

# The mission of Animal Angels Rescue

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Gay-owned sanctuary gives hope to abandoned and abused animals

■ PAWS, Page 28



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Established 1984 | Volume 28 | Issue 31

FREE | Friday, December 16, 2011



# SENIOR CLASS

Cannon Flowers has teamed up with Resource Center Dallas on a project to gauge the needs of LGBT seniors, and then find ways to meet those needs. Read the full story on Page 20.

Untouched photo



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Photo by David Webb. Design by Kevin Thomas.



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# instantTEA

## Another pedestrian hit on strip

For the third time in six weeks, a pedestrian was struck by a vehicle on the Cedar Springs strip last weekend.

This time, the victim reportedly is a 10-year-old girl, but her injuries aren't believed to be life-threatening.

Dallas police said Tuesday, Dec 13 they could provide few additional details about the accident. No offense report was generated since the driver of the vehicle stopped at the scene.

According to 911 call records, the incident was reported at 2:35 p.m. on Saturday and took place at 4100 Cedar Springs Road.

Sr. Cpl. Kevin Janse, a spokesman for DPD, said the unidentified victim was transported to Children's Medical Center.

"From what I can tell by the notes on the call sheet, the child had non-life threatening injuries, but may have had possible broken bones, but it does not say which bones," Janse said.

Dallas Voice is working to obtain an accident report from DPD's Open Records Division.

Unconfirmed eyewitness accounts forwarded to the newspaper indicate the victim is a 10-year-old girl who had just exited a school bus from a field trip and was struck by a pickup truck.

Two pedestrians were killed last month on the Cedar Springs strip in accidents involving hit-and-run drivers. Wayne Priest, 55, died after being struck Nov. 3 near Cedar Springs and Reagan Street. Edward Lee King, 61, was hit Nov. 25 near Cedar



## Laura Martin is now a sr. corporal

Of the 400 Dallas police officers who took an exam to become senior corporals this year, LGBT liaison Laura Martin received the highest score.

Martin was one of 37 officers promoted to senior corporal last week (photo at left).

She's been with the department for almost 14 years, including the last five as LGBT liaison officer.

Martin, currently assigned to a community engagement unit at DPD's Northwest Division, said she doesn't expect her duties or position to change as a result of the promotion, although she acknowledged that down the road it could "open up the department."

"You can move around more, although I'm happy where I am," Martin said. "It's always good to promote if you get a chance. It's a little more money and a better pension. ... I don't expect that I'll be doing anything differently than what I'm already doing."

— John Wright

Springs and Knight Street.

In response to the deadly accidents — the first in recent memory on the strip — Dallas City Councilwoman Angela Hunt has asked city staff to look at ways to make the area safer for pedestrians.

— John Wright

## Razzle Dazzle Dallas taking applications from beneficiaries

Razzle Dazzle Dallas, the traditional street party that was revived last June after a five-year hiatus, will take place again on June 7–10.

The week of parties that fall during national Pride celebrations are a community fundraiser. Last year Razzle returned \$60,500 to eight beneficiaries.

Community organizations can apply to be included as beneficiaries by going to the Razzle Dazzle website and completing the application by Jan. 15. The steering committee is expected to announce the beneficiaries by the end of January.

Two main events are the Metro Ball that takes place at Station 4 on Friday night and raises money for the Greg Dolgener AIDS Fund and the street party on Saturday night.

— David Taffet

## And the winner is...

Liz Mikel. I have to say, I take a little credit for being about the only local critic actually to like the world premiere of *Lysistrata Jones* (back when it was called *Give It Up*).

Mikel was the only original cast member to move to the Broadway version, and the New York Times raved about the premiere Wednesday night, singling out Mikel for praise.

Good for Liz, good for the Dallas Theater Center, good for everyone.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

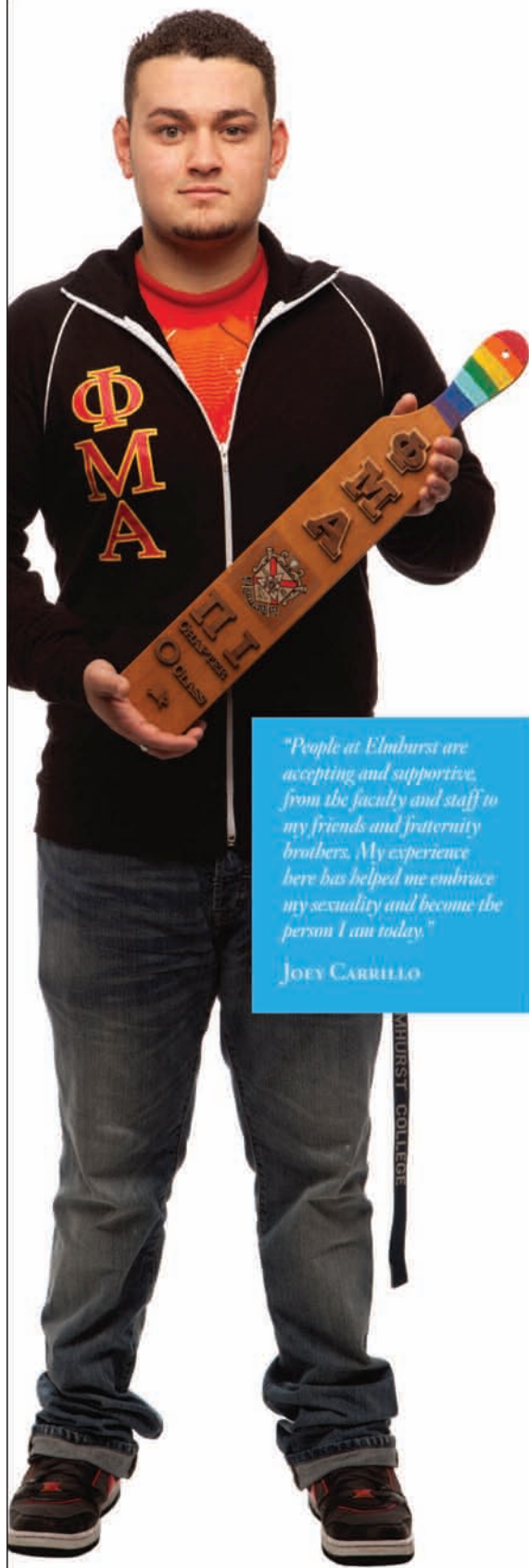
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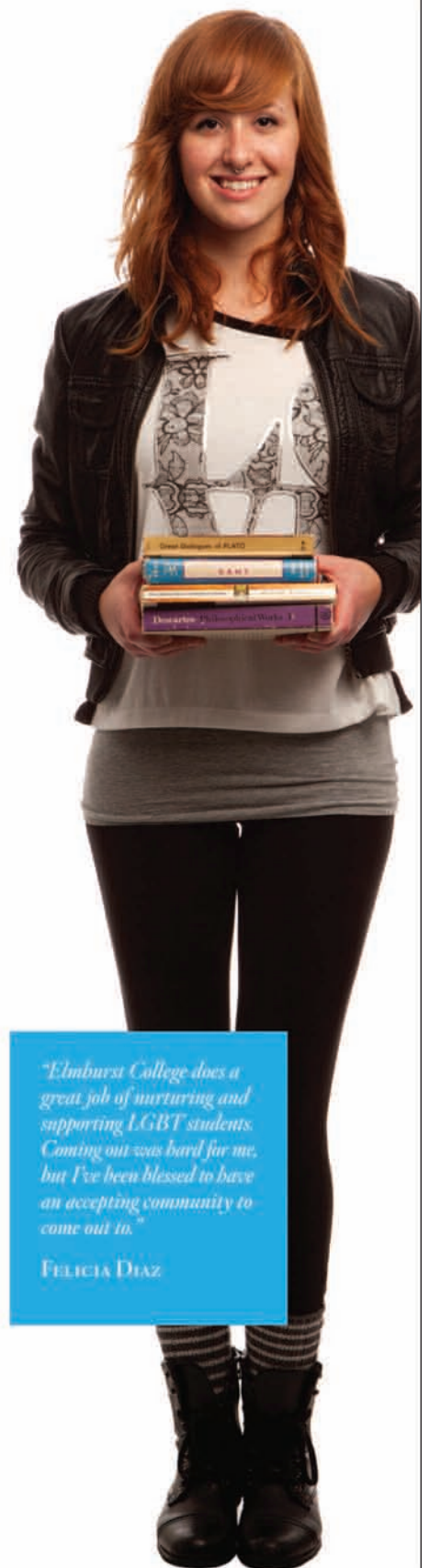
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—*Chicago Sun-Times*, August 26, 2011



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# Black Tie Dinner hands out \$1.142M

Lemons stepping up as 2012-13 co-chair; Duncan joins staff as development director

**TAMMYE NASH** | Senior Editor  
nash@dallasvoice.com

Officials with the 2011 Black Tie Dinner on Thursday night, Dec. 15, distributed a total of \$1.142 million to 17 local beneficiary organizations and the Human Rights Campaign Foundation.

Although the overall total was down a bit from 2010's total of \$1.15 million, some local beneficiaries received higher individual amounts this year since the number of local beneficiaries

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Go online to [DallasVoice.com](http://DallasVoice.com) to see a slideshow of more photos from the Black Tie Dinner check distribution event on Thursday night.

dropped from 18 to 17 after AIDS Services of Rural Texas closed its doors in late spring.

As is traditional, half the total proceeds this year — or \$571,000 — went to the Human Rights Campaign Fund. Resource Center Dallas was the local organization receiving the largest sum — \$63,868.

RCD also received the largest donation to a local beneficiary last year, but that total, at \$48,504, was significantly lower than this year.

The percentage of the total proceeds that each local beneficiary receives from Black Tie Dinner each year is determined by a formula based on how many tables and how many raffle tickets each organization sells for the dinner, how many volunteer hours each organization contributes to the dinner and other factors.

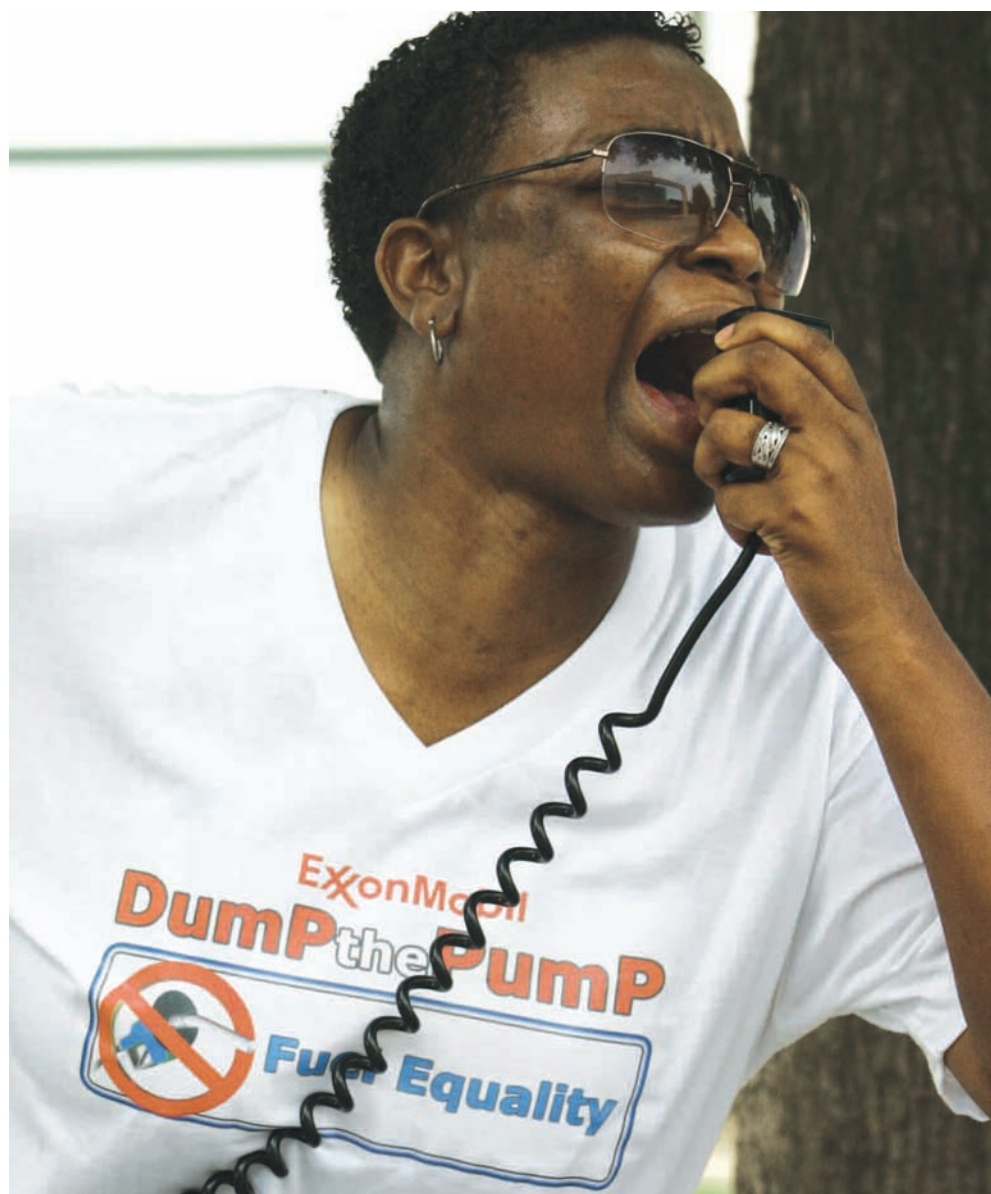
Chris Kouvelis, 2011-12 BTDD co-chair, said in a statement released Thursday that he and other board members were pleased with the amount given to beneficiaries.

"It's a thrill and an honor for Black Tie Dinner to be able to distribute these funds," Kouvelis said. "It is with distribution that the reason for all the hard work done by this wonderful board is realized."

■ **BLACK TIE**, Page 14



**COMMEMORATIVE GIFT** | BTDD Co-chair Chris Kouvelis shows off the plate presented to each beneficiary along with a check. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)



**HIGH OCTANE** | Queer activist CD Kirven participates in a protest organized by GetEQUAL in 2010 outside the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas, where Exxon Mobil's shareholders held their annual meeting. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

# Exxon Mobil hits new LGBT low

Company is 1st to receive negative score on HRC's Corporate Equality Index

**JOHN WRIGHT** | Senior Political Writer  
wright@dallasvoice.com

IRVING — Exxon Mobil Corp. has again made history for its anti-gay employment practices.

The Irving-based company, which is No. 2 on the Fortune 500 and has more than 80,000 employees worldwide, last week became the first business to ever receive a negative score on the Human Rights Campaign's annual Corporate Equality Index.

The 2012 edition of the Index, which marks the 10th anniversary of HRC's scorecard, includes ratings for 636 major companies based on their LGBT-related employment practices.

Exxon Mobil failed to meet any of the criteria for the 2012 Index, and had points deducted for engaging in activities that undermine LGBT equality. As a result, the company received a score of minus-25 from HRC.

Before Exxon and Mobil merged in 1999, Mobil offered domestic partnership benefits and had an employment nondiscrimination policy that included sexual orientation. However, ExxonMobil did away with both the benefits and the policy after the merger, and has repeatedly resisted share-

holder efforts to amend the policy to protect gay employees.

The 2012 Index marks the first year HRC has handed out negative scores, and Exxon Mobil was the only company to receive one.

"For over a decade, HRC has urged Exxon Mobil to re-evaluate its employment practices and policies regarding LGBT employees," HRC spokesman Paul Guequierre said. "They continue to give us, and the entire LGBT community, the cold shoulder."

William F. Holbrook, a spokesman for Exxon-Mobil, sent Dallas Voice a copy of the company's "Corporate Citizenship Report," which says it has a "zero-tolerance" policy against "discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity."

However, Guequierre said the Corporate Citizenship Report isn't an Equal Employment Opportunity statement, and lacks the legal force an EEO statement carries.

Exxon Mobil's report also says the company offers health benefits to the partners of gay employees in countries where same-sex marriage is legal, but goes by federal law in the U.S., which only recognizes heterosexual spouses.

Holbrook declined to further discuss the company's negative score on the CEI.

Exxon Mobil was one of three companies to receive the 25-point deduction for undermining LGBT equality on the 2012 Index. The other two were New York-based Verizon Communications

■ **EXXON**, Page 12



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Free announcements are subject to editing

## localbriefs

### Leather Knights choose leaders

The Leather Knights elected a new Leadership Council for 2010 on Monday, Dec. 12.

New officers for the club are: Jeffrey Payne, lord (president); Michael Dang, chamberlain (vice president); Wayne Davis, exchequer (treasurer); Rudy Santini, chancellor (secretary); Chris LaPoma, seneschal (charitable events); Adam Lynn, ambassador (community relations); Steve Waldren, master of the revels (social events); and David Roy, scribe (historian).

New officers will be installed during the "Changing of the Guard and Awards Ceremony" during the Leather Knights' annual Anniversary Dinner on Jan. 28 at Bridge Bistro, the new restaurant location of Margaux's. The dinner is being held in partnership with the Mr. Texas Leather weekend.

### CCGLA holds year-end party

More than 100 members and supporters attended the year-end meeting of the Collin County Gay and Lesbian Alliance, held Dec. 10 at the home of CCGLA President Bob Shimmin and his partner, Robb Blanchette.

Among those attending the event catered by Cater 10 were Plano City Councilman Pat Gallagher, Collin County Democratic Party Chair Shawn Stevens, Texas Democratic Women of Collin County President Barb Walters, TDWCC

board member Alicia Schulze, C.U.R.E. President Roseann Rossetti and CCGLA founders and former board members Dawnetta Miller and Blue Martinez.

Donations benefiting CCGLA partner organization Health Services of North Texas were collected at the event.

CCGLA Vice President Jeanne Rubin noted that 2011 has been "a year of firsts" for the organization, including CCGLA's first candidate meet-and-greet event in McKinney. The organization had already held such events in Plano and Frisco.

"We have lots of new members and renewed interest in board service," Rubin said. "It promises to be a fabulous year in 2012."

### Legacy offers walk-in counseling

Legacy Counseling Center Executive Director Melissa Grove says the agency will offer walk-in counseling for the holidays.

"The holidays can be stressful for a lot of gay people," Grove said. "They might not get the acceptance at home that they have in Oak Lawn."

She said that dealing with a chronic illness can compound the stress. Legacy offers counseling services to people who are HIV-positive. Through the holidays, the center is accepting new clients without an appointment Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Legacy accepts all insurance, Medicare, Medicaid and Northstar.

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#### Angel

Angel is an angelic brown tabby with white markings and enormous gold-green eyes. She's just 8 months old and weighs a mere 4 pounds. Angel is sweet, calm, laidback and loving. Why not adopt an Angel of your own this holiday season?

Angel and many other cats, dogs, puppies and kittens are available for adoption from Dallas Animal Services, 1818 N. Westmoreland at I-30, just minutes west of Downtown Dallas. The shelter is open Monday-Saturday 11 a.m.-6:30 p.m. and Sundays noon-5 p.m. The regular adoption cost is \$85 for dogs and \$55 for cats, but discounts are offered for animals in the shelter longer than 45 days, to senior citizens and to those who adopt two animals at the same time. All dogs are negative for heartworms, and cats have been tested for FeLV and FIV. For more information, visit [DallasAnimalServices.org](http://DallasAnimalServices.org) or call 214-671-0249.



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# YFT restructures its staff

Development will become a board function, with programming handled by a professional staff member

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer  
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Officials with Youth First Texas have created the new part-time position of youth program coordinator, and the board hopes to fill the job before the end of January.

The new hire will be responsible for program development, implementation and evaluation.

The agency, which serves LGBT youth up to age 22, currently has no employees.

Sam Wilkes had served as director of development and administration, but that position has been eliminated.

In announcing the change, the YFT board called the staff restructuring a reflection of its stronger commitment to core programs.

"We really found that even though we have a program committee, we need a dedicated person," said YFT Board Co-Chair Chris-James Cogna. "We've had an influx of LGBTQA Hispanic youth," Cogna said.

He said the agency is looking for someone who has experience in youth work, preferably with the LGBTQA community. Other preferences include someone with an education or programming background and who is bilingual.

"We've had an influx of LGBTQA Hispanic youth," Cogna said.

Most of the Hispanic youth who attend are fluent English speakers, but their parents primarily speak Spanish. He said that it is important to welcome parents having trouble accepting their child's sexual orientation or gender identity and to answer questions they may have.

"It makes a huge difference when we have a bilingual staff member," he said.

Development will be taken over by a committee chaired by the treasurer, currently Kevin Mackenroth, and will include two other board members.

"The plan is to launch a sustained giving program from individuals and corporations, and include estate planning," Cogna said. He said this was the first time the agency has tried this approach.

Cogna also said that YFT is in good shape financially.

"We're going into the first quarter with 30 percent more income than we expected," he said. "We're putting more money into programming in 2012 than ever."

Cogna said that the core programs will continue. Education instruction includes health and nutrition classes as well as helping youth obtain GEDs or get into college. One of the agency's recent success stories is a student who applied to Southern Methodist University with the help of YFT, and who is now a pre-law and pre-med student there.

Other YFT programs include the big group on



**PROM NIGHT** | Youth attending a previous Gayla Prom stop dancing long enough to smile for the camera. Previously presented at SMU by Resource Center Dallas, the prom now comes under the purview of Youth First Texas.

Thursday nights, the gender identity group, self-defense class and Friday night family dinner.

The center maintains a food pantry for emergency situations for youth living on their own.

"We move them over to the SNAP [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program] food stamp program," Cogna said. "But we fill the gap until we can get them into that."

YFT is also trying to take over planning and organizing for the annual GAYLA prom, which has been held at SMU in May in recent years. Cogna said the new programming director would take over handling the project, which was dropped by Resource Center Dallas.

"We're looking for volunteers to pull it together," Cogna said.

Also, Cogna said he hopes the new staff member will do more outreach to schools and gay-straight alliances and do "gap analysis" to determine who and what areas are underserved.

"I want to see the center open every evening at 4 and every Saturday night," Cogna said.

Currently, YFT is open Tuesday through Friday at 6 p.m., Thursday at 5 p.m. and every other Saturday evening. Cogna said that many youth go home after school and don't get out again. Opening earlier would serve more people, he said.

"Finding volunteers who will be there at 4 is a challenge," Cogna acknowledged. He said finding a group of people to each devote one Saturday a month to opening the center will likely be easier. ■

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## Softball coaches accused of outing E. Texas teen

Trial set for January after federal  
judge rules privacy claim can  
move forward in court

**JOHN WRIGHT** | Senior Political Writer  
wright@dallasvoice.com

TYLER — Before Skye Wyatt's softball coaches outed her as a lesbian to her mother in 2009, she was a straight-A student who loved going to school, Wyatt alleges in court documents.

Then a 16-year-old sophomore at Kilgore High School in East Texas, Wyatt wanted to continue playing softball and maybe even become a coach.

But after coaches Rhonda Fletcher and Cassandra Newell locked Wyatt in a locker room on March 3, 2009 — where they allegedly threatened and interrogated her, before kicking her off the team and outing her to her mom — Wyatt said she became depressed and anxious.

"I had trouble sleeping," Wyatt wrote in a sworn statement dated Oct. 3, 2011. "I even cut myself and contemplated suicide. My grades went down, and I started skipping school.

"As a result of Ms. Fletcher and Ms. Newell telling my mom I was gay, she and I didn't speak for months," Wyatt wrote. "Our relationship was totally destroyed for almost two years. It was incredibly difficult for me to go through all of the pain of being outed and kicked off the softball team without feeling close to my mom."

In December 2010, Wyatt and her mother, Barbara, filed a federal lawsuit against Fletcher, Newell and the Kilgore Independent School District, accusing them of violating her privacy.

Last month, U.S. Magistrate Judge John Love, of the Eastern District of Texas, denied the defendants' motion for summary judgment in the case, which is now set for trial in January.

Wayne Krause, an attorney with the Austin-based Texas Civil Rights Project, which is representing Barbara and Skye Wyatt, called Love's decision to deny summary judgment "a huge victory."

Krause said it marks the first time a court in the 5th U.S. Circuit — which covers Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas — has identified a constitutional right to privacy for sexual orientation information.

"It's one thing to say that conduct by LGBT people can't be criminalized under the Constitution," Krause said, referring to the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in Lawrence v. Texas, which overturned the state's sodomy ban. "It's another to say there's an explicit constitutional right to have information about sexual orientation be kept confidential."

Attorney Robert S. Davis of Tyler, who's representing the defendants, downplayed the significance of Love's 23-page decision.



Skye Wyatt

"I think the court found that there were some contested fact issues, and that's fairly common, so we're ready to go to trial on it and think we'll get a good result," Davis said.

In court documents, the defendants allege that Skye Wyatt had been openly gay for several years and never attempted to keep her sexuality secret.

They also argue that the coaches had a legitimate interest in revealing Wyatt's sexual orientation to her mother, because they were concerned about her safety. The coaches said they believed Wyatt was in a potentially illegal relationship with an 18-year-old named Hillary Nutt.

But the plaintiffs responded that if the coaches thought Wyatt was in an illegal relationship, they should have reported it to law enforcement, not her mother. The defendants also note that the school district doesn't routinely investigate heterosexual relationships between 16- and 18-year-olds.

Instead, the coaches were merely retaliating against Wyatt and trying to intimidate her, the plaintiffs allege. The coaches believed Wyatt had started a rumor that Nutt was Newell's ex-girlfriend and that the coach herself was gay.

According to the original lawsuit, Fletcher and Newell called an unscheduled team meeting on March 3, 2009. The coaches dismissed the rest of the team before leading Wyatt, identified as "S.W." in court documents, into a locker room and locking the door behind them.

"Fletcher asked S.W. if she was gay, and accused her of having a sexual relationship with another girl. She also claimed that S.W. was spreading gossip about this other girl being

■ **SOFTBALL**, Next Page

# RCD opens new dental suite

United Way provided funding for construction, staffing of new suite being named in honor of Bret Camp

**TAMMYE NASH** | Senior Editor  
nash@dallasvoice.com

Resource Center Dallas was set to dedicate a complete new suite in its dental clinic on Friday, Dec. 16, and RCD Executive Director and CEO Cece Cox said the new suite is being named in honor of Bret Camp, former RCD associate director in charge of the agency's health services.

"We wanted to honor Bret's 16 years with this agency, and his knowledge and service to our community," Cox said. "We felt naming this dental suite after him was an appropriate way to do that."

Camp left Resource Center Dallas last summer due to health issues.

The dental clinic is housed within the Nelson-Tebedo Clinic, located on Cedar Springs Road near the intersection with Throckmorton Street.

Cox also noted that the costs of construction for the new dental suite and the cost of staffing it for one year came to \$125,000, and was fully funded by United Way of Dallas. Those funds were part of the \$225,000 total RCD received from United Way.

"Dental care is one of the highest priority needs" for people with HIV/AIDS who access health care assistance in Dallas County, Cox said, adding that facilities to meet the growing need were lacking.

"With this new dental suite, we can serve more clients and we can get them in for care faster," Cox said. With the new suite in place, she said, RCD's dental clinic will be serving about 1,000 clients a year.

As federal funding priorities shift and funding for HIV/AIDS-related services decline, Cox said last month that RCD is among those agencies looking for ways to expand its clinical services beyond



Bret Camp

just the HIV/AIDS community. But, she added this week, doing so will be a long and complex process.

"When you have a program funded with federal money, you have to keep that segregated, completely separate from your other services," Cox said. "You can just lump it all together."

Cox also said that RCD officials are considering whether some services now housed at the Nelson-Tebedo Clinic on Cedar Springs Road will remain at that location after the center moves into planned new facilities at Cedar Springs and Inwood Road. Construction on the new facility, designed by architect James Langford who was trained by I.M. Pei, is set to begin in 2014.

Cox said that a lot of the work of the Nelson-Tebedo Clinic revolves around HIV/AIDS testing and prevention efforts, and that the clinic's current location in the center of the area traditionally considered Dallas' LGBT neighborhood is most advantageous to that work.

"Right now, the clinic is located right in the heart of the neighborhood. It is a good location for those services, and that is a historically important site," Cox said. "We do see some big advantages to continuing to maintain a presence there even after our new facilities are built." ■

## SOFTBALL

From Page 10

'Coach Newell's girlfriend,'" the suit states. "The girl to whom Fletcher was referring had interacted with Newell at a number of school events. At the time of Fletcher and Newell's confrontation, S.W. was dating that girl."

When Wyatt denied the allegations, the coaches reacted angrily, threatening to sue her for slander and making menacing gestures. "S.W. was very afraid, and feared they might strike her," the complaint states.

After Fletcher and Newell finally allowed Wyatt to leave the locker room, they promptly phoned Barbara Wyatt and asked her to meet them at the field. When Barbara Wyatt arrived, the coaches told her that her daughter was a lesbian and gave her the phone number of the girlfriend.

The coaches kicked Skye Wyatt off the softball

team, but lied to other players by saying she had quit, according to the lawsuit. Their actions resulted in "severe mental and emotional anguish, resulted in social isolation, and robbed her of the freedom to deal with her sexuality privately, at her own pace and on her own terms."

Barbara Wyatt eventually filed a complaint with the school district's superintendent, who dismissed it saying that the coaches were "legally obligated to share this information with the parent."

"In other words, KISD's policy mandates that teachers disclose students' sexual orientation to their parents," the suit alleges.

"Discrimination, bullying and the infliction of emotional trauma against students who are gay or believed to be gay is a nationally recognized problem," the complaint states. "Defendants' actions and policies exacerbate this problem and set a very harmful example to students, teachers, and parents in Kilgore ISD." ■



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**LEATHER KNIGHTS DOLE OUT OVER \$9K**



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**EXXON**

From Page 6

Inc. and Milwaukee-based Foley & Lardner LLP.

Deena Fidas, director of HRC's Workplace Project, said Verizon was penalized for resisting a shareholder resolution to add gender identity to the company's employment nondiscrimination policy; while Foley & Lardner was docked for representing the National Organization for Marriage in campaigns against marriage equality in the District of Columbia and Minnesota.

Verizon received an overall score of 20, while Foley & Lardner got a 60.

"It is not a designation that we take lightly," Fidas said of the 25-point deduction for undermining LGBT equality. "These businesses did nothing to rectify these particular situations."

On a more positive note, Fort Worth-based AMR Corp. (American Airlines) is one of only nine companies that have received perfect scores every year since the Index began in 2002, Fidas said. The others are Aetna Inc., Alcatel-Lucent, Apple Inc., Eastman Kodak Co., JPMorgan Chase & Co., Nike Inc., Replacements Ltd. and Xerox Corp.

Those nine employers all managed to maintain their scores of 100 on the 2012 CEI despite new, more stringent criteria — most notably a requirement to offer comprehensive transgender health benefits, including coverage for gender reassignment surgery.

Lauri Curtis, vice president for diversity at

American Airlines, said adding comprehensive trans health benefits was "the right thing to do for our business."

"We don't look at it as how difficult it was," Curtis said. "The bottom line is that we have a very diverse population, both our employees as well as our customers, and that's really what we true ourselves to. That's our driving guidepost as it relates to our diversity efforts."

"At the end of the day it's all about equality and respect for everyone," she added. "I think it just underscores that this is serious stuff to us, because it's just part of who we are. It's been part of who we are for a long time."

American Airlines and AT&T Inc. were the only North Texas-based companies that satisfied all of the new criteria and received perfect scores on the 2012 CEI. That's down from nine local companies that received HRC's top rating on the 2011 index.

Nationally, 190 companies received perfect scores this year, down from 337 last year. But Fidas said comparing this year's scores to last year's amounts to apples and oranges. In addition to trans health coverage, HRC added criteria in 2012 related to "soft" partner benefits, organizational competency on LGBT issues, and public support for equality.

"It's a new standard," Fidas said. "We raised the bar in these four significant areas, and some businesses are just going to take a little more time to get there. We don't see that as a drop or a lack of com-

■ EXXON, Next Page

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■ **EXXON**, From Previous Page

mitment.”

In fact, Fidas said, this year’s Index shows remarkable progress as employers strive to meet the new criteria. For example, two years ago, only 49 employers offered comprehensive trans health benefits, but since then the number has jumped to 207.

Representatives from North Texas-based companies that lost their perfect scores on this year’s CEI said they’re disappointed but committed to working toward re-establishing them.

“Anytime that you were on a list and then you’re not on a list, it does cause some angst,” said Steve Lyle, chief diversity officer for Dallas-based Texas Instruments, which received a 90 on the 2012 Index after four consecutive years of perfect scores. “We don’t want that segment or our employee population to feel disenfranchised because TI’s no longer on this list, or feel like we care less today than we did last week.”

That’s why the company sent emails to LGBT employees in advance of the Index’s release explaining the reason for the lower score: The company’s insurance provider, Blue Cross Blue Shield, doesn’t consider gender reassignment surgery to be a medically necessary procedure.

Texas Instruments could have overridden Blue Cross’ decision at a minimal cost, Lyle said. However, that would have been unfair to employees who want coverage for other procedures that aren’t considered medically necessary, including growth

**EQUALITY INDEX RATINGS**

North Texas-based companies on the 2012 Corporate Equality Index.

Company:	Final Score
AMR Corp. (American Airlines):	100
AT&T Inc.:	100
Affiliated Computer Services:	40
Brinker International Inc.:	60
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp.:	20
Comerica Inc.:	95
Commercial Metals:	0
Dean Foods Co.:	40
Dr. Pepper Snapple Group:	60
Exxon Mobil Corp.:	Minus-25
GameStop Corp.:	75
Haynes and Boone, LLP:	85
J.C. Penney Co. Inc.:	85
Kimberly-Clark:	90
Nokia Corp.:	70
Nortel Networks Corp.:	60
Sabre Holdings:	90
Southwest Airlines Co.:	90
Tenet Health Care:	45
Texas Instruments Inc.:	90

For more info on the 2012 Corporate Equality Index, go to [tinyurl.com/3t4jg6a](http://tinyurl.com/3t4jg6a).

hormones for children and in vitro fertilization.

Lyle added that TI is interested in working with HRC and other employers to convince insurance providers that gender reassignment surgery — historically regarded as cosmetic — should instead be

deemed medically necessary.

“We’re in the business of making electronics, not in determining medical necessity, but we do want to influence the conversation, because it aligns with our values,” said Lyle, who’s openly gay. “We want to be able to offer benefits to our employees that are necessary for them, but we also want to have internal equity of those benefits.”

Plano-based J.C. Penney Company Inc. also lost points for failing to offer comprehensive trans health benefits, and saw its score drop from a 100 to an 85. Daphne Avila, a spokesman for J.C. Penney, said in an email this week that the company will “continue to explore cost-effective options for improving associate benefits.”

“Given our record of achieving a perfect score three out of the past four years, our current ranking is not where we would like it to be,” Avila wrote. “While the new guidelines present opportunities for advancement across all industries, our score — albeit not poor — does not accurately reflect our overall commitment to inclusion and diversity. ... While we are unable to guarantee our future standings, please know that we are already evaluating the 2013 HRC criteria and are looking for opportunities to raise the bar.”

Representatives from Grapevine-based GameStop, which saw its score drop from 100 last year to 75 this year; and Dallas-based Brinker International, which saw its score drop from 100 to 60, didn’t respond to requests for comment this week. ■

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**BLACK TIE**

From Page 6

Kouvelis served his first year as co-chair with Nan Arnold, who stepped down from the post during the check distribution event after two years as co-chair.

Arnold told Dallas Voice this week she was proud to know that during the last two years, "we were able to increase distribution [to beneficiaries] substantially from the previous three to four years. Being able to give more to our beneficiaries is always a wonderful thing, and of course, that is our No. 1 mission."

She said she is also very proud of how successful the 2011 dinner was.

"We really changed a lot of things this year. We had a great lineup and we sold out by August," Arnold said. "We've heard a lot of good remarks about the dinner this year, and of course, we always love hearing good things."

Black Tie officials on Thursday introduced Mitzi Lemons as co-chair for the 2012 and 2013 dinners, and they introduced Margaret Byrne Duncan as the new development director for the dinner.

"I am leaving the board in excellent hands," Arnold said of Lemons' selection as the new co-chair. "Chris has been a great co-chair partner and is more than ready to take the reins [as senior co-chair]. And Mitzi has shown remarkable leadership as chair of our business operations committee."

Arnold continued, "She [Lemons] is the first person to have the opportunity to have served [during the last year] as co-chair elect, so Chris and I have been able to work with her and mentor her all year. There is no doubt they are a terrific team and will lead the board to great things."

Arnold steps down as co-chair after eight years on the BTD board, saying it has been "an honor and a privilege" to serve.

"I am just humbled to be a small part of a really great community in Dallas and I appreciate the opportunity to do my part to help in any way I can," she said.

Looking back on her eight years on the board, Arnold said there have been many special moments and memories, but one in particular that stands out in her mind was being able to hand



**PASSING THE TORCH** | Outgoing Co-chair Nan Arnold, left, and incoming Co-chair Mitzi Lemons at the Black Tie Dinner check presentation party at the Dallas Museum of Art on Thursday, Dec. 15. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

over a "substantial" donation to first-time beneficiary Home for the Holidays following the 2010 dinner.

"They were so excited; there were tears and yells of joy and appreciation," Arnold recalled. "There were hugs all around. It was wonderful."

Home for the Holidays, a nonprofit that helps people with HIV/AIDS travel home to be with family, received \$24,375 in 2010, an amount that Home for the Holidays President Rodd Gray said earlier this year was a fortune for an organization in which board members often used their own credit cards and bank accounts to cover expenses until they could raise enough money to get reimbursed.

Home for the Holidays did not apply to be a Black Tie beneficiary this year, Gray said, explaining that the 2010 donation was enough to tide them over for some time. "We don't need

the money right now, and we didn't want to possibly take away money from some other organization that needs it more," Gray explained.

For Lemons, stepping into the role of Black Tie Dinner co-chair is an exciting opportunity.

"It is an honor I never dreamed I would have the privilege of experiencing, and I know it will be a time in my life that I will always cherish," Lemons said. "To lead such a remarkable organization that impacts the LGBT community in the way that we do is almost daunting, to say the least. But I know I have the support of my co-chair [Kouvelis] and a truly amazing board and advisory board."

Lemons has been a Black Tie board member for four years, and worked as a volunteer with the organization for two years before joining the board. She said that she was on the board at Celebration Community Church in Fort Worth

when the church first applied and was selected as a Black Tie beneficiary.

When the church was selected as a beneficiary, Lemons said, "I began volunteering with Black Tie and became more and more interested in how the organization works and how it helps so many people."

Lemons said that during her first year as Black Tie co-chair, she intends to "continue our efforts to educate not only the LGBT community about the mission of Black Tie Dinner to help our beneficiaries, but also to educate the general public and our sponsors. There are still many opportunities in the North Texas area, and we will work hard to expand our reach."

"Although the 2011 dinner will be a hard act to follow, we are already in full swing working on an amazing 2012 dinner," she added.

Lemons has been in law firm management for more than 25 years and currently works as a law firm administrator. She and her partner, Dr. Sarah Hardy, have been together for 15 years, and Lemons said Hardy is also "very much a part of Black Tie with her never-ending support of my role on the board and her belief in the Black Tie mission."

"The many hours of work we do as board members to produce the dinner each year would never happen without the devotion of our spouses to what we believe in," Lemons said.

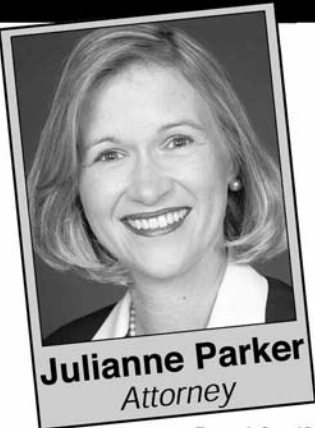
Duncan said this week that the transition to her new position as development director for Black Tie Dinner has already begun, even though she does not officially take over the position until Jan. 1.

"I am honored to be part of the nation's largest, most successful single-event LGBT fundraiser," Duncan said. "That success would not be possible without our extremely dedicated volunteer board of directors."

Duncan said she became familiar with Black Tie while working for five years with AIDS Arms, one of the dinner's beneficiary organizations. Because of that, Duncan said, "I have firsthand knowledge of how important Black Tie's funding is to the LGBT-supportive organizations serving North Texas."

Duncan said her goal for 2012 is to continue building on the organization's current success and to find ways to increase the donations Black Tie gives back to its beneficiaries. ■

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Image (detail): Jean Paul Gaultier, *Punk Cancan* collection, cancan-style ruched tulle strapless dress with "whirl of legs" lining, haute couture spring/summer 2011, photograph © Patrice Stable/Jean Paul Gaultier

# 2011: An 'epic' year for marriage equality

Gay marriage advocates saw some setbacks, but progress, especially in opinion polls, is encouraging

**DANA RUDOLPH** | Keen News Service  
lisakeen@mac.com

One leading advocate has called 2011 an "epic" year for marriage equality. But was it really?

While only one state — New York — enacted full marriage rights for same-sex couples, it was the most populous state to have done so thus far.

Five other states also moved closer to marriage equality than ever before. Public opinion shifted dramatically toward supporting equality. And the Obama administration announced that it no longer considers a key part of the Defense of Marriage Act constitutional.

On the negative side, however, three states failed to pass marriage equality bills that had been introduced in their legislatures, and two states passed bills to put measures on their ballots in

2012 that will seek to ban marriage for same-sex couples under their state constitutions.

Despite the negatives, Evan Wolfson, president of the national Freedom to Marry group, said in an interview that 2011 was "an epic year of real transformation."

## Successes

On the federal level, Attorney General Eric Holder wrote a letter to Congress in February, stating that the administration believes Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act is unconstitutional and that the federal Justice Department will no longer defend the law in court.

Section 3 of DOMA states that the federal government will not, for any federal purposes, recognize the marriages of same-sex couples.

Holder's letter said the administration believes laws disfavoring persons based on sexual orientation should have to pass the most stringent judicial review — heightened scrutiny. And he said the administration would argue so in two cases challenging DOMA in the 2nd Circuit.

LGBT legal advocacy group Lambda Legal, in its December "State of the Law 2011" report, called Holder's letter "game changing." Wolfson said it represented "an immense historical shift."

Another sign of this shift, Wolfson said, was the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell," the military's ban on openly gay servicemembers. DADT repeal will help fuel the marriage equality effort, Wolfson said, "because Americans are now going to see the women and men serving our country as openly gay members of couples and openly gay members of families."

On the state level, the biggest win in 2011 came in New York, where lawmakers passed a marriage equality bill in June. When Gov. Andrew Cuomo, Dem., signed the bill, he doubled the percentage of same-sex couples living in states that allow them to marry.

New York is also the only state to have passed marriage equality through a Republican-led legislative chamber, its state Senate.

Cuomo, by adding his vocal support to the bill, "put his political capital on the line," Wolfson said. His success prompted Politico.com to call him a

"national contender" and leader of the Democratic Party's progressive base.

The Washington Post said his triumph made him "a first among equals when it comes to the jockeying for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination."

Wolfson said, "The freedom to marry went from being a perceived and presumed 'third rail' that politicians ran from to now being a pathway to political gain."

Five other states came closer to marriage equality than ever before. Maryland for the first time passed a marriage equality bill out of a legislative chamber, its Senate, although the measure fell short of winning in the House. And Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois and Rhode Island each passed civil union legislation.

## Setbacks

But there were disappointments, too.

In Colorado, a civil unions bill was killed on a party-line vote in the Republican-led House

■ MARRIAGE, Page 18

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Evan Wolfson



Andrew Cuomo

## MARRIAGE

From Page 16

Judiciary Committee, after passing the Democrat-controlled Senate.

And in Rhode Island, the civil unions bill disappointed many because a bill for full marriage equality had been on the legislature's agenda. It was dropped after it failed to gain enough support, despite large Democratic majorities in both chambers and Independent Gov. Lincoln Chafee's promise to sign it.

LGBT groups were also disappointed with a provision in Rhode Island's civil unions bill providing extensive exemptions on religious grounds for those who don't wish to recognize those unions. Chafee himself said the civil unions law "fails to fully achieve" the goal of providing same-sex couples with equal rights.

## In the courts

Two states saw progress in lawsuits that could lead to marriage equality. In New Jersey, marriage equality advocates have sued the state, claiming that the state's existing civil unions laws do not provide them with full equality — an equality the state Supreme Court said in October 2006 is guaranteed by the state Constitution.

In California, a three-judge panel of the federal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments Dec. 8 on procedural matters related to the case to determine the constitutionality of Proposition 8, the state's ban on marriage for same-sex couples. Regardless of the outcome, the case will almost certainly be appealed to the full 9th Circuit court and/or the U.S. Supreme Court.

## Ups and downs in states

Three states successfully played defense in 2011.

Iowa, New Mexico and Wyoming held firm against attempts to pass bills for ballot measures that sought to ban marriage for same-sex couples under their state constitutions. If passed, Iowa's bill would have taken away the right to marry that same-sex couples gained in 2009.

But there were some clear setbacks in 2011 as well.

North Carolina and Minnesota passed bills for ballot measures in 2012 that seek to ban marriage for same-sex couples under the state constitutions. And Indiana and Pennsylvania started the process for such ballot measures, which could see further action in 2012.

In Maine, however, LGBT advocates gained enough signatures to place a measure in favor of marriage equality before voters on the 2012 ballot — although advocates in California and Oregon decided to postpone such attempts and continue to build support.

These ballot measures could be impacted by what was perhaps the most significant win in 2011: a shift in public opinion towards support for marriage equality.

## The polls

Support for marriage equality nationwide rose about 1 percent per year between 1996 and 2009, but jumped to a rate of 5 percent per year in 2010 and 2011, according to a July analysis of over a decade's worth of polling data by Joel Benenson, President Barack Obama's lead pollster, and Jan van Lohuizen, President George W. Bush's lead pollster.

Freedom to Marry commissioned the study. The average level of support for marriage equality was 41 percent in 2009, but 51 percent in 2011, based on four leading national polls — CNN-ORC International, Gallup, Pew and Washington Post-ABC News.

This change is driven in part by "overwhelming generational momentum," Wolfson explained, with almost 70 percent of voters under 40 supporting marriage equality.

But the analysis also concluded that since 2006, support has risen 15 percent among seniors, 13 percent among Independents and 8 percent among Republicans.

Additionally, it found that marriage equality supporters now hold their views as strongly as opponents, which was not the case in the past.

"The politics of the freedom to marry have changed dramatically, as has public support," said Wolfson.

All told, he said, the events of 2011 mean that "We now have real wind in our sails as we go forward."

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# Still no single clear leader in Republican presidential contest

Romney often under fire from conservatives for changing positions on issues including LGBT rights

**STEVEN R. HURST** | Associated Press  
editor@dallasvoice.com

WASHINGTON — Republicans are growing significantly less satisfied with the field of candidates to challenge President Barack Obama next year, and they are about evenly split in their support for Mitt Romney and Newt Gingrich, a new Associated Press-GfK poll finds.

Despite Obama's low approval ratings and deep vulnerability over his handling of the U.S. economy, the poll of all people surveyed, including Democrats and independents, found Romney and the president statistically even. Obama leads Gingrich 51 percent to 42 percent.

With three weeks remaining before the Iowa caucus, the first contest where voters actually declare their choice of a candidate, Romney's argument that his Washington outsider status sets him apart has not blocked Gingrich's stunning climb to the top of the field.

A similar AP-GfK poll of Republicans in October found Gingrich well behind the leading candidates, with 7 percent. Romney had 30 percent.

The new poll conducted earlier this month finds Gingrich preferred by 33 percent of Republicans and Romney by 27 percent. However, that finding falls just within the poll's margin of error of plus or minus 6 percentage points.

All other candidates are in single digits.

The poll also found a considerable drop in satisfaction with the overall Republican field. In October, 66 percent of Republican adults were satisfied, and 29 percent unsatisfied. Now, 56 percent are satisfied and 40 percent unsatisfied.

Voter preferences in early voting states such as Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina do not necessarily match those in national polls. The Iowa caucus is Jan. 3. The New Hampshire primary is one week later.

At a time when polls show plummeting public approval of government, the 68-year-old Gingrich has a long history in the capital as a member of Congress, speaker of the House of Representatives and, since 1998, a lucrative, Washington-based consultant, speaker and author.

Except for four years as Massachusetts governor, Romney, 64, has spent his career in business and management. He ran unsuccessfully for the Senate in 1994 and for president in 2008.

Both men have earned millions of dollars over the years. Romney has built his campaign largely on the argument that his business background makes him better suited for the presidency than anyone else, especially on creating jobs in an economy where unemployment remains at 8.6 percent. But in a recent debate in Iowa, Romney at first struggled to name issues on which he and Gingrich disagree.

After citing Gingrich's support for a mining

colony on the moon and changes to child labor laws, Romney said: "The real difference, I believe, is our backgrounds. I spent my life in the private sector. I understand how the economy works."

Among Republicans who say they prefer a non-Washington candidate, Romney has a modest edge over Gingrich. Gingrich has a larger advantage among those who say they prefer Washington experience in a nominee.

Romney's better showing in a head-to-head matchup with Obama may give him some ammunition with Republicans whose top priority is ousting the president. Otherwise, Republicans appear to see Romney and Gingrich as similar in many important ways. The two men polled about evenly on the questions of who would be a strong leader, has the right experience, understands ordinary people's problems and can bring needed change. Rom-

ney holds a clear edge on who is most likable. Gingrich leads on the question of who "has firm policy positions." Romney is often asked about his changed positions on abortion, gay rights, gun control and immigration. Gingrich, however, also has shifted views on key issues. ■

AP Deputy Polling Director Jennifer Agiesta and News Survey Specialist Dennis Junius contributed to this report.

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■ coverstory

# Senior Class



**BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP** | Cannon Flowers, right, is getting help with his Mature LGBT Project for North Texas from Candace Thompson and Beau Bumpas, two 31-year-olds who share an interest in creating resources for LGBT seniors. (David Webb/Dallas Voice)

Cannon Flowers has teamed up with Resource Center Dallas on a project to gauge and meet the needs of LGBT seniors

**DAVID WEBB** | Contributing Writer  
[davidwaynewebb@yahoo.com](mailto:davidwaynewebb@yahoo.com)

It was an irony of life that caused community activist Cannon Flowers to develop an even more compelling concern for the challenges some LGBT people face as they grow older and struggle to maintain basic living standards.

Flowers had already drafted his proposal for the "Mature LGBT Project for North Texas" for presentation to an audience of community leaders when he slipped on a rainy sidewalk while walking his dog in early November and broke his leg. The accident put Flowers in the hospital, and his injury required surgery that left him recovering in a wheelchair.

The activist, who has supported a number of LGBT community causes over the past 10 years,

suddenly became unable to properly care for himself, putting him in a similar position as the targeted group his project would benefit.

"I don't think I could have made it without help," said Flowers, who fortunately had a partner and several close friends upon whom he could rely for help until he recovered. "I think there would have been days I would have had to go without eating if I hadn't had anyone to help me."

Flowers, 53, said the experience gave him a new appreciation for the hardships LGBT seniors sometimes experience. And it strengthened his resolve to help provide more community resources for them.

The plight of disadvantaged LGBT seniors had already been highlighted a year earlier by the discovery that an elderly gay political activist suffering from dementia had wound up living on the streets of Dallas before he was arrested by police and later placed in a nursing home.

"I've been thinking about it for the last couple of years," said Flowers, who noted that his

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Cece Cox

■ SENIOR, From Previous Page

concerns about some older friends' isolation had sparked the idea. "I see them, and I realize they shouldn't be alone. It doesn't have to be a holiday. They just shouldn't be alone."

The project's proposal includes statistical information derived from the 2010 U.S. Census that estimates there are 30,000 LGBT people between the ages of 45-90 living in Dallas County. The data also indicates that 27 percent of all people 65 and older live alone.

Flowers' proposal identifies numerous unique challenges faced by older members of the LGBT, including loneliness caused by the loss of life partners and the absence of children and other family members in their lives. It also points to financial and legal problems caused by the lack of protection through traditional marriage rights and a lack of social services and living facilities specifically geared to the LGBT population.

The proposal notes that although there are programs and living facilities for the general population that LGBT seniors can access, there often are barriers created by real or perceived anti-gay discrimination. LGBT seniors fear they would be forced to go back into the closet in order to access resources devoted to the general population, according to the proposal.

In announcing a national summit recently, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development acknowledged that LGBT seniors face additional stresses because they are more likely to age without the benefit of a partner, children and other family support. And Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders and the National Academy on an Aging Society released their "Public Policy & Aging Report" that shows LGBT seniors face significant barriers to successful aging that include poor health outcomes, a lack of economic security, social isolation and unequal treatment under the law and in general population aging programs.

Those national reports show the needs of LGBT seniors are easily understood and documented, but they aren't being fully addressed

at this time in Dallas, Flowers said.

"There's just not any organization spearheading it," Flowers said. "In the last two years I've talked about it a lot, and I've thought somebody has got to do something about it."

The overall project proposed by Flowers appears to be far-reaching and ambitious, providing for services that would include social networking and consultation and education services for diet, medical needs, legal services, life coaching, finances, grief support, retirement living and travel.

The preliminary results from a survey Flowers sent out to LGBT people in Dallas showed the primary areas of interest were LGBT-dedicated living facilities, programs for promoting lifelong friends and programs sponsoring social events.

Flowers has been in contact with Resource Center Dallas officials on his project, and he is collaborating with them as a volunteer in an effort to get the project launched.

Cece Cox, executive director and chief executive officer for Resource Center Dallas, said she agrees there is much work to be done to meet the needs of LGBT seniors, and said center officials welcome the work Flowers is doing.

"I think it is important work," Cox said. "I'm supportive of it."

Cox said that Flowers is helping the center staff develop and implement an assessment tool that can be used to gauge the suitability of general-population facilities and programs for LGBT seniors.

It would be beneficial if the other components of Flowers' project could be coordinated with the center, which is already addressing some needs of LGBT seniors, Cox said.

The center administers a program called GAIN — the LGBT Aging Interests Network — that provides learning, entertainment and social activities and referrals for LGBT seniors.

The survey Flowers sent out also shows that a majority of people would prefer an existing agency like Resource Center Dallas undertake

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## coverstory

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2011

#### Bay Area LGBT groups get \$690,000 in grants

From the San Jose Mercury News:

The Billy DeFrank LGBT Community Center in San Jose led the list of Santa Clara and San Mateo county non-profits winning grants from the Horizons Foundation.



Based in San Francisco, Horizons announced \$690,000 in grants Tuesday to 50 groups working with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents of the Bay Area.

[SNIP]

#### FEATURED INTERVIEW



Thom Bierdz with Rick Rose

#### FEATURED COLUMN

**THE LGBTSR WEBSITE** | The LGBTSR website, launched in May, focuses on news and advice for and about LGBTs over 50.

LGBT publications are often geared toward a youth-appreciative audience, but at least one Web site wants to attract a different type of reader.

LGBTSR.com, which was launched in March of this year, is tailored to attract LGBT readers who are 50-plus years of age. The website “embraces age and celebrates life over 50, with all the ups and downs of living long enough to tell about it,” according to the Website’s mission statement, which promises to provide readers with news, reviews, opinion pieces and a “thing or two to hold up to the light.”

Mark McNease, 53, of New York City, is the founder of LGBTSR.com. He lives in Manhattan with his partner Frank of five years, whom he plans to soon marry under the state’s new marriage equality law. The couple also owns a country home in rural New Jersey where they plan to retire someday.

“It’s an upbeat publication,” McNease said of the website in a telephone interview. “I’m over 50, but I’m alive and I feel great.”

## SENIOR

From Page 21

the project rather than creating an independent agency dedicated to LGBT seniors.

The center is in the process of developing a strategic plan for expanding its services for LGBT seniors, Cox said. Center staff recently provided cultural competency training to the senior ombudsman for the Texas Department of Aging, and similar training is planned for other professionals who deal with seniors as the needs are identified, she said.

Flowers’ work helping center staff survey and assess senior facilities and programs will assist in the improvement of referral services for LGBT seniors, Cox said. Other alliances with organizations serving general populations will likely be announced in 2012, she said.

“There is a lot happening,” said Cox, who noted the Women’s Communities Association has been collecting undergarments and socks for nursing home residents for years.

Interest in and work on LGBT senior issues has been steadily building momentum for at

least the past five years, Cox said. The work has begun to attract more attention because of more data being produced about it, she said.

Also, more attention is being paid to LGBT seniors because there are more openly LGBT seniors than ever before, Cox said.

“We focus on what is important to us,” Cox said. “We are aging so that has become more important to us.”

In relation to other big U.S. cities’ progress in the area of LGBT senior services, Cox said Dallas is behind some cities and ahead of others.

Cox said it is unlikely a living facility for LGBT seniors would be built in Dallas because of the expense and the difficulty that would be encountered in obtaining funding for it.

Perhaps one way to compensate for the lack of a dedicated living facility is to ensure that LGBT seniors receive interaction with other like-minded people. One of the major components of Flowers’ project would pair needy LGBT seniors with young people who would volunteer to visit with and assist them.

“I really do believe there is a value to having

■ SENIOR, Next Page

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Publishing the website is a labor of love, said McNease, who also writes a column for the publication. In the column, Mark's Café Moi, McNease shares his views on life and the events that affect it. In a recent column, he recounted the day two airplanes struck the World Trade Center in Manhattan on Sept. 11, 2001.

"I love our audience," said McNease, who also holds down a full-time job as an executive assistant for a group of senior editors at the global news agency Reuters. "This is their place."

In addition to original pieces authored by a small staff of regular freelance writers, the website reports news from all over that focuses on LGBT people who are 50 years and older. Some of the recent stories include news about the development of a residential building in Chicago that will provide one of the nation's first affordable apartment buildings for LGBT people, age discrimination within the LGBT community and the failure of the nation's medical community to keep up with the number of transgender people who are becoming medical patients because professionals are inexperienced with the population.

The news feed also regularly includes stories about health, legal matters and other items of interest for anyone 50 and older, in addition to LGBT news stories that are of interest to people of all ages.

McNease, who has been a writer since childhood, began his journalism career in Los Angeles writing fiction and reviews for Edge, an LGBT publication that went out of business. Afterwards, he wrote plays, eventually seeing six of them produced.

He worked in children's television for nine years, including several years at Sesame Workshop as the story editor for foreign co-productions of the children's program. In 2001 he won an Emmy for Outstanding Children's Program for *Into the Outdoors*.

One of the advisors and writers for LGBTSR.com is Rick Rose, a writer, director and producer, with whom McNease collaborated on the Emmy-award winning children's series. Rose has also been nominated for Emmy Awards for his *Discover Wisconsin* travel series.

The creation of LGBTSR.com is the fulfillment of a three-decade dream, said McNease, who noted he considers himself fortunate to have survived the AIDS epidemic that struck down so many of his contemporaries, including a former partner. Even his 20s, he realized that LGBT cultural offerings seemed to ignore anyone who was over 50 years of age.

"I started to notice that people over 40 started to disappear in the gay media," McNease said. "I knew then that I wanted to create something for people over 50."

McNease said that he is pleased with the growth of the readership of the website because about 35 percent of the hits each month appear to be from return visitors. His initial goal is to see a 10-fold increase in readership, which he hopes a pending redesign of the website will help accomplish.

McNease said that he is planning to soon survey readers to find out what they would like to see happen on the website, and that he is seeking submissions from people who would like to add to the publication's dialogue.

"This is something I've wanted to do for years," said McNease, who is currently underwriting the cost of the publication from a small inheritance he received from his family in Indiana where he grew up. "I'm very proud of it, and I'm going to continue publishing it."

—David Webb

#### ■ SENIOR, From Previous Page

young people in your life," said Flowers, whose friends include younger people with whom he became acquainted through his adult children. "It forces you to stay young that much longer."

Flowers has already recruited two younger people to his project who are willing to volunteer their time to interact with LGBT seniors and to help Flowers attract more youthful volunteers. Candace Thompson, a social worker, and Beau Bumpas, a photographer, both 31, said they are eager to help Flowers kick off the project.

Thompson said she is the primary caregiver for her 90-year-old grandfather so she is already involved in the type of assistance that is needed. Flowers said she will be helping him develop guidelines for the volunteer work.

"I've always gravitated toward older people," Thompson said. "Aging is a reality. It will happen at one point in time, so everyone needs to be prepared for it."

Bumpas said that in addition to helping Flowers who has been his mentor, he also wants to

see the project implemented for personal reasons — even though he is still relatively young.

"I'm single, and I don't see myself getting a partner," Bumpas said. "It scares me to wonder who is going to take care of me when I get old. I'm all alone."

Flowers said that Thompson and Bumpas would be providing invaluable assistance to him as he figures out how to market his project to the community at large to gain volunteers and to gather support for funding it. For the project to work, there must draw support from all ages of LGBT people, as there has been for programs helping LGBT youth, he said.

Flowers said LGBT youth programs have been successful because LGBT adults remember what it was like to be young and gay. The challenge will be to create an "emotional aspect" that helps younger LGBT people imagine what it would be like to be old and gay and in need. ■

David Webb is a veteran journalist who has covered LGBT issues for the mainstream and alternative media for three decades. Contact him at [davidwaynewebb@yahoo.com](mailto:davidwaynewebb@yahoo.com) or [facebook.com/therarereporter](https://www.facebook.com/therarereporter).



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## ■ spirituality

# Coming to the aid of those who are wounded by religion



**WALKING WOUNDED** | Vickie Johnson helps people who have been hurt by their religious upbringing begin to heal. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

Vickie Johnson of Pastoral Counseling Center specializes in therapy for those whose lives have been damaged by religion

**DAVID TAFFET** | Staff Writer  
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Vickie Johnson said each of the 18 therapists at the Pastoral Counseling Center on Lemmon Avenue has a specialty. She concentrates on helping those who have been wounded by religion.

"It's something I've been aware of most my life," she said. "As a lesbian, growing up in the church, I was always aware of people who were very hurt, and I went through some of that myself."

Johnson grew up in the Methodist Church. She was ordained as a minister in the church, but in 1984 the church came out with rules forbidding a lesbian from serving in that capacity.

So although she was ordained, she remains unappointable.

"When I had to leave the church, it was such a loss," Johnson said. "I was devastated."

But she studied to become a licensed clinical social worker instead and now attends the Unitarian Universalist Church in Oak Cliff.

"Religion and spirituality can be one of the most helpful and supportive and nurturing aspects of one's life," Johnson said. "Or it can be one of the most damaging."

■ RELIGION, Next Page



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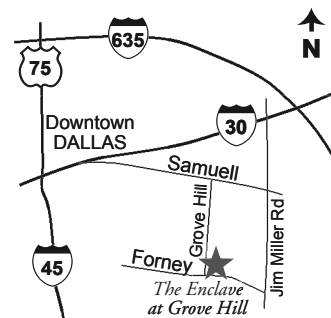
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■ **RELIGION**, From Previous Page

She said there are a number of categories of religious abuse and in various religions the issues may differ.

Because of their religion, many gay people decide to marry a person of the opposite sex. Johnson said that hurts not only the gay person, but also the straight spouse as the marriage falls apart. And children are hurt as well when the parents divorce.

Some have endured damaging reparative therapy aimed at changing their sexual orientation. With those patients, Johnson said she begins by dealing with the hurt and confusion.

"Who am I?" is the basic question that someone who has undergone reparative therapy must grapple with first, Johnson said. That is followed by, "What do I do next?"

As people come out at younger ages, Johnson said she has worked with teens who have been thrown out of their homes because of their sexual orientation. And she's worked with older people who come to a turning point in their lives — the death of a parent or death of a spouse or an empty nest — when they realize they cannot hide their sexual orientation anymore.

Some that have come to the Pastoral Counseling Center have been raped by a priest, Johnson said. In the Catholic Church, the priest is a figure of God, she said, so the feeling may be that they have been assaulted and abused by God.

Johnson said she begins therapy by working with a client to figure out what areas of their life are most damaged and how have they gotten themselves through. Then they can figure out the best course of action — to leave, restore or repair

the relationship.

Johnson said she administers a spirituality assessment to determine where a person's support comes from. She also discusses issues of health related to a bad coming out process. People who are closeted may put themselves in unsafe or dangerous situations and abuse drugs or alcohol.

Johnson said those who've been subjected to reparative therapy usually come into therapy with her hurt and confused, questioning where they belong and what they should do next. And abuse by a religious figure leaves a victim with a feeling of betrayal by the church and those around who saw what was going on and didn't stop it, she noted.

Johnson said she helps these clients accept that their victimization doesn't say anything about who they are, but at the same time, she helps them realize that they are responsible for their healing.

To reach that healing, Johnson said, she helps clients understand their strengths and find support, discussing with them to what extent a relationship with their family can be repaired.

Sometimes, Johnson said, she has to tell her clients, "For your safety and well being, you may have to act as if that person is not in your life. Down the road? Who knows."

Johnson said getting a healthy self-image of ones sexuality and religion is important.

"Each religion has its own sins and foibles that are inherent and their own strengths," she said. "I see so much of how religion for some people can be one of the most helpful and affirming things around them." ■

*Pastoral Counseling Center, 4525 Lemmon Ave. Suite 200. 214-526-4525.*



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## Christmas services at LGBT churches

### DALLAS COUNTY

#### Cathedral of Hope

5910 Cedar Springs Road, Dallas  
 Christmas Eve at:

- Noon. Shoppers' Christmas Eve, the Rev. Shelley Hamilton preaching
  - 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. traditional worship, the Rev. Jo Hudson preaching
  - 7 p.m. Congregacion Latina, Interfaith Peace Chapel, the Rev. Alejandro de la Torre preaching
  - 11 p.m. Gospel Mass, the Rev. Dr. Steven V. Sprinkle preaching
- Christmas Day at 11 a.m.  
 the Rev. Dawson B. Taylor, preaching

#### MCC of Greater Dallas

1840 Hutton Drive, No. 100, Carrollton  
 Christmas Eve at 7 p.m. family-friendly service  
 Christmas Day at 10 a.m.

#### Promise MCC

2527 W. Colorado Blvd., Dallas  
 Christmas Day at 10:30 a.m.

#### White Rock Community Church

9353 Garland Road, Dallas  
 Christmas Eve at 6:30 p.m.  
 Christmas Day at 10:45 a.m.

### TARRANT COUNTY

#### Agape MCC

4615 E. California Parkway, Fort Worth  
 Christmas Eve at 7 p.m.  
 Christmas Day at 10:30 a.m.

#### Cathedral of Hope Mid-cities

2400 School Lane, Bedford  
 Christmas Eve at 6 p.m.  
 Christmas Day at 11 a.m.

#### Celebration Community Church

908 Pennsylvania Ave., Fort Worth  
 Christmas Eve at 11 p.m.  
 Christmas Day communion from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

#### Trinity MCC

1846 W. Division St., Suite 305, Arlington  
 Christmas Day at 11 a.m.

### ELSEWHERE

#### Harvest MCC

725 N. Elm Street, Suite 18, Denton  
 Christmas Day at 10 a.m.

#### Celebration on the Lake

114 Golden Oaks Drive, Mabank  
 Christmas Day at 10 a.m.

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## CORRECTIONS &amp; CLARIFICATIONS

## CORRECTION:

Judge Tena Callahan, of the 302nd Family District Court in Dallas County, doesn't face re-election until 2014. A story that began on Page 6 of the Dec. 9 issue said otherwise.

## viewpoints

## Another misstep for Perry's campaign

Hateful bigotry of Texas governor's presidential campaign ad is surpassed only by its assininity

Just when I thought the 2012 Rick Perry for President campaign couldn't get any nuttier, guess what? Yep, it managed to get sillier with the release of Gov. Perry's campaign video attacking openly gay and lesbian members of the U.S. Armed Services.

Never mind that in the video dubbed "Strong" Perry is wearing the same type of tan Carhartt ranch coat actor Heath Ledger wore in the gay romance movie *Brokeback Mountain*, and that the video's musical score was inspired by gay American composer Aaron Copland. The message is ridiculous, and the video's distinction of registering more than half a million "dislikes" (646,000 dislikes to 20,000 likes) is probably attributable as much to its assininity as its hateful bigotry.

Facing the camera, against a wooded backdrop that conjures images of the big gay movie's outdoor scenes, Perry declares that he is not "ashamed to admit" he is a Christian.



**David Webb**  
The Rare Reporter

"You don't need to be in the pew every Sunday to know that something is wrong when gays can serve openly in the military, but our kids can't openly celebrate Christmas and pray in schools," he declares.

Perry adds that as president he would "end Obama's war on religion" and "fight against liberal attacks on our religious heritage."

Aside from the imagery and the music of the video making Perry and his campaign staff again look like fools, the idea that openly gay and lesbian members of the military somehow undermine Christianity is ludicrous. Or are children supposed to resent gay and lesbian soldiers because they get to go off and fight wars while they are stuck at school, unable to pray out loud?

I doubt that it will come as a shock to Perry, his staff, the voting public or even school children that there are openly gay and lesbian people working in every level of local, state and federal government and private business — even churches — without harm to Christianity. Yet for some reason they expect everyone to swallow the notion that openly gay and lesbian members of the military will put the nation under the control of pagans.

What about openly gay and lesbian soldiers who observe Christianity by going to church, reading their Bibles and praying? Are they to be the demise of their own religion?

And do U.S. citizens who are Jewish or members of other faiths matter at all to Perry and his campaign staff? Under the Perry plan, are the children of those citizens to be indoctrinated into Christianity?

As to Perry's promise in the video's closing, it would be news to everybody if it were learned President Obama had declared a war on religion. Those laws regulating Christmas displays and school prayer were put in motion decades ago, a long time before Obama ever thought about running for political office.

Open prayer in school was banned by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1962 when Perry was in grade school. Surely he remembers.

Ultimately, I can't imagine many people viewing the overturn of "don't ask, don't tell," which was supported by a majority of the American public, enacted by Congress and signed into law by Obama, as an assault on Christianity.

White House Press Secretary Jay Carney said last week that Obama was probably not aware of the Perry campaign video claiming he had declared war on Christianity, but regardless the president is proud of his support of LGBT issues.

The video looks like evidence of the Perry campaign's desperation following the governor's disintegration in national polls since his announcement in August he would run for president. Perry dropped from a double-digit front leader status to 5 percent following a series of debate missteps and disastrous public appearances that showed him to be outmatched on the debate stage by every other Republican in the campaign.

A new American Research Poll shows Perry now has 13 percentage points in Iowa, the first primary state. But he still is in back of the pack, far behind Newt Gingrich and Mitt Romney.

Regardless of where Perry goes in the polls, I'm confident he will again sabotage himself in some manner, unless he has an undercover gay or lesbian person on his campaign staff doing it for him.

Speaking of which, after Perry's anti-gay ad was released, leaders from the gay Republican group GOProud outed one of the campaign's consultants as gay. It was later learned that the consultant, Tony Fabrizio, had written an email prior to the ad's release calling it "nuts."

But aside from that effort and the obvious aspect of Fabrizio being a traitor who apparently has sacrificed the LGBT community to make a few bucks for himself, he doesn't appear to have been doing a good job of using his expertise as a gay man to help Perry navigate difficult wa-

ters. Who will ever forget the image of Perry deep-throating a corn dog at an Iowa state fair while Romney graciously nibbled on his?

What were they thinking when they handed a corn dog to Perry, who has been fighting rumors that he is secretly gay for years?

In fact, a common question today is, "How did he ever go so far in Texas politics?"

There is only one group of people — other than personal friends, relatives and other beneficiaries of the governor's influence as an elected official — to whom Perry still appeals: That is conservative Christians who put their religious beliefs ahead of every other consideration, regardless of whose rights get trampled upon in the process.

No wonder Perry released such a video and continues to offer it on his campaign website, but I don't think there are enough of them to vote him into office.

Many people who started off supporting Perry have now fled from his camp, saying that his performance as a presidential candidate has brought about a national embarrassment. The worst part of it is that there is no telling what Perry and his campaign will do next. But it's bound to be a dilly. ■

*David Webb is a veteran journalist who has covered LGBT issues for the mainstream and alternative media for three decades. Contact him at davidwaynewebb@yahoo.com or http://therarereporter.blogspot.com.*

## Feedback

## An Open Letter to Rick Perry

Dear Gov. Perry,

Your antics since you announced your bid for the Republican presidential nomination have already almost pushed me over the edge. You have long-since made me regret having voted for you the first go-round (before seeing the light). There have been multiple times that I have been embarrassed by you in much the same way that residents of Alaska must have been embarrassed by their then-governor Sarah Palin.

But the video commercial you released last week crossed the line. I am not only embarrassed that you are our state's top elected official, I am ashamed of — and for — you.

It's so apparent that you are making a completely unveiled attempt to pander to religious conservatives with this babble about "Obama's religious war."

Yes, there are people across the nation — and

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■ **FEEDBACK**, From Previous Page

unfortunately, many of them here in the South — who will identify with your narrow-minded and hateful ideologies. But you, Mr. Governor, do not represent all Texans and certainly could in no way ever assume a position where you lead on behalf of an entire nation.

Your comments are hateful and full of fear. They are misinformed with respect to the ideals our country were shaped by and founded upon. And they place you absolutely on the wrong side of history — the same whitewashed tomb of people who opposed women's rights, civil rights for people of all races and rights for the handicapped.

So here is what I say to you, oh woefully out-of-touch public servant to the people of Texas:

I've been a Christian my entire life and I believe in essentially the same creator, center of the Universe, life-giver, omniscient, all-loving being you claim to believe in — the very same Essence that millions of human beings believe in across the world. And although I no longer occupy a pew within a specific religious body, I respect your right to do so.

So go ahead on into your house of worship and occupy your pew. Worship the way you want to worship, say what you want to say, fol-

low whatever rules they ascribe, judge those within your body, and exclude whomever you want to exclude. I will not judge you.

I would appreciate it, however, if you would behave in kind and refrain from bringing your hateful judgment to me or to any of my fellow human beings and their families.

Keep it there, inside your religion; it is not welcome in my house, my state, my nation. Remember, the lines drawn between church and state are there for a reason. Our country was founded on the pursuit of liberty and the desire for religious freedom — not on narrow-minded ideologies that discriminate against a minority. These people did not want to come to the New World to impose their religion on others but rather to worship the God they wanted to worship. Period, end of story.

Though it's true that many of our founding fathers were chauvinists and slave owners, I believe many of them had a seed of foresight to believe that the statement "all men are created equally" applied (or would apply) to both genders, all races and eventually all sexual orientations.

Our respectable President Barack Obama — who leads in a way you apparently will never be able — did not start a religious war. Prayer in school has been an issue of contention since I

was a child. And gays serving in the military have nothing to do with an attack on your religion.

What a foolish comparison; high school students come up with more reasonable — and creative — theses than that.

"Gays in the military" no more impedes your right to worship than women being allowed to vote or allowing a black man to drink from the same water fountain as someone of your race did. Yet religious people somehow once supported such absurd and un-Godly beliefs as those, too.

People who dare breathe such views today are frowned upon, eschewed and pitied. At least generally, they have the sense to keep those thoughts to themselves.

You, sir, are not the only one who wears the name "Christian." I know many such people who are heterosexual and accept their gay and



Gov. Rick Perry

lesbian brothers and sisters. And I know many homosexual Christians who sit in pews and worship Jehovah and obey the two greatest commandments: loving God with all their hearts, minds, souls and strength and loving their neighbors as they love themselves.

(You would be a wise student to note that it does not say "love only your heterosexual neighbors." Are you, Mr. Perry, doing that?)

It seems to me that every time you open your mouth and say something hateful, you diminish the very witness of the Christ you claim to follow. Your unkind words belie any love that your namesake should evoke.

We don't need you to save us, nor do we need your judgments or your pronouncement of some ridiculous war made up to get yourself attention within a small group of narrow-minded, religious people like yourself. We are not trying to destroy your religion or asking for admission into your religious sects; further, we are not asking your leaders to perform our marriages.

We demand, however, that you respect us and our families. The United States of America is not just the home of Republican, Christian heterosexuals; it is our home too and at home, we are created equally — every last one of us. Please, sir, do not attempt to force your religious beliefs on my humanity. As a homosexual, I am no less deserving of rights than any heterosexual. You are my governor, not my judge.

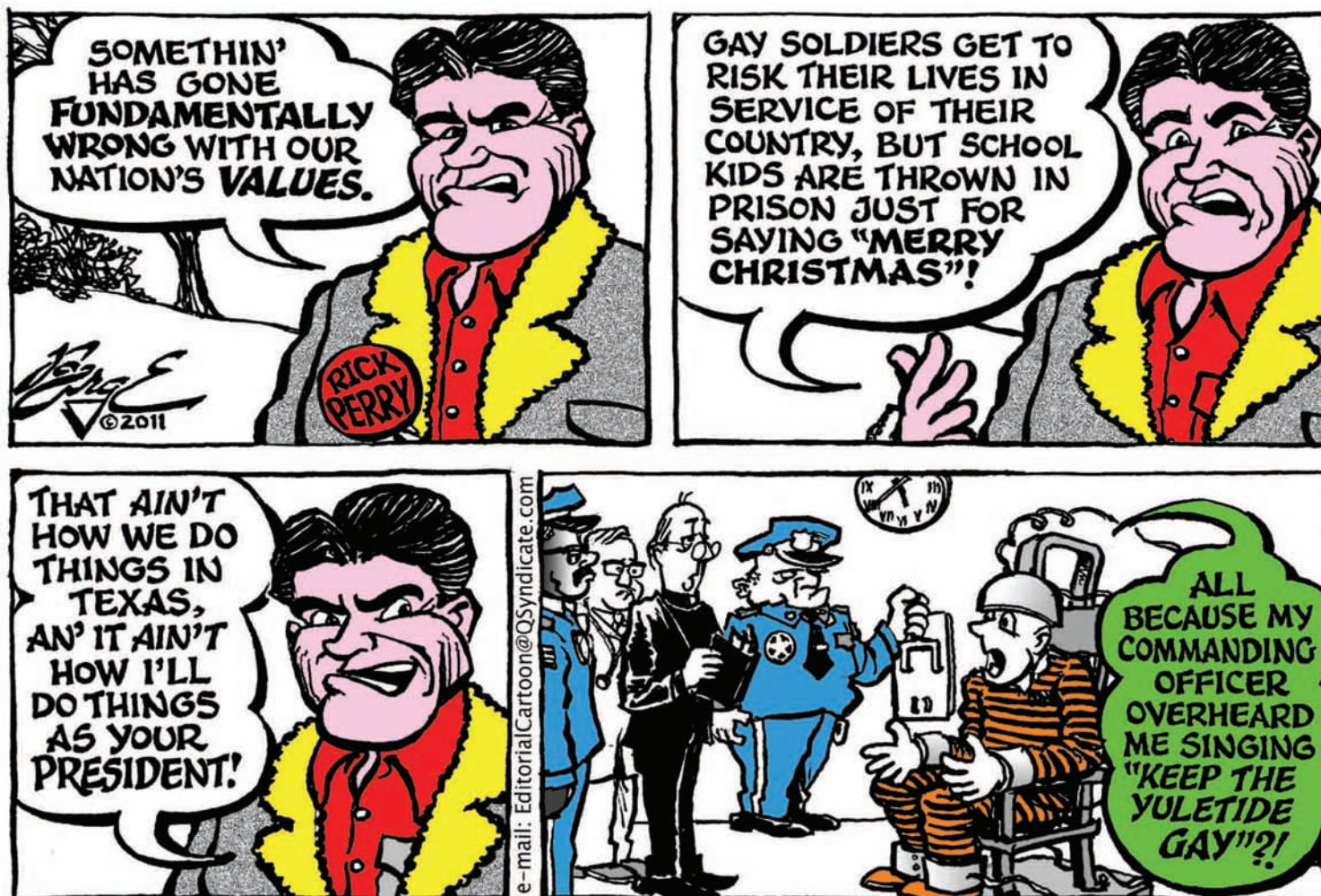
Fear-mongering public servants like you will become relics that students of government and politics will study as examples of narrow-mindedness and shameful behavior. When they study the great women and men of politics, you will be absent from among them; I rather think you will be in the category of those rued and pitied — George Wallace will keep you company there.

Rick Perry, you should be ashamed of your ridiculous video. You should immediately apologize and reconsider whether running for the office of president of the United States is something you're cut out for.

By your words and your actions — embarrassing gaffes and soundbites notwithstanding — you continue to prove you are not the man for the job.

Respectfully,  
Todd Whitley, Granbury

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Is Rick Perry gay?

### RESULTS FROM LAST WEEK'S POLL:

Would having more security guards on Cedar Springs make you feel safer there?

- Yes: 71 percent
- No: 20 percent
- Unsure: 9 percent

189 Votes cast

# HOPE on the range

Animal Angels Rescue provides unwanted beasts a chance at a better life

**STEVEN LINDSEY** | Contributing Writer  
stevencraiglindsey@me.com

There are dog lovers, and then there's Carole Sanders. With 300 dogs and counting under her roof, Sanders' Animal Angels Rescue, Rehabilitation, Adoption and Sanctuary represents a last chance for many unwanted canines. But unlike the fate of many other homeless animals on this 38-acre ranch in Jacksboro, Texas, these dogs (and 18 horses) have a place to live out the rest of their lives with food, shelter and most of all, love.

Sanders, now 72, loved dogs from a very early age and knew that somehow her life would end up in the service of animals.

"I just didn't know I was going to do anything at this level, but I've always seen the need out there and I have the will and determination to do what I had to accomplish. You have to take time," she says. "If you try to do too much too fast, you can't do it well. That's why some rescue groups burn out and fail."

It was vitally important to Sanders that the sanctuary, which she started in 1992, grow slowly and that everything was in place to sustain it. In 1993, Animal Angels received its non-profit 501(c)3 tax status. Then in 2001, Sanders retired after 40 years of serving a completely different yet equally unruly animal — the airline passenger.

"After being a flight attendant for so long, I figured out that I'm a giver," she says.

Thankfully, she's not alone in the giving department. Along with her life partner, Nita Burgoon, Sanders continues to buy up surrounding land — not just to provide more space for the dogs, but to keep neighbors far, far away (300 barking dogs could lead to complaints that might jeopardize the entire mission).

In the cozy lodge that Burgoon had custom-built for the couple, more than a dozen smaller dogs have graciously allowed the two women to share their space, though it's difficult to find a chair, sofa or any other soft surface without a furry face staring up from it.

More recently, former Operation Kindness intake coordinator Beth Kelley, her husband Matt, and three children have moved into a house on the property and are in charge of many of the daily chores and upkeep that an organization like this entails. Serving the needs of the animals has created a unique situation for Kelley and her family.

"When making the decision to all work at the sanctuary as a family and not having to commute to an outside source of income we feel that we not only have enhanced the upbringing of our children, but the lives of animals that are in great need while educating the community that we live in," she says.

Part of that education is in-your-face messages that appear on

every Animal Angels vehicle. "Only and idiot would let a dog ride in the bed of a truck" adorns their pick-ups; a gestured middle finger from bubbas who drive past isn't uncommon.

Other messages are less provocative, though no less thought-provoking — like the fact that one female dog and one male dog can be responsible for 67,000 more dogs in just seven years. (For cats, that's 420,000 in the same time frame.) These statistics are just one of the many reasons that every dog at Animal Angels is spayed or neutered by a vet who comes to the on-site medical facility at least once per month.

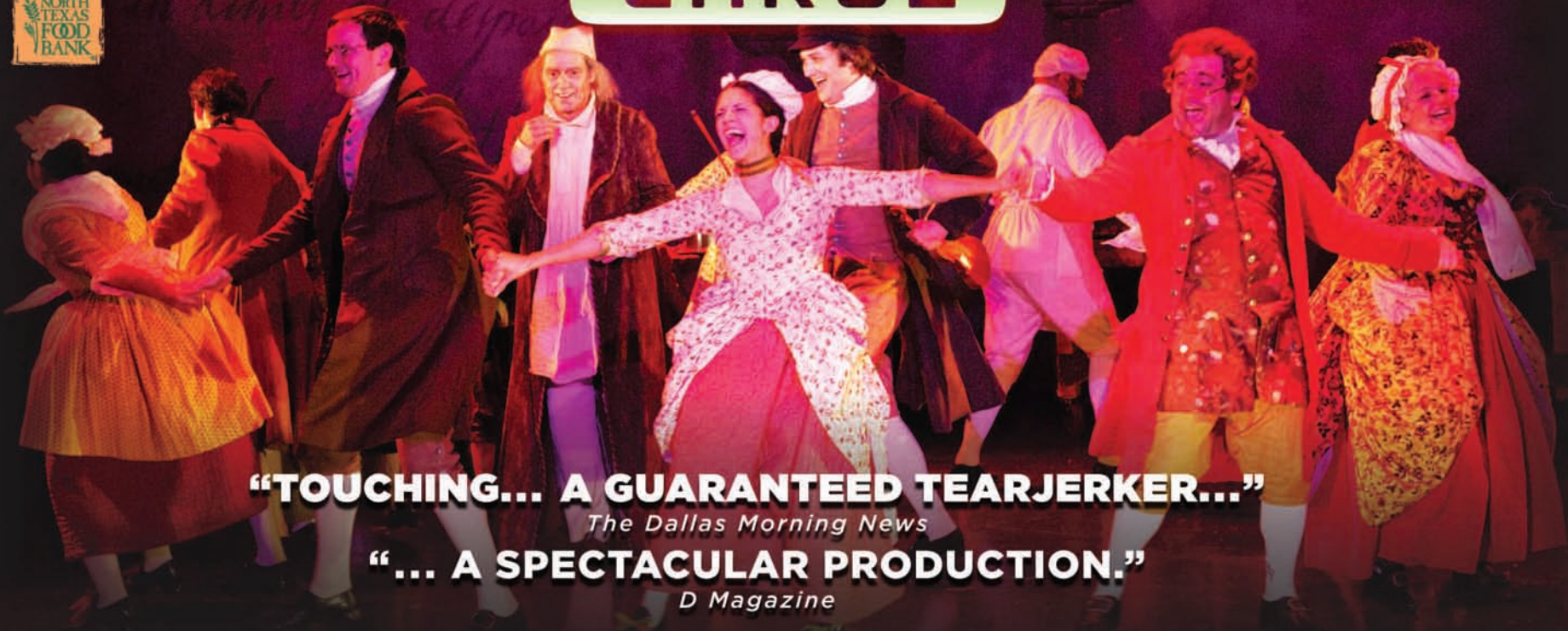
With all the dogs spayed or neutered, there is no threat of breeding, thus presenting opportunities for less restrictive doggie interaction. When Kelley first came on the scene in February of last year, most of the dogs were in chain-link "neighborhoods," large fenced-in areas where dogs could socialize with each other in like-minded packs.

"We couldn't let them roam the whole property at the time because we didn't have a full perimeter fence," Sanders says. "So the best solution was large neighborhoods with dogs that got along. We've now taken it a step further. Other sanctuaries still have a lot of pens, but here we have a lot out and I think that's the best place for them. Thanks to Beth, she started turning dogs loose left and right."

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ANGELS IN AMERICA | A Jacksboro animal sanctuary benefits from, from left, Matt and Beth Kelley, Carole Sanders and Nita Burgoon, who serve 300-plus dogs and horses. (Photo courtesy Rodrigo Orta)

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL



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*The Dallas Morning News*

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*D Magazine*

Karen Almond

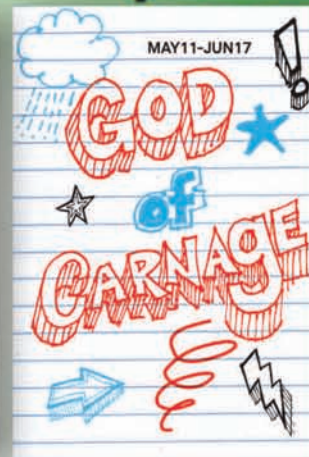
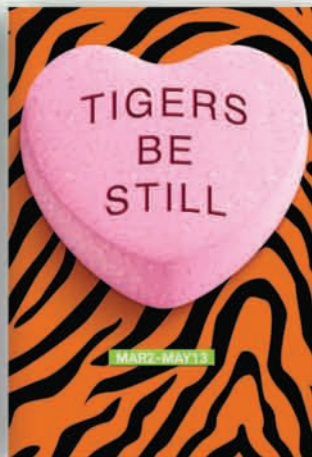
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# Livin' the Vida

Richard Vida revisits 'Les Miz' in a grand revival



**MASTER OF THE HOUSE** | Richard Vida returns to 'Les Miz' 18 years after his B'way run.

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

"Show people don't have holidays," Richard Vida says with a sigh. Though he's not complaining. In fact, he kind of likes it.

"In New York City, Christmas is packed. You'll always have a show Christmas night, though on Christmas Eve, it depends. Before 9/11, we always had matinee *and* evening shows on New Year's Eve. When I was doing *Les Miz* in the old days, when it was still three hours and 15 minutes, it got out at 11:45 and we were right in Times Square at midnight."

A lot has changed since those days. Evening shows in Dec. 31 are canceled and Vida is on tour, not in New York. But one thing hasn't changed: Vida is still doing *Les Miserables*.

Not the entire time, of course — and not in the same way. Vida was a replacement in the original production back in the 1980s, playing the thieving Montparnasse for two years. He loved the show.

"I was a dancer at the time, doing all the big dance shows. *Les Miz* was my first non-dancing show but I was blown away by it.

■ VIDA, Page 35

## 'La Bete:' Gorged on stanzas

Rhyming couplets and curly fright wigs and lots of facial mugging are the kind of conceits more beloved by theater-folk than theatergoers. Actors are trained on classics like Moliere; hamming it up onstage as a fop is a rite of passage.

If you like that kind of thing, I suppose *La Bete* at Theatre 3 is about as good as you're likely to get. The conundrum is: Why *would* you like that kind of thing?

*La Bete* is a structural nightmare, a play about actors who hate other actors ... and playwrights and critics and, to an extent, audiences. Elomire (Jakie Cabe, pictured left) is the lead actor-writer of his royal troupe and resents having the blowhard actor Valere (Bradley Campbell, pictured right) forced on him by his patron, Princess Conti (Georgia Clinton, pictured top).

You don't get much more of a plot than that in Act 1, which is dedicated to highlighting the vocal skill of Valere — he has an uninterrupted 20-minute monologue that Campbell modulates masterfully. His Valere is a flouncy boor — imagine Zach Galifianakis in pantaloons — both insufferable and the saving grace of the show. Campbell and Clinton seem to be the only ones who don't get cornered by the couplets, turning dialogue into the sing-songy patter of reading Dr. Seuss to children at bedtime, a sin especially committed by Cabe (It's not a pretty show, either, with the cast swathed in costumes that look like Carol Burnett's hand-me-downs from her *Went with the Wind* sketch.)

The playwright, David Hirson, has some modestly interesting observations about the tension between art and popular entertainment and the need to strike a balance between them. But he slathers on so much extraneous nonsense (a maid who only speaks in one-syllable words rhyming in "Oooh" is the most inane) that the message is lost. Maybe he's challenging us to see *La Bete* as the compromise between art and commerce; instead, it seems more like showcase for Campbell, ranting in the comic wilderness.

— A.W.J.

Theatre 3, 2800 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Through Jan 14. Theatre3Dallas.com.



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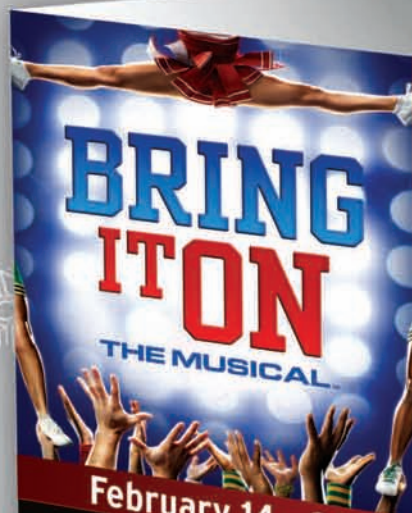
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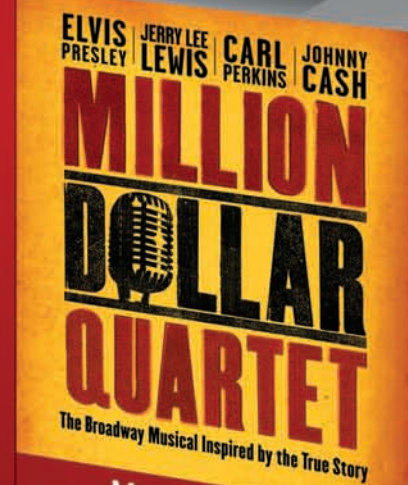
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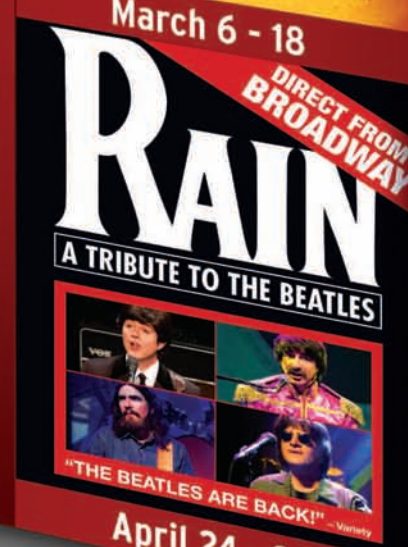
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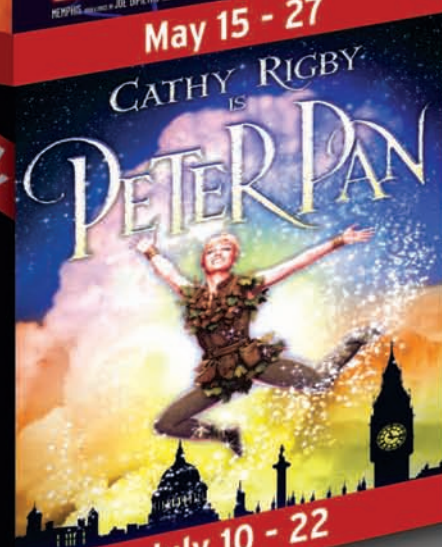
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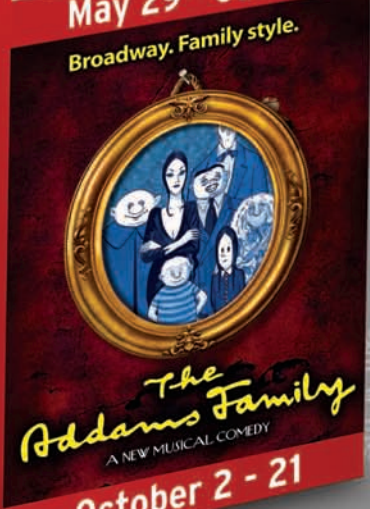
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■ VIDA, FROM Page 33

The original production of *Les Miz* ran until 2003 — closing a decade after Vida's run in it. He went on to act in numerous TV shows, movies and musicals in the intervening years. "So imagine my surprise, 18 years later, to be playing Thenardier in the 25th anniversary production."

Surprised, because as much as he enjoyed the experience, he'd *had* it. So when his agent asked if he'd be interested — advancing from one the bandits to their sleazy leader, Thenardier — he passed. His agent asked, before deciding, if he would go see the production. He did.

"It was the best version I have seen," he says. "It's been reorchestrated and newly conceived. Technologically it's just beautiful — no more turntable! The backdrops are actual projections of Victor Hugo paintings. It's so imaginative. At intermission, I called my agent and said not only am I interested in doing it, it's *mine*."

The process has been illuminating, now that he approaches it not as young dancer but as a seasoned actor in middle age.

"I already knew the role, but what is interesting was, when I re-read all 1,236 pages of the book and as an older person, I understood it better. I have the life experience to play this unredeemable, despicable human being. The

comedy comes through, but he's dark. And it's so completely the opposite of who I am in real life."

*Les Miserables* is one of the most successful — and divisive — musicals in history, a long-running hit about the failed 1832 Paris uprising. It's a sweeping epic based on what is generally considered one of the great novels of the 19th century, but has its detractors as bombastic, although the characters are sharply drawn and the complexities of the book are masterfully synthesized.

Hmmm... students who take up arms against the rich hierarchy in the streets. Sounds a little like Occupy Paris, no?

Vida's not so sure.

"In some [curtain speeches],

Several presenters have said this

is the French Occupy Wall Street, but I'm not so sure patrons are making that correlation. I don't see it being the same thing. I think of it more as an allegory, and the religious awakening that turns your life around," he says.

It's certainly turned Vida's life around. This is his eighth national tour, and the first one where he's been able to travel with his partner, who is the show's musical conductor.

"It's fantastic that we are working and traveling together after 18 years," Vida says.

That's almost enough to soften the hardest of hearts ... maybe even Thenardier's.

... Nah, don't count on that. ■

**LES MISERABLES**

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**Down Christmas Layne**

Austin cabaret act Hedda Layne gives one of the nicest gifts of all. On her website, she's offering a free album download of holiday music. With an electronica approach, Layne and producer/husband Troy Lee come out of left field to drop a whimsical package of carols to add to your collection.

Without going overboard, Layne offers nine familiar tunes, but starts with Lee's remix of "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy." Lee keeps it simple, but turns the instrumental into a great techno-lite opener.

The beat hits when "Santa Baby" goes into a high energy beat that works almost too well. Layne's voice has an appropriately vintage Betty Boop-ness to it which the song needs. The dance tone

never pulls away from the song's spirit, but instead enhances it with some punch. They delve into some robotic voice enhancement that could have gone majorly awry, but instead, Layne and Lee smartly just add in a pinch of it. The formula continues to work in the dance-floor-ready "Winter Wonderland."

Layne stays true to traditionals "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" and "What Are You Doing for New Years Eve," which balance out the energetic numbers. Her "Silent Night" rendition, though, is a bit hit and miss. Layne has beautiful control over her voice, reaching sublime high notes, but at times she gets a little too dramatic and that feels more like she's showing off.



She teams up with Girl Scout Troop 1149 for two songs which have a lot of heart, but are also a bit awkward. Remember, this is not a girl's choir, but a scout troop. Layne singing on "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" works fine, but the kids are all over the place. You can sense what she's trying to do here, but the intended cuteness factor wears thin.

The medley of "Jingle Bells/We Wish You a Merry Christmas" works far better. The girls are reigned in as they sing the chorus and the downtempo dubstep beat gives a consistent groove. Layne sometimes derails on her vocal runs, but the track finishes with surprising sophistication.

— Rich Lopez

Three stars. To download the free tracks, visit [HeddaLayne.com](http://HeddaLayne.com).

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**L+S** concerts

# Musical ornaments

Queer music faves decorate the concert landscape this week

This is one of those weeks that really speaks to LGBT music lovers, with live music options across the spectrum — from choral to techno and some local indies in between. Clearly, Dallas is on Santa's "nice" list.

— Rich Lopez

### Moby

The electronica superstar comes to town to perform a DJ set at the Lizard Lounge as the club celebrates its 20th anniversary. This is almost full circle for Moby as he performed at the nightlife institution two decades ago.

The queer artist returns to the club as a Grammy-nominated musician and an electronica icon.

• Saturday at Lizard Lounge, 2424 Swiss Ave. Doors at 8 p.m. \$50-\$75. [TheLizardLounge.com](http://TheLizardLounge.com).



### Tori Amos

A queen of eclectic music, Amos has gone orchestral in this year's *Night of Hunters*. Like scotch, Amos can be an acquired taste, but her ethereal voice and insane amount of talent wins over audiences who get to catch her live. She has the enchanting aura of Stevie Nicks, but that smooth operator delivery is all her own.

• Thursday at the Verizon Theatre, 1001 Performance Place, Grand Prairie. 8 p.m. \$39.50-\$59.50. [Ticketmaster.com](http://Ticketmaster.com).



### The Women's Chorus of Dallas

This Peace on Earth concert is a family affair as TWCD brings in a children's choir and local fave Anton Shaw. The ladies will offer traditional music to some holiday rockin' with conductor Melinda Imthurn and likely create a new holiday experience.

• Sunday at the Wylie Theater, 2401 Flora St. 7 p.m. \$30. [TWCD.org](http://TWCD.org).

### Turtle Creek Chorale

Let's face it: The chorale's holiday show is a signature — the holidays just aren't the same without their glorious hymns and wacky antics rolled into one.

Interim conductor Trey Jacobs leads a solid show in *My Favorite Things* that delivers the cheer and the warmth that's expected from the guys this time of year.

• Wednesday at the Meyerson Symphony Center, 2301 Flora St. 8 p.m. \$16-\$65. [TurtleCreek.org](http://TurtleCreek.org).





## Jim Brickman

The elegance of popular pianist Brickman is never lost during the holiday season. He brings back his "Christmas Celebration" concert to North Texas, and while he enchanted us at the Meyerson this past January, he'll be tickling our ivories in Cowtown at Bass Hall this time. Either way, he makes it look a lot more like Christmas when he's around.

- Monday at Bass Hall, 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth. 7:30 p.m. \$33-\$82. BassHall.com.



## CHIX

This local band has been chipping away at the scene and coming into their own with both covers and originals. With gigs at Mable Peabody's in Denton and Jet Set in Uptown, they got the gig they've been waiting for with a Sunday show in November at Sue Ellen's. Band member Nikki Stallen called it the best show they've had. Now headlining Saturday night, and with a growing fan base, they're hoping to pack the house.

- Saturday at Sue Ellen's, 3014 Throckmorton St. 9:30 p.m. SueEllens.com.



## Emmeline

Local indie chick Emmeline is no stranger to queer audiences, making a strong impression at Twist Dallas, which features mostly LGBT musicians. Organizer SuZanne Kimbrell booked Emmeline not just for her talent, but also to "bridge the gap" between straight and gay. She heads north to Denton with killer keyboards and an oh-so-lovely voice.

- Saturday at Café Du Luxe, 3101 Unicorn Lake Blvd., Denton. 8 p.m. ReverbNation.com/Emmeline.



## Infidelix and Immigrant Punk

Queer artists Infidelix, pictured, and world music renegade Immigrant Punk may be rough and tough on the outside, but this show proves they can be softies. The two acts join a hefty lineup of locals for the Wreck the Mics to Christmas Lights show in Denton. The show is a toy drive for low-income families in the area. Bring a new, unwrapped toy and then throw down for Infidelix's hip-hop stylings and Immigrant Punk's hardcore fusion of rock, rap and Spanish influence. (Boombachs, Wild Billand Ewok are also on the bill.)

- Monday at Hailey's, 122 West Mulberry St., Denton. Doors at 9 p.m. \$5-\$7. HaileysClub.com.



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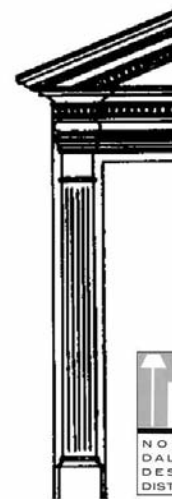
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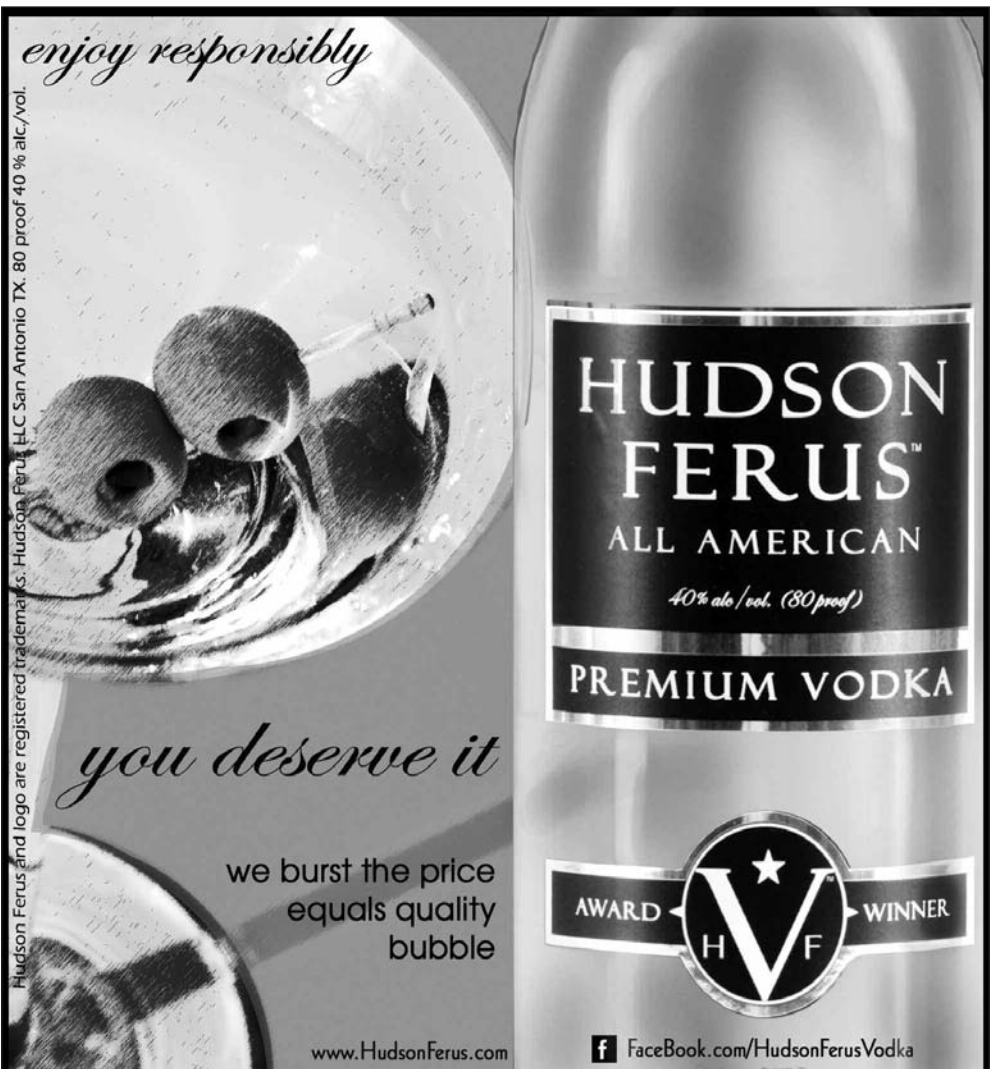
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# Dynamic duo

LIFE+STYLE

fitness

Val Haskell and Jenni Stolarski stay fit with soccer, yoga... and anything else

The adage every journey begins with a first step is as true for a fitness regime as a world tour. For dynamic duo Jenni Stolarski and Val Haskell, those steps may be along the banks of the Trinity River, on a soccer field or even on the rungs of a ladder for a trapeze course. These ladies mix it up in a spectrum of workout routines. They're game to try almost anything, as long as it doesn't involve being trapped indoors.

— *Jef Tingley*

**Names and ages:** Jenni Stolarski, 41, and Val Haskell, 39.

**Occupations:** Stolarski: Realtor, Briggs Freeman Sotheby's International Realty; Haskell: project manager.

**Length of relationship:** 19 years.

**Sports & activities:** Tennis, walking, running, soccer, yoga, trapeze (!).

**Exercise regime:** Stolarski: I walk five days a week for an hour. I have two walking buddies who make this possible. If left to my own devices, I'd just stay in bed. [I also do] yoga two or three times a week, including a core-strength class, and tennis once a week.

Haskell: Typically I run four times a week, play tennis once, and during the soccer season, I play a game a week.

**Upcoming fitness goals:** Stolarski: Consistency. This summer, Val and I did a trapeze course with my brother and his wife in NYC. I was sore for days. But I want to continue to have the energy, strength and stamina to try fun things like that for the rest of my life.

Haskell: I'd love to show a decent time in a half marathon and help my soccer team with some goals and assists next season. Also focusing on the A's next year: Abs, arms and...

**Most memorable athletic accomplishment:** Haskell: If the number of videos and random mentions are the barometer, it would have to be going to trapeze school for an afternoon. I had no idea it was so hard! Getting up and down from that bar in mid-air is serious work.

**Least favorite exercise or piece of gym equipment?** Stolarski: The gym. Period. I like to be outside.

Haskell: I can't stand the gym, either.

**Favorite spot in North Texas to exercise outdoors?** Stolarski: We have taken to hiking/walking in the Trinity River Basin. There is a small dirt path that runs along the levee. It's quiet down there, which is amazing when you remember it's in this huge city. And the views are great.

Haskell: Coombs Creek Trail, Stevens Park tennis courts, Katy Trail and White Rock Lake

**Ways you stay fit or workout together?** Stolarski: Being active together was one of the ways we got to know each other. We played soccer and swam at UT. That just carried on through the years; we biked, we hiked the Tetons, we played soccer. Val taught me how to play tennis. It's one of my favorite ways to spend time together.

**How does your partner motivate you to work out?** Stolarski: I know Val is always going to come up with some crazy idea of a fun thing to do. Did I mention trapeze school was *her* idea? And I don't want to miss out.

Haskell: She gets out of bed early and meets someone for her workout five days a week, which means lounging in bed is not as compelling. She also says nice things about the way I look, which I really like.

**How do you reward yourself after a great workout?** Stolarski: My reward is waking up every day, getting to feel good. It sounds cheesy as all get out, but really, the reward is that I get to keep exercising.

**Words of advice for people trying to work fitness into their life?** Haskell: Incorporate it socially. Walk with a friend, play tennis with a work buddy, join a team or a running group like the Dallas Running Club. The more you merge your social life and active life, the easier it is to make it fit into your schedule. And your friends end up with shared goals and you encourage each other.

**If you could become an Olympian in any sport, what would it be and why?** Stolarski: I'd want to play soccer on the U.S. National team. Those women have such a great dynamic; it's a joy to watch. Plus it would make my dad, who's been a soccer coach for 40 years, ridiculously proud.

**Favorite song or playlist for working out?** Stolarski: None. That is part of the joy of being outside: It comes with its own soundtrack.

Haskell: I'm usually outside running in the dark, yelling at my teammates on a soccer field or chatting on the tennis court, so no playlist for me.

**Which celebrity or athlete's physique would you like to have and why?**

Stolarski: Abby Wambach. That woman was built to play soccer!

Haskell: A few years ago, I saw a picture of Joan Jett at a concert and she still looked great and had amazing arms. I aspire to look good, healthy and lean in my 50s.



**SLIM WITHOUT GYM** | Be it running, walking or swimming from a trapeze, Val Haskell and Jenni Stolarski find fitness almost anywhere there go — as long as it's not in a gym. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

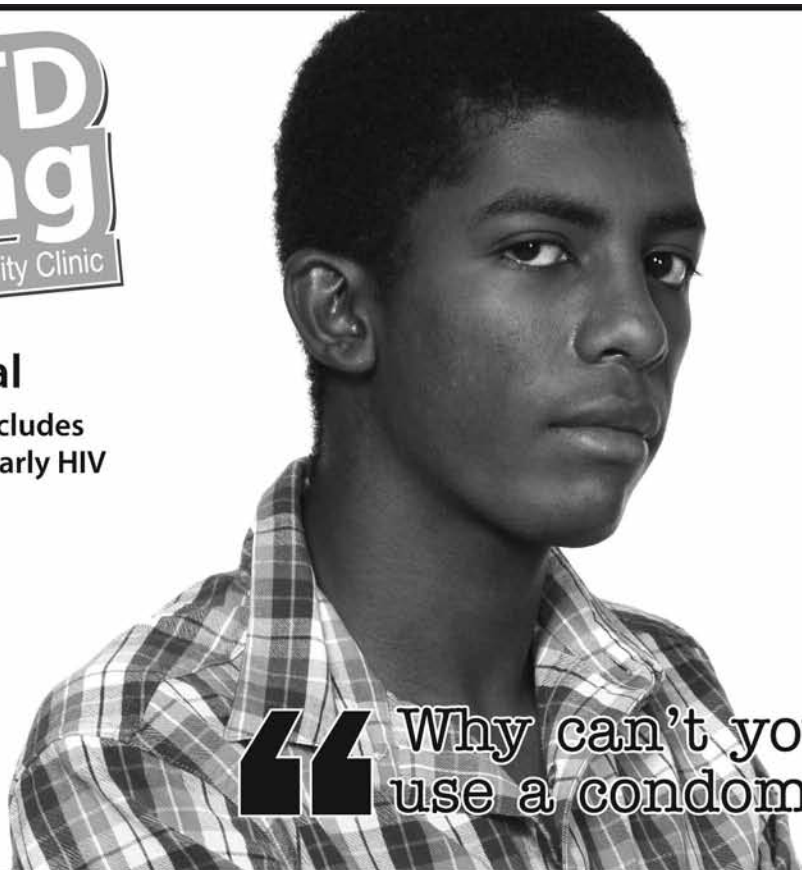
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**OVERRUN WITH DOGS** | The author, above, learns first-hand how friendly a rescue dog can be — and how adorable they are just being themselves, right. (Photos courtesy Rodrigo Orta)

■ **PAWS**, From Page 28

Now there are more than 170 dogs that are lovingly called “free range.” Dozens of shelters dot the landscape under large trees and among rocks and low-lying bushes. Huge containers of dog food are available on-demand for any dog with an appetite. And baby pools serve as the drinking bowls necessary to quench the thirst of

so many active animals.

What’s immediately noticeable after spending any amount of time at Animal Angels is how sublimely happy the dogs appear. With little hope of adoption, they’re still able to get the human interaction that many (though not all) crave. Even more importantly, they benefit from the instinctual bonding with fellow dogs.

Throughout the grounds, packs have formed naturally and few dogs within any of them venture into the territory of others. Occasionally they fight, but little more than a growl or a quick nip is needed to keep the peace.

The remaining 130 or so dogs are segregated into neighborhoods for good reasons. For one group, they’re too small to roam freely and safely among a majority of large-breed dogs. Others have been in the neighborhoods too long to adapt to a life outside their fences. The rest simply can’t be trusted to be loose because they don’t get along with people.

With other dogs, however, they’re right at home.

Not all dogs that come to Animal Angels are immediately lifers, either. Puppies, small breeds and other more “adoptable” dogs are given to rescue groups that will give them a much greater chance of finding a forever home. If that doesn’t work out, they always have a place at the sanctuary.

Yet keeping the sanctuary operational takes more than the 24/7 dedication of Sanders and her crew — it requires consistent monetary donations. Animal Angels is able to purchase food, medication and other supplies at such deep discounts that they can stretch a dollar — an important skill given that they need approximately 10,000 pounds of dog food per month just to feed their current residents. That doesn’t include any other operational or medical expenses.

But one look at the loving eyes, happy faces,

and spastically wagging tails and it’s clear that these dogs have found heaven on earth. And Sanders, Burgoon and the entire Kelley family truly are angels to each and every one of them.

“You can’t save them all, but you try. That’s what counts,” Sanders says. “You do the best you can.”

To learn more, or to donate, visit [AnimalAngels-Texas.org](http://AnimalAngels-Texas.org).





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L+S sketches



**Drawing  
Dallas**

MARK STOKES | Illustrator  
mark@markdrawsfunny.com

From coffeehouse to gay bar, **Taylor Hartman** has a lust for new experiences

**Name and age:** Taylor Hartman, 18

**Spotted at:** Buli Cafe

**Occupation:** Barista at Buli Café, Dancer at BJ's NXS!

**Wanderlust:** This sweet, blonde Gemini was born in Tampa, Fla., but has moved around his whole life. Taylor's family has an inherent restless spirit, having settled in Florida, Texas and Missouri. A hands-on guy, Taylor knows how to rope cattle and work as a ranch hand — he is good with animals and can even build fences. He came to Texas with his family but moved to Dallas on his own to begin a new life in the big city.

Taylor says his parents always knew he was gay, so coming out was no big deal. He is a fast learner, and has become an experienced dancer in a few short months. He plans to become a professional dancer or a business owner. He has also inherited his family's wanderlust and has plans to travel to Paris and then see where he can go from there. Until then, he plans to spend Christmas in the gayborhood with his "second family."

# Drive-by Tasting

One visit.  
One meal.  
One shot to  
get it right

**Pie Five Pizza Co.**

When you put a number in your company name, and that number represents how long it'll take you to get your meal... well, that's pretty much the textbook definition of "fast food."

Which is not a criticism. When you have a deadline, it's nice to know the prep-time for your meal is limited. Which is what the new local pizza chain Pie Five promises: Your personal pizza in about five minutes. How do they guarantee that? Because, sort of like Krispy Kreme, you get to watch it being made.

A friend of mine scoffs at the concept. Speed, he says, does not equate with quality. On the other hand, the two aren't inherent enemies, and I kinda like the control I have over my meal.

Pie Five has a set-list of their signature hits: Deep-dish meat-lovers' or thin-crust vegan, etc. It's nice to see what the chef recommends. But pizza, perhaps more than any other dish, is an idiosyncratic dining experience: If you're a New York-style fan, you probably can't be convinced to swap loyalties and become a Chicago- or Sicilian-style lover. People who would hesitate to tell the chef at a steakhouse how long to cook a filet and when to turn it and what compote to serve with it have no problem asking for half chicken, half peppers. Most great pizzas are the ones *you* compose.

That's what I suggest at Pie Five, where the options are impressively diverse. I grabbed a thin-crust (thick is also available) with the diavolo base sauce, a spicier version of the marinara. Then I went to town on the meats: Pepperoni, hamburger, pulled pork, bacon. Slather on the veggie toppings: Jalapenos, black olives, artichoke hearts. Throw on some cheddar at the end — why not? It then gets placed in a fancy version of the Easy-Bake Oven, emerging a few minutes later on the other side, where you can add "magic dust" (seems like a garlic powder blend) and/or crushed red pepper. I took both: I want to see how spicy



**A GOOD 9-INCHER** | The personal pizzas at Pie Five are just the right size to satisfy a hearty appetite. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

my pizza can get.

The answer is: Pretty damn spicy. They don't blink when you ask for "more of this" or that "keep goin' on the jalapenos." It's your funeral — or rather, your pizza. I like that.

The taste paid off. Maybe part of that is pride in ownership, but the crust was crisp, the ingredients fresh and potent, the combination flavorful. I got exactly what I wanted, quickly and pleasantly, and for about \$10 including drink.

The service has some errors. I asked for pulled but got pork sausage first; I had to repeat my order about magic dust. But the folks were nice, the place clean and the meal warm and filling on a rainy weekday. And with their punny T-shirt logos ("Pie-curious" is my favorite), you feel right at home here. ■

**Overall impression:** A filling, 9-in. pizza made to order: What more do you want? **Recommended:** Yes.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Multiple locations including Knox Street and 75. [PieFivePizza.com](http://PieFivePizza.com)

## QUICK LOOK: BOLSA



I have to confess, I have never been as bowled over by **Bolsa**, the Oak Cliff locavore-loving hang, as much as my foodie friends have. Some of them confess it's nice to have a good place in the hood, and they have their faves while conceding service can be an ordeal. But maybe I was going at the wrong time of day. Maybe it's not lunch or dinner I should have been scoping out, but brunch.

That certainly was the case on a recent visit, where the meal met — even exceeded — Bolsa's reputation. An artisanal apple-chestnut soup packed all the colors of autumn in one bowl, and the pork belly over mustard greens were sublimely flavorful. But the star was a thick-cut but impossibly airy cornflake-breaded French toast, pictured, that was unqualifiedly the best I've ever had in Dallas. Hmmmm... Bolsa may have won over a new fan. Finally.

— A.W.J.

[BolsaDallas.com](http://BolsaDallas.com)

Check out BJ's on f for New Year's Eve info!

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Dallas Voice editors will choose My Gay Texas finalists. Finalist's photos will be used for promotional materials and online balloting. Readers will pick the 2012 My Gay Texas winner by voting online Jan 3-28, 2012. Only original photos taken by the entrant are qualified for entry. Full details at [www.dallasvoice.com/MGT](http://www.dallasvoice.com/MGT)

## Friday 12.16

### This is a journey into solstice

The annual Winter SolstiCelebration has gotten so big, it's now spread across two days. In its 19th year, the event uses music, dance, ceremony and more to observe the Winter Solstice. And don't forget the Yule Fest. Canned food and winterwear donations are encouraged.

**DEETS:** Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 7 p.m. Through Saturday. \$15. EarthRhythms.org.

## Saturday 12.17

### Techie buzz art

Out Dallas-based artist R. Mateo Diago puts his vision on display in the new exhibit *every then ... and now* in which he intergrates the iPhone's capabilities into helping create his art. We might be able to take rad photos with apps like Instagram, but Diago uses it as a statement of people's compulsion. Cool, right?

**DEETS:** Ro2 Art Downtown, 110 N. Akard St. Opening reception at 7 p.m. Through Jan. 28. Ro2Art.com

## Wednesday 12.21

### On writing 'Well'

Author Gregory G. Allen returns to Dallas from New York to sign his new book *Well With My Soul* about two brothers, one gay, coming to terms with each other. It even garnered a Lambda Literary nomination. Welcome home, sir.

**DEETS:** Krimson & Clover, 3111 Cole Ave., Ste 101. 5-7 p.m. GGAllen.net.





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# SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2011

## MONEY DROPS!

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21 and up only. Cruisin' the Crossroads suspended for this special event. No passes.

## FRIDAY 12.19

## COMMUNITY

**Hold 'Em High for Hope** charity poker event and mixer for Hope for Peace and Justice. Axiom Sushi Lounge, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. 6 p.m. H4PJ.org.

**Queerly Speaking** with special guest host Brandon Horsley-Thompson. The theme of this monthly spoken word event by Fahari Arts is "the gift of you." South Dallas Cultural Center, 3400 S. Fitzhugh Ave. 8 p.m. \$5. FahariArtsInstitute.org.

**Blue Christmas** worship service. This peaceful service is for those who are suffering loss, hardship or grief during this holiday season. This is an open and affirming church of the United Church of Christ. Central Congregational Church, 5600 Royal Lane. 7 p.m.

**Oak Lawn Group for Gays Lambda** (formerly CODA) meets on Fridays at the St Thomas Episcopal Church, 6525 Inwood Road. 6:30 p.m. Call 214-868-7350 for more information.

## ART

**Divine** featuring the art of lesbian artist Cathey Miller and Norbert Kox. Recapitated porcelain figures by Click Mort are also on display in the upstairs gallery. Webb Gallery, 209 W. Franklin Road, Waxahachie. Through Feb. 5. WebbArtGallery.com.

**Holiday Presence** annual art show featuring local out artists Erica Felicella and Robb Conover and more. Most art is priced under \$200 and the works are rotated in as pieces sell. Kettle Art, 2714 Elm St. 7 p.m. Through Dec. 24. KettleArt.com.

## THEATER

**A Bur-Less-Q Nutcracker.** MBS Productions brings back its annual holiday show that's been nominated for a Goldstar National Nutcracker award. Stone Cottage Theater, 15650 Addison Road., Addison. Through Dec. 27. \$18-\$21. MBSProductions.net.

**A Christmas Carol.** Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through Dec. 24. \$15-\$85. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

**Dick Whittington.** Traditional British panto play performed by Theatre Britain. Cox Building Playhouse, 1517 H. Ave., Plano. Through Dec. 28. \$15-\$18. Theatre-Britain.com.

**Rockin' Christmas Party** music revue. WaterTower Theatre, 15650 Addison Road, Addison. Through Sunday. \$20-\$50. WaterTowerTheatre.org.

## SATURDAY 12.20

## COMMUNITY

**Fourth Annual Ruben Veloz Karaoke Food Drive.** Pekers Bar, 2615 Oak Lawn Ave. 9 p.m.

**DFW Prime Timers** play bingo at private residence. For more information, call 972-504-8866.



**RED CHRISTMAS** | You might be a redneck if you make it to the 3 Redneck Tenors Christmas Spec-Tac-Yule-Ar show this week, but for sure you'll have laughs as beefy trio deliver traditional holiday songs but in a slightly different fashion.

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

## BROADCAST

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

## SUNDAY 12.21

## COMMUNITY

**The House of Glamour** is a forum for African-American women to dialogue. Brooklyn's Jazz Cafe, 1701 S. Lamar St. 3 p.m. LOSF.org.

**The Set** for SGL African-American men. The Jefferson Clubhouse, 1001 Ross Ave. 6-9 p.m. LOSF.org.

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

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

**First Community Church of Dallas** worship services. The church is open and affirming. FCC of Dallas, 9120 Ferguson Road. 11 a.m. FCCDFW.org.

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

## MONDAY 12.19

## COMMUNITY

**Stonewall Democrats.** 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.

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

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

## MUSIC

## 3 Redneck Tenors Christmas Spec-Tac-Yule-Ar.

The trio performs holiday favorites with a benefit show for Ohlook Performing Arts at the matinee performance on Dec. 21. The Grand Theater, 100 N. Charles St., Lewisville. 7:30 p.m. Through Thursday. \$25. OhlookPerform.com.

## TUESDAY 12.20

## COMMUNITY

**Simply Red.** StraightOut Media hosts this holiday mixer with music by DJ Brandon Moses. An unwrapped toy donation is encouraged for Santa's Helpers. Axiom Sushi Lounge, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. 6 p.m.

**Stonewall Democrats of Dallas.** Ojeda's Restaurant, 4617 Maple Ave. 6:30 p.m. 214-506-3367.

**JEWEL Lesbian Fiction Book Club** meets. ilume, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. 6:30 p.m. Visit website for meeting dates if they change due to author's availability. RCDallas.org.

**QLive! Open Mike Night** for comedy. Percussions Lounge, 426 S. Jennings Ave., Fort Worth. 10 p.m. QCCinema.com.

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

## WEDNESDAY 12.21

## COMMUNITY

**DFW Prime Timers Prime Lunch** at Mac's Barbecue, 3933 Main St. Noon. The group will play its weekly bridge game at 7 p.m. at a member's residence. To attend either, call 972-504-8866 for more information.

**Legacy of Success Foundation Community Mixer.** This mixer is intended for community networking and is held every third Wednesday. Catfish Blues, 1011 S. Corinth St. LOSF.org.

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

## THURSDAY 12.22

## COMMUNITY

**Healing and Hope** support group. This group reaches out to all who have lost a loved one and is the only known group open to include the gay community for support in their losses. Grace United Methodist Church, 4105 Junius St. 6:30 p.m. For more information, contact Bill Bucher at 214-205-2317 or email BillB4665@att.net.

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

**The Rotary Club of Dallas-Uptown** meets every Thursday. All visitors are welcome. Hully and Mo's, 2800 Routh St. 11:45 -1:00 p.m. DallasUptownRotary.org

**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.

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

**Standing on the Promises Alcoholics Anonymous** group meets at Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.

**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.

*Have an event you want to share? You can upload it directly to our website calendar.*

*Visit DallasVoice.com and click on the Calendar tab in the top banner and follow the prompts to Add Event.*

## this week's solution



**CELEBRITY BIRTHDAY**

By Jack Fertig



**Jennifer Beals** turns 48 on Monday. The actress came to fame in the iconic '80s film *Flashdance*. But it wasn't until 2004 when she resonated with the lesbian community playing Bette Porter for six seasons of *The L Word*. Since the show's cancellation in 2009, she's been seen in *The Book of Eli* with Denzel Washington and the canceled 2011 Fox series *The Chicago Code*.

**SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 20**

Being helpful at holiday parties can get you into a better job. Keep a clear head and the rest should fall into place. Missed opportunities could come knocking again. Don't rule anything out.

**CAPRICORN Dec 21-Jan 19**

While your intuitions about money are on the mark it helps to double-check the facts. Avoid dithering and second-guessing yourself. Being rigorous is good; beating yourself up isn't.

**AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18**

There is such a thing as being too nice when you can't hide bitchy undertones. There are no secrets. Whatever you say will slip out. Talk about celebrities instead of gossiping.

**PISCES Feb 19-Mar 19**

Your intuition and advice are worth more than you realize. If you listened to yourself, you'd be better off! Blurting out a secret proves to your advantage if it's your secret and nobody else's.

**ARIES Mar 20-Apr 19**

Get wild and creative. Explore new ideas. Just remember you are experimenting. Keep it light and fun. Being too sure of yourself can make you look pompous and/or get you into trouble.

**TAURUS Apr 20-May 20**

Make every effort to be open-minded. Your ability to assimilate and gain insight can prove very helpful at work. Opportunity will come soon and unexpectedly; be ready for anything.

**GEMINI May 21-Jun 20**

Difficult issues need addressing. Be considerate when telling your partner how you feel. The middle ground between saying too much or too little can be hard to negotiate.

**CANCER Jun 21-Jul 22**

High hopes for the holidays are dashed. Reconciling between high ideals and realistic expectations is part of growing up. Taking a longer view will help you keep a positive perspective.

**LEO Jul 23-Aug 22**

Christmas is whose birthday? Not yours. You just want to make things fun and bright, but it's too easy to overdo it. A quiet hug or a small, elegant gesture is often more effective than a big to-do.

**VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22**

Holidays are not about getting historical facts right, disturbing your family with revelations or proving something. Think about what matters, and when and how best to tell them — but later.

**LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22**

Shocking your partner can be a good thing, but not with a cattle prod. When creative passions go overboard let your sweetie reel you in. Just let that be a further creative challenge.

**SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21**

Your critical eye on community affairs is not always appreciated. Getting the diplomacy right can be a challenge. Don't be wishy-washy or obtuse. Solicit a friend to help get your point across.

**THIS WEEK**

Just before the solstice when the sun enters Capricorn, Venus will leave Cap for Aquarius. It makes a good combination for looking forward with good imagination and your feet solidly on the ground. Start making sensible plans for next year.

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

**JANE'S WORLD**

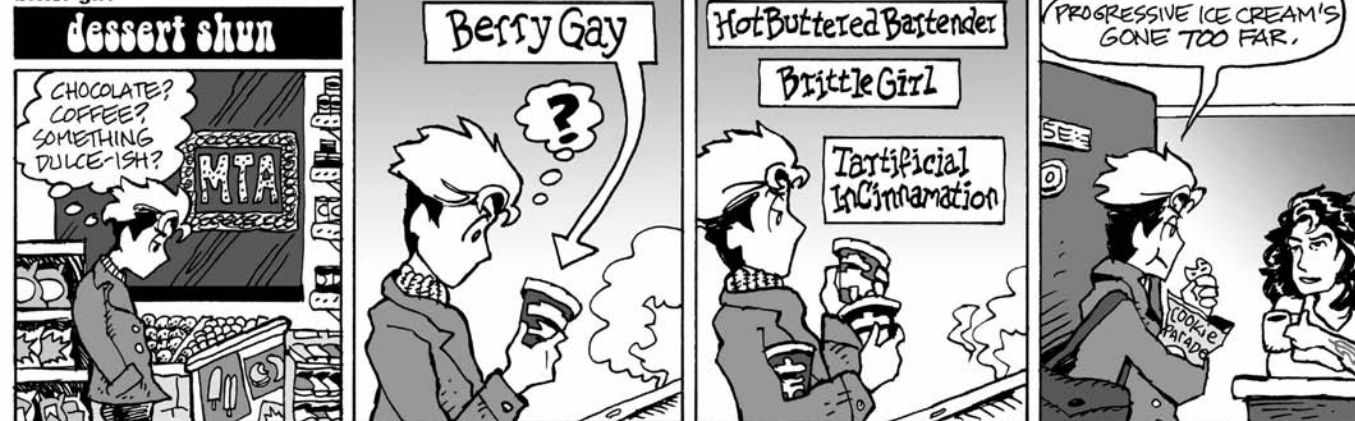


Jane's World © Paige Braddock 2011 www.JanesWorld.us

**BACK IN THE PRESENT...**



**bitter girl**

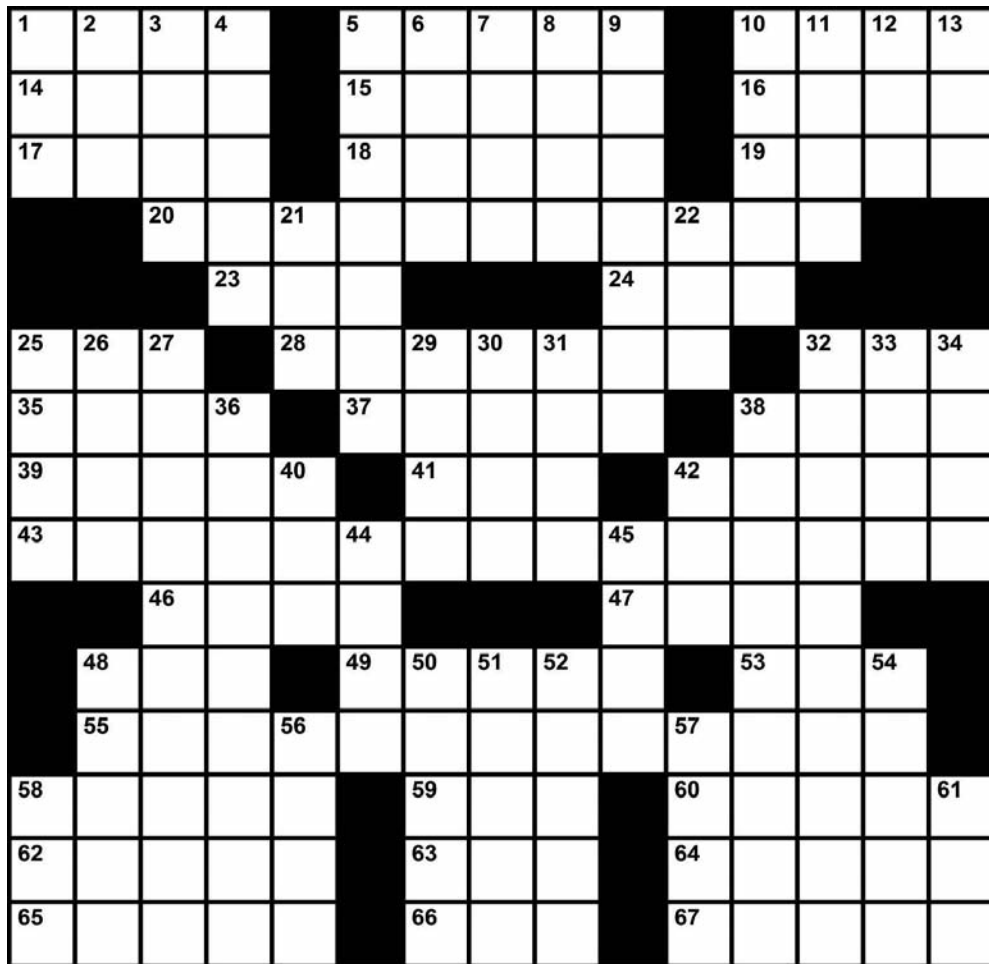


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# Not Just a Cruising Motto

Solution on page 47

**Across**

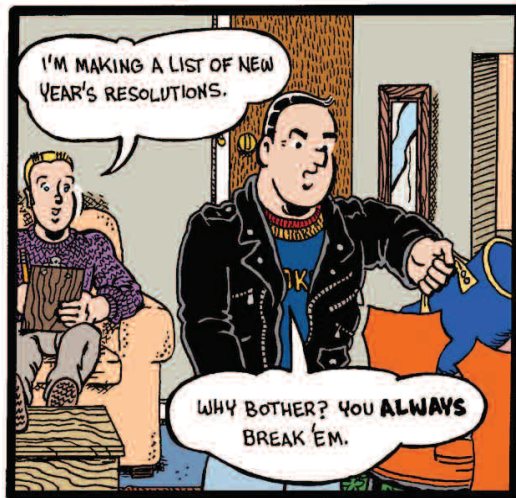
- 1 Maude producer
- 5 Source book for Jesus Christ Superstar
- 10 Doctors make you strip for it
- 14 Pisa's river
- 15 Old line for cockpit workers
- 16 Brain section
- 17 Began a hole, with "off"
- 18 Cocoon creator
- 19 You may feel it at a gay bar
- 20 Start of the motto of J. Edgar's agency
- 23 More of the motto
- 24 End of the motto
- 25 Gardner of Show Boat
- 28 Willingly obedient
- 32 Rock guitarist Barrett
- 35 Streisand, for short
- 37 Forbidden acts
- 38 Former Mets' stadium
- 39 Rosie's favorite dolls
- 41 Old org. of tight ends
- 42 Bottom bumper of boats
- 43 He plays the title role in J. Edgar
- 46 Tow job
- 47 Bean town?
- 48 Get off the fence

**Down**

- 49 Nelson of reruns
- 53 It comes before mature ejaculation
- 55 J. Edgar director
- 58 Words of empathy
- 59 The "S" in RSVP
- 60 "We're doomed!"
- 62 Easier on the eyes
- 63 Threesome in Roma
- 64 Poet Stephen Vincent \_\_\_\_
- 65 Belief summary for Troy Perry
- 66 Thumbs-up
- 67 Bewilder



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## • FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 10PM-2AM

### DRAMA ROOM

Angelo Marconi  
Alex Andrews

### TIN ROOM

Dylan Roberts  
Christopher Daniels  
Bobby Clark

## • SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 10PM-2AM

### DRAMA ROOM

Dylan Roberts  
Christopher Daniels

### TIN ROOM

Angelo Marconi  
Alex Andrews  
Bobby Clark

drama room  
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Must be present to win!





Bird, Shannon and Stephanie at Cherries.

Bundle up and head out to these hot spots .... **Axiom Sushi Lounge** is a hopping place. **Hope for Peace and Justice** hosts the **Hold 'Em High for Hope** charity poker event and mixer Friday with **Pocket Rockets Dallas**. Win big with poker, the silent auction and other prizes. Donations encouraged. The **StraightOut Media** boys host **Simply Red** at the lounge on Tuesday. **DJ Brandon Moses** brings the music to the holiday event that benefits **Santa's Helpers**, which means take a new unwrapped toy and then have your drink .... Local singer **Jurni Rayne** invites everyone to celebrate at her **30th Birthday Bash** Friday at the **Brick**. The party is a red carpet affair and she'll give a special performance of her single "You Lied." Trust. You do not want to miss her sing live .... You don't have to sing for your supper, but maybe for someone else's at the **4th Annual Ruben Veloz Karaoke Food Drive**. Take canned food donations to **Pekers Bar** on Saturday and then pick your favorite song to sing. Easy! ... **Bad Habits** performs Friday at **Sue Ellen's**, followed by **CHIX** on Saturday. **Kickback** finishes off the weekend on Sunday .... All kinds of goodies can be found Friday at the **Dallas Eagle's Annual Christmas Stocking Auction**. **DJ Blaine Soileau** follows up the night with his sounds on the dance floor. The **United Court of the Lone Star Empire** hosts their yearly **Jingle Ball Show** on Saturday. And if you got it, flaunt it at **Throb** on Wednesday, the club's underwear night and contest .... Boot scoot the night away Mondays at **Club Reflection** for **Country Dance Lessons** .... Celebrate **Lizard Lounge's 20th Anniversary** with **Moby** as he performs a DJ set for the big event .... Go enjoy! ■

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



Joel, Ethan and Chris at Drama Room.



Joey and Chris at Tin Room.



Jess, Mesh and Jennifer at Sue Ellen's.



Lloyd, Laura and Drew at the DIFFA Wreath Auction.



Chuck and Jason at the DIFFA Wreath Auction.



Cliff and Morgan at the Round-Up Saloon.





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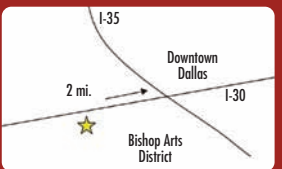
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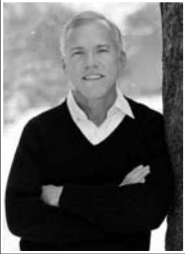


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