serious dose of homoeroticism, and that's a recipe — OK, a formula — for a feel-good film.

— A.W.J.

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Saturday 09.10

Forest through the trees

When Jay Maggio paints, it's hard to not take a look. His tree-scapes are textural and impressionistic but with cool, modern touches. In other words, we likey. Craighead Green presents a three-artist exhibit including Maggio, Heather Gorham and Arturo Mallman. Despite different perspectives, their works are quite cohesive.

DEETS: Craighead Green Gallery, 1011 Dragon St. Through Oct. 8. CraigheadGreen.com

Saturday 09.10

Splash the day away

It used to be splashing people with water balloons was reason to get grounded by the parents. Now it's for all the right reasons. The LifeWalk Waterpalooza dodgeball tourney returns, with teams duking it out with water balloons to benefit AIDS Arms.

DEETS: Station 4 parking lot, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 1 p.m. LifeWalk.org.

Thursday 09.15

Southern belles

For The Women's Chorus of Dallas to snag the Secret Sisters for the Southern Harmony Party is quite a feat. And if it benefits the chorus, well that's not so bad either.

DEETS: Lakewood Theater, 1825 Abrams Parkway. 8 p.m. \$25-\$50. TWCD.org.



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FRIDAY 09.09

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Lambda Pride Toastmasters. Regular meeting for improving communication and leadership skills. Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 6:30 p.m. Lambdapride.freetoasthost.us.

Business Network Collin County luncheon. Fox Sports Grille 5741 Legacy Drive. 11:30 a.m. \$20. 469-335-0606.

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

JEWEL Crafting Circle meets the second Friday. ilume, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. 6:30 p.m. Visit website for the project of the month. RCDallas.org.

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

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

Unwired Dallas. Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA) meets for those wishing to quit using meth. Also meets on Mondays and Wednesdays at the same time. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. 7:30pm. Free. CrystalMeth.org.

Stonewall Group of Narcotics Anonymous. Meets daily at noon and 7:30 p.m. 2438 Butler St., # 108

CODA, codependents support group at Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 7 p.m. Cathedralofhope.com.

ART

Beyond Words exhibit features the art of songwriter and Elton John collaborator Bernie Taupin. Taupin will be in appearance through Saturday. Wisby-Smith Fine Art, 500 Crescent Court. 6 p.m. Wisby-Smith.com.

BROADCAST

Pink Noise, the Dallas Voice radio show with online editor John Wright and Life+Style writer Rich Lopez.

4 p.m. RationalBroadcasting.org. Follow on Twitter @pinknoiseshow.

CONCERT

Kittie, Diamond Plate, Faded Grace and more. Kittie supported gay youth with their It Gets Better video and now headline their current tour. Trees, 2709 Elm St. 7 p.m. \$12.50-\$16. TreesDallas.com.

THEATER

Dallas Pride Fest put on by Uptown Players features selections of queer-based plays. Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through Sept. 17. Festival passes available. UptownPlayers.org.

Wild Oats by John O'Keeffe and adapted by James McLure. Theatre Three, 2900 Routh St. Through Saturday. \$10-\$40. Theatre3Dallas.com.

SATURDAY 09.10

COMMUNITY

In the Heat of the Night. Benefit for Legal Hospice of Texas with Vegas theme. Cocktails, cards and crooning are all part of the evening. Studio 1019, 2278 Monitor St. 6:30 p.m. For more information, call 214-521-6622 or email harvey@legalhospice.org.

Dallas Diablos Rugby Boot Camp. Both the men's and women's teams are on the hunt for new members. Lake Highlands Park, 9500 E. Lake Highlands Road. 9 a.m. DallasDiablos.org.

Choctaw Casino/Bingo trip leaves the second Saturday of every month from 709 Magnolia St., Arlington. \$7. 817-548-8110.

Once in a Blue Moon, women's dance. DanceMasters Ballroom, 10675 East Northwest Highway, Suite 2600B. 7 p.m.-midnight. \$10. 972-479-0774.

DFW Prime Timers Prime Beefer pot luck dinner at private residence. 7 p.m. Call 972-504-8866 for details.

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

■ CALENDAR, Page 36



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■ CALENDAR, From Page 35

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BROADCAST

Cathedral of Hope worship service. Ch. 8 at 12:35 a.m. (Friday after midnight).

SUNDAY 09.11

COMMUNITY

Drag Brunch Sunday with Jenna Skyy and Krystal Summers. Dish Restaurant & Lounge, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. Two sittings at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. OpenTable.com.

Expressions, a free gender support group for men and women led by volunteers. Sponsored by Dallas Gender Society. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. 7 p.m. 214-540-4475.

Cowtown Leathermen cookout. Best Friends Club, 2620 East Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth.

DFW Prime Timers play Uno at member's residence. Call 972-504-8866 for details.

Breath of Life Interfaith Mindfulness Fellowship. LGBT-friendly "meditation and more" event. In-

spired by Buddhist spirituality. Dallas Meditation Center, 727 S. Floyd Road, Richardson. 5 p.m. Donations accepted. InterMindful.com.

Whosoever Dallas Sunday services. 807 Fletcher St. 10:45 a.m. WhosoeverDallas.org.

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

Dignity Dallas sponsors Roman Catholic liturgy. Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 6 p.m. 214-521-5342 ext. 1732. DignityDallas.org.

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

MONDAY 09.12

COMMUNITY

The Essence of Inclusive Leadership workshops. Building business, organization, community and family with trainer Raj Gill. Sponsored by Hope for Peace and Justice. Interfaith Peace Chapel, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. Through Wednesday. \$25-\$45. NVCDFW.org.

Stonewall Democrats of Tarrant County. Tommy's Hamburger Grill, 3431 W. 7th St., Fort Worth. 7 p.m. 817-913-8743.

PFLAG Mesquite. St. Stephen UMC. 2520 Oates Drive, Mesquite. 7 p.m. 972-279-3112.

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

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

CABARET

Mama's Party. Amy Stevenson hosts the weekly cabaret featuring local stage actors and musicians. Contemporary Theater of Dallas, 5601 Sears St. 7 p.m. MamasParty.com.

TUESDAY 09.13

COMMUNITY

Be an Angel, the 17th annual fundraiser benefiting Legacy Counseling Center, features entertainment by singer Vince Martinez. Monica's Aca y Alla, 2914

Main St. 7 p.m. LegacyCounseling.org

Late Bloomers, social support group for women who came out later in life. La Madeleine, 3906 Lemmon Ave. 6 p.m. 903-778-4446.

Lambda Pride Toastmasters. Regular meeting for improving communication and leadership skills. Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 6:30 p.m. Lambdapride.freetoasthost.us.

DFW Prime Timers Prime Diner at Black Eyed Pea, 7979 Beltline Road. 7 p.m. Call 972-504-8866 to attend.

QLive! Open Mic Night for comedy. Percussions Lounge, 426 S. Jennings Ave. 10 p.m. QCinema.com.

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

CONCERT

Los Lobos. The Grammy-award winning group performs at Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 8 p.m. TITAS.org.

WEDNESDAY 09.14

COMMUNITY

Lambda Legal Monthly Mixer. Open to the public. Dish Restaurant and Lounge, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. 5:30 p.m.

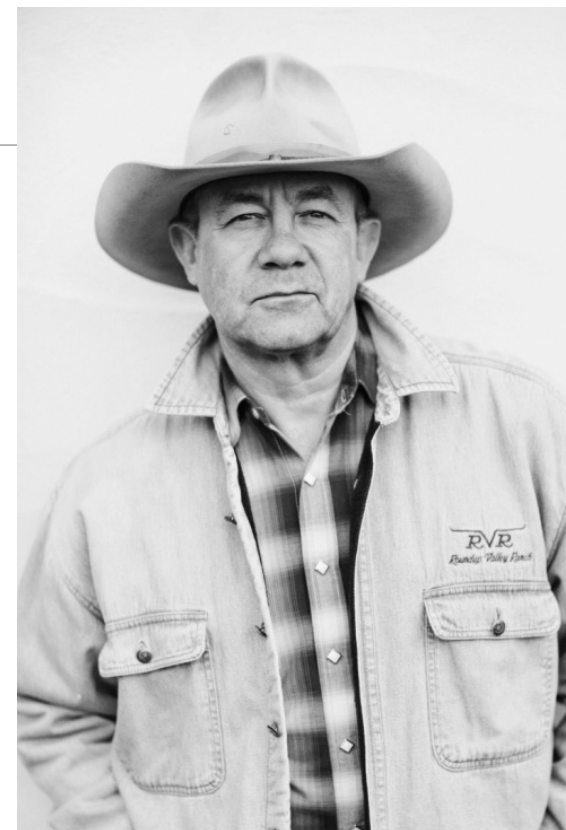
Cathedral Business Network second Wednesday meeting. Location to be determined. 11:30 a.m. Contact Anity Haddy at Cathedral of Hope for more information. 214-351-1901. CathedralOfHope.com.

American Veterans for Equal Rights. North Texas Chapter. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan. 7 p.m. Lone Star Veterans Chapter. LGBT veterans meets in Fort Worth. 7:30 p.m. For info, email LSVCPres@aol.com.

DFW Prime Timers play bridge at member's residence. 7 p.m. Call 972-504-8866 to attend.

BROADCAST

Lambda Weekly. LGBT radio for North Texas. This



MASTER AND MAESTRO | Songwriter and artist Bernie Taupin appears at 'Beyond Words' this weekend.

week's guest is Dallas Voice arts critic Arnold Wayne Jones discussing the fall TV season and the Emmy Awards. 89.3 KNON-FM at 7 a.m. LambdaWeekly.com.

THURSDAY 09.15

COMMUNITY

The Rotary Club of Dallas-Uptown meets and all visitors are welcome. The organization of professionals provide humanitarian service and help build goodwill and peace in the world. Hully and Mo's, 2800 Routh St. 11:45 a.m. DallasUptownRotary.org

The Set is a forum by the Legacy of Success Foundation for African-American men to dialog. South Dallas Cultural Center, 3400 S. Fitzhugh Ave. 6 p.m. LOSF.org.

The House of Glamour is an monthly event by the Legacy of Success Foundation for African-American women to meet and caucus. Brooklyn's Jazz Café, 1701 S. Lamar St. 3 p.m. LOSF.org.

Brokeback Dallas. Support group for gay men married to straight women. St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church, 6526 Inwood Road. 7:30 p.m.

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CELEBRITY BIRTHDAY

By Jack Fertig

Jennifer Hudson turns 30 on Monday. The Oscar winner has made headlines in the recent past mostly on her weight loss. She talks to *Self* magazine this month about losing over 80 pounds. This year, she returns to the big screen in *Winnie*, portraying Nelson Mandela's wife, and in 2012's *The Three Stooges*.



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

You find amazing deals at estate sales, perhaps even your true love. If you already have one, bring him or her along and you find some treasure that will become an emblematic keepsake.

LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

You're looking especially gorgeous. The attention you get will surprise you. Of course you're not just a pretty face; a new contact could prove very helpful as a colleague.

SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

Hiding out from the social whirl may give you peace, but doesn't do much for your anxieties. Hum the first tune that comes to mind. That song will offer insights to face your worries.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 20

Party it up but don't go overboard. Seek out new, interesting, unusual people at these events. Their perspectives can trigger new insights into your own roots.

CAPRICORN Dec 21-Jan 19

Career opportunities are looking good, but are you prepared? Know your strengths and the difference between reaching and overreaching. Work causes you to neglect issues at home.

AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Think a little harder before opening your mouth. Does it really need to be said? Your words carry more weight than you realize. Treat them like currency and don't waste them.

PISCES Feb 19-Mar 19

Opportunities abound as Venus is flashing her goodies in your house of illicit pleasures. She offers a deeper challenge to re-examine your priorities and values.

ARIES Mar 20-Apr 19

You're suddenly looking marriageable no matter what local laws allow. Let someone special see your inner wounds. Allowing yourself to be vulnerable shows confidence in both of you.

TAURUS Apr 20-May 20

A friend in need is a pain in the ass. You have your own problems. Even so, helping out your pal can not only get you out of your own problems for a bit, but help point you to a solution.

GEMINI May 21-Jun 20

Your idea of social outreach is a little outré. One on one is fine for scaring off people you don't want to deal with, but if you're working with a group, behave accordingly.

CANCER Jun 21-Jul 22

New recipes go better than you'd hoped for. Even if things screw up, you get points for trying. At work keep your boss up on any experiments, just in case.

LEO Jul 23-Aug 22

Advice is not necessarily appreciated, as you could find out the hard way. An earnest, soul-searching talk about sex can be more satisfying than actually doing it. Not that one rules out the other.

THIS WEEK

Venus coming home to Libra normally helps us to be more gracious, social and polite. Opposing Uranus on the way in whips up some crazy ideas of what that might mean. Compassion and imagining yourself in the other's position is usually the best way to start out.

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

Kyle's Bed & Breakfast by Greg Fox

315

IS THAT ALL YOU GOT, STEELE? C'MON... YOU CAN THROW HARDER THAN THAT.

WATCH IT, LADY... YOU'RE TALKIN' TO THE GUY WHO'S UP FOR THIRD BASEMAN OF THE YEAR IN THE MINOR-LEAGUE AWARDS.

HILARIOUS. HEY, DELIA... ABOUT THOSE MINOR-LEAGUE AWARDS... YEAH?

GOOD THING YOU'RE NOT UP FOR PITCHER, OR YOU'D BE IN TROUBLE.

WELL... THEY'RE HAVIN' A BIG, BLACK-TIE DINNER IN NEW YORK CITY...

GONNA' BE SOME FAMOUS SPORTS-WRITERS THERE... MAYBE SOME OF THE YANKEES AND METS PLAYERS, TOO.

SOUNDS PRETTY FANCY.

... MAYBE YOU'D WANNA' GO WITH ME.

YOU MEAN... LIKE A DATE?

... MORE LIKE YOU N' ME... YOU KNOW... SORTA' JUST GOIN' TOGETHER BUT NOT, YOU KNOW...

... OKAY, YEAH. LIKE A DATE.

OH.

YEAH, UM... ALL THE GUYS ON THE TEAM ARE... BRINGIN' SOMEONE WITH 'EM... AND I GOT THIS TICKET FOR TWO...

... SO I THOUGHT... IF YOU'RE NOT DOIN' ANYTHING THAT NIGHT...

NO! NOT LIKE THAT... I MEAN...

FORGET IT. GEEZ. WHAT WAS I THINKIN'?

STEELE...

NO, REALLY... IT'S OKAY, DELIA. IT WAS STUPID OF ME TO ASK.

... I'M NOT REAL GOOD AT LYING. AND ON A NIGHT LIKE THAT... WITH ALL THOSE PEOPLE AROUND... QUESTIONS ARE GONNA' GET ASKED... ABOUT YOU AND ME.

HOW ABOUT IF YOU PRETEND YOU DON'T SPEAK ENGLISH? THEN YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO TALK TO ANYONE.

OKAY, NOW YOU'RE BEING STUPID...

NO, IT WASN'T. AND I'D LIKE TO GO WITH YOU, STEELE, BUT...

AND I DON'T THINK I COULD LIE... THE WAY YOU CAN... ABOUT WHO YOU ARE.

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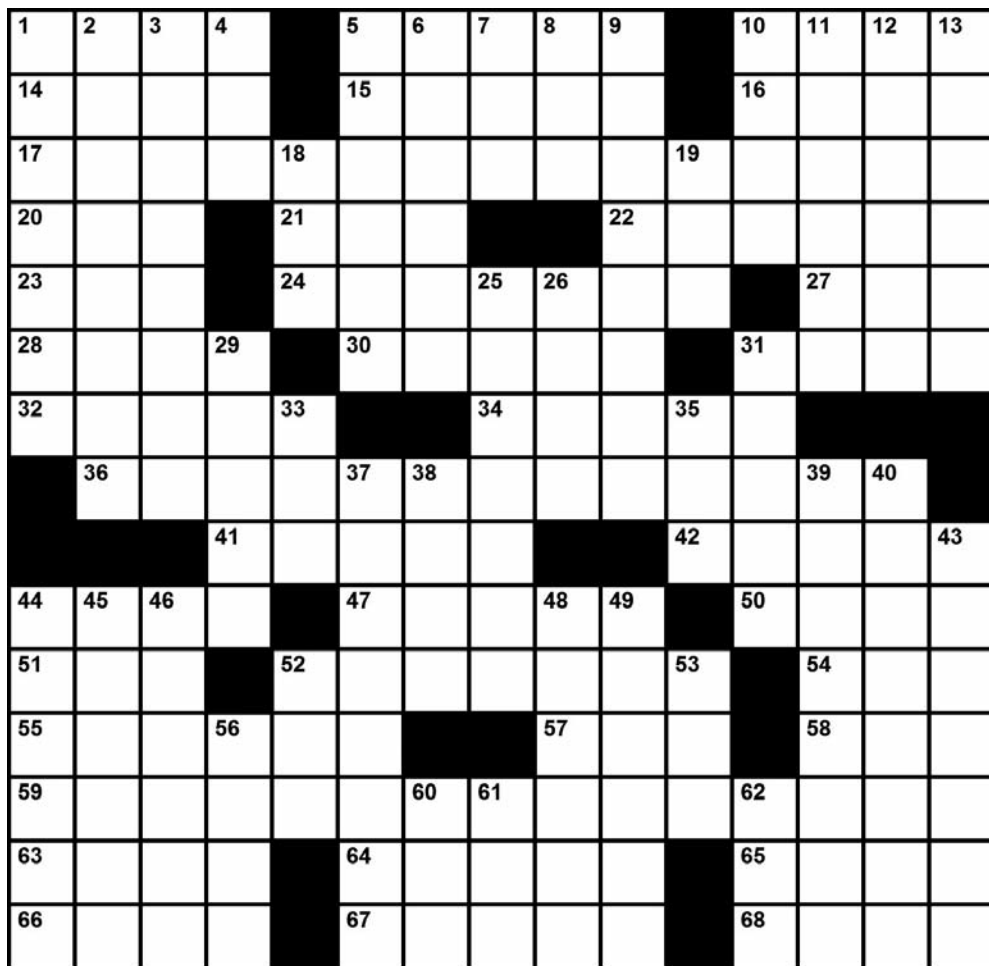
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I DON'T THINK YOU'LL GET TO FIRST BASE WITH HER.

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Funny Girl

Solution on page 36

Across

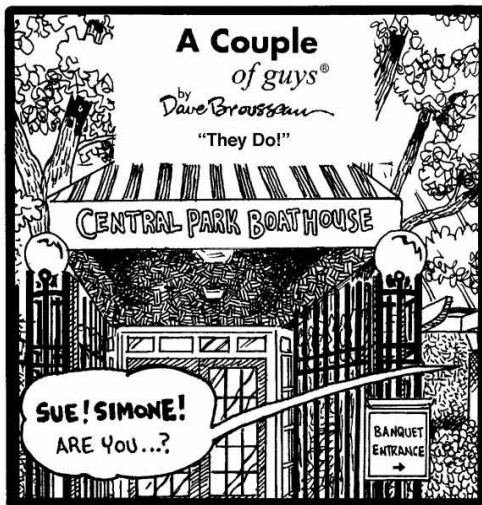
- 1 Junior Vasquez is this kind of jockey
- 5 Stick your nose in
- 10 ___-tat
- 14 From the top
- 15 Old Mercury
- 16 Neighbor of Pakistan
- 17 64th album of 59-Across
- 20 Chef Traci ___ Jardins
- 21 Cardinals, on scoreboards
- 22 "___ the position!"
- 23 Erie, to fifty million Frenchmen
- 24 Warnings
- 27 Motor oil can letters
- 28 Jack of old Westerns
- 30 Zach Braff in Broken Hearts Club
- 31 Do a banker's job
- 32 Patron of Wilde's homeland, briefly
- 34 Is capable, like a horse in Guys and Dolls
- 36 Upcoming biography of 59-Across
- 41 Thespian
- 42 Lube user?
- 44 Pale gray
- 47 Part of a drag queen's wig
- 50 French 101 verb

Down

- 1 Appomattox signatory
- 2 Where to buy a top
- 3 Dr. George O'Malley has them inserted
- 4 Up the creek
- 5 Pacific battle site, in brief
- 6 Spring month for Vivien
- 7 Gay icon for nearly half a century
- 8 "___ shame"
- 9 "Over my dead body!"
- 10 Luncheon ending
- 11 One who gazes at crystal balls
- 12 "Leaves a mark on
- 13 Overture to a split end?

Down

- 1 Screws around
- 2 Wedding vow phrase
- 3 Albee Pulitzer Prize work
- 4 100 lbs.
- 5 Amulet for Antony's girlfriend
- 6 Like one's own tongue
- 7 Make a choice
- 8 Prospector's find
- 9 Jack Sparrow activity
- 10 Hoops for the New York Liberty
- 11 Turn on
- 12 Explorer of southern Australia
- 13 Chipped in
- 14 Britten's raincoat
- 15 Teakettle sound
- 16 Broadway cries of "More! More!"
- 17 Open a crack
- 18 Asia's ___ Peninsula
- 19 One under a captain
- 20 Gentle handling, initially
- 21 God of Gaius
- 22 Big footstools
- 23 Like slasher films
- 24 "We're here, we're queer, get used to it!" and others
- 25 Slaves, to a master
- 26 A liver does this
- 27 Cover stories
- 28 Place to turn pages?
- 29 Six Feet Under auto
- 30 Third Reich chronicler Willia
- 31 They scatter their seed afar
- 32 It gets laid in the street
- 33 Waikiki paste
- 34 Type of ski lift
- 35 Debussy's dry
- 36 Some dam govt. project
- 37 30-day mo.



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This Paper is 100% RECYCLABLE



Party at the Drama Room.

Who isn't looking for a good time? These options might suit you in one way or another Forget Netflix and go for the **Netchix** show every Monday at **JR.'s Bar & Grill**. **Krystal Summers** and **Erica Andrews** host the night with performances on demand You could get hooked on Krystal as she also hosts **Drag Brunch Sunday** with **Jenna Skyy** at **Dish**. Nothing like sausage with your drag You have got to check out **Uptown Players' Dallas Pride Fest** with a slew of queer plays throughout the next week at the **Kalita Humphreys Theater**. That's right, get some culture, why don't ya? ... Get gay splashed at the **LifeWalk Waterpaloosa** on Saturday at the parking lot behind **Station 4**. There's nothing like a good wet balloon in the face Check out the **Lisa Marshall Band** on Friday at **Sue Ellen's**. **Ciao Bella** headlines Saturday night. And we're curious about the **DILF** show on Sunday We have marked the **Angels and Demons kickball match** on our calendar. **The DFW Sisters** and **the Dallas Diablos** rumble at **Glencoe Park** Sunday afternoon benefiting **Legacy Founders Cottage and Counseling Center**. But will the Sisters be in full garb? ... You can boot scoot at **Club Reflection** in Fort Worth all you want, but **Giant Jenga** is by far the fun reason to go **DJ Rob** hosts the Friday night **Dark and Dirty** party at the **Dallas Eagle** while **DJ Troy Sands** will get you to **Dance Your Ass Off** on Saturday. Every Thursday, the club names the **Bear of the Week** Start the weekend off with the monthly **High Tech Happy Hour** hosted by the **LGBTA employee group of Texas Instruments**. They head to **Two Corks and a Bottle** in the **Quadrangle** on Friday.

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



Denise and Shawn at Station 4.



Tiana, Brandi, Manssa, Lisa and Brittany at the Round-Up Saloon.



Kelly and Irene at Sue Ellen's.



Lips and Brian at the Dallas Eagle



Jesse at TMC: The Mining Station.



Brenda at the Brick.

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Personal Care	■	46		
Psychotherapists	■	46		
Spirituality	■	46		
Salons/Stylists	■	46		
Massage	■	46		
Health & Nutrition	■	47		
Announcements	■	47		

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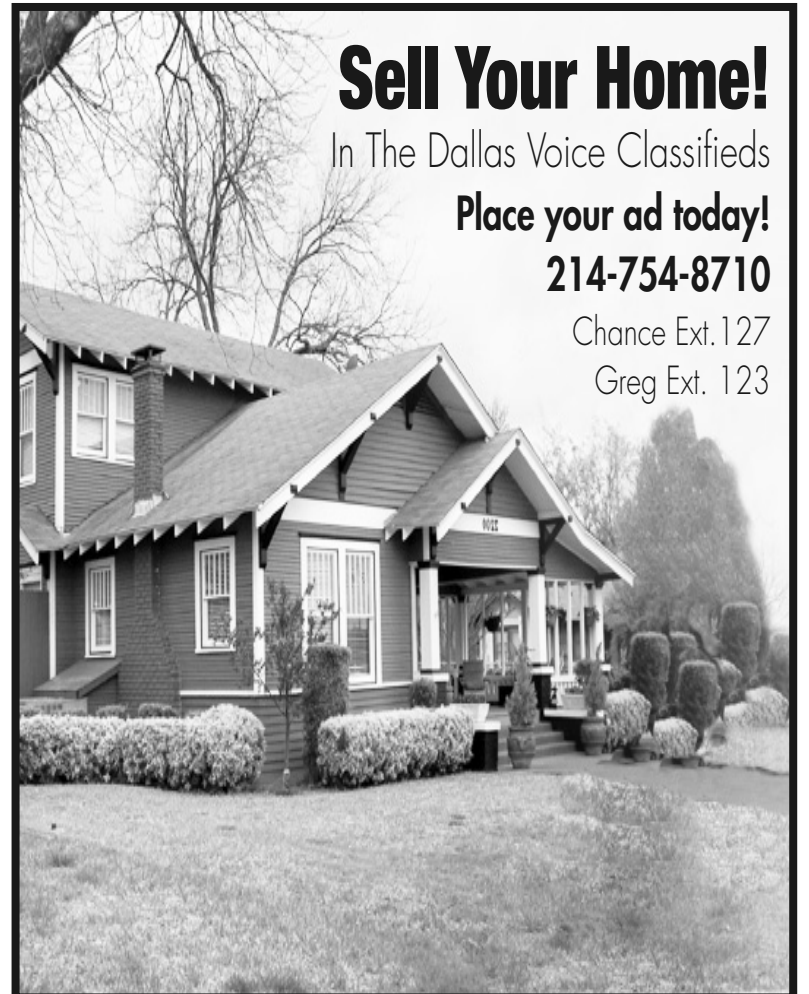
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