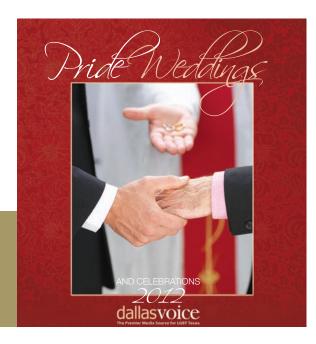
Pride Weddings Spring 2012

Key points to making your ceremony A-list

One mother-of-the-bride gushes about her daughter's big day

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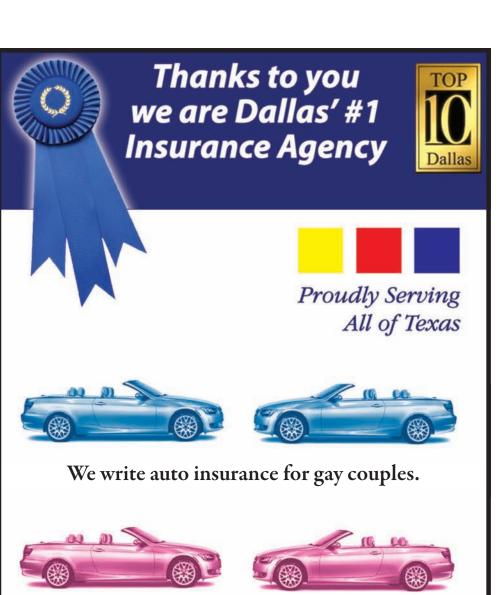
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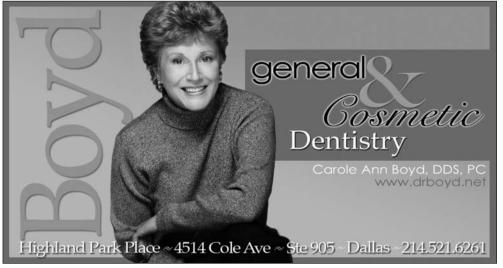
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Demolition at new RCD site draws large crowd, \$10K in donations

The journey to a new Resource Center Dallas became a little shorter Saturday, April 28, with the demolition of the strip center at the site of RCD's future home near Cedar Springs and Inwood roads.

"Brunch & Bulldozers" brought music and food trucks to entertain the crowd throughout the three-hour event. Dozens of attendants paid \$5 each for the chance to swing a sledge hammer at the brick building, denting the walls and even shattering some windows.

Roughly 300 people attended the event, RCD Capital Campaign Manager Mack Campbell said.

"This was the first public awareness event for the capital campaign," Campbell said. "We had great participation from the community."

While the amount raised on Saturday was still being calculated, Campbell put the figure at more than \$10,000, which will be added to the \$4 million already raised for the new \$12 million building.

The demolition demonstration tuned dramatic music to the destruction in front of an anxious, cheering crowd. Only a portion of the building was demolished for the crowd's enjoyment, and crews returned Monday, April 30, to finish the work.

"The building should be a pile of rubble," Campbell said Monday afternoon.

He added that it should take the construction crew about a week to sort through the rubble to find recyclable items and to clear the site completely.

In the coming months a sign that publicizes that the future home of RCD will be housed at the location will be placed in the empty 1.75-acre lot. Plans for fundraisers are in the works for the fall and winter, Campbell said, but nothing has been finalized yet.

Overall, Campbell said Saturday's turnout was a positive beginning to the future work before the new building's construction in 2014.

"It was just a great feeling to have such a visual step to building a new LGBT resource center," he said. "I'm just excited to see people in the community step up and get behind this project."

Anna Waugh

LSRFA kicks off new season

Lone Star Ride Fighting AIDS kicked off the new season with a party at the new Irving Convention Center on Sunday, April 29. Event manager Jerry Calumn announced new sponsors and fundraising tools, and handed out copies of the new route.

The two-day, 175-mile ride takes place the last weekend in September and benefits Resource Center Dallas, AIDS Services Dallas and AIDS Outreach Center

The first day of this year's ride begins in Irving and makes a 100-mile loop through Dallas. The second day, the ride heads through Arlington and Fort Worth.

A new corporate sponsor is Microsoft.

"Microsoft is invested in the community and diversity and helping people realize their full potential," said Jeri Johnson, leader of Microsoft's citizenship and



SISTER SLEDGE A member of the DFW Sisters helps out with the demolition of the strip center at the site of the future home of Resource Center Dallas, 5714 Cedar Springs Road, on Saturday, April 28. (Anna Waugh/Dallas Voice)

public affairs outreach in the DFW area. The LSRFA will ride out from Microsoft's Irving campus.

"This is the first time we've hosted anything on this site," she said. "We want to make a difference."

Microsoft's sponsorship will have an impact on the ride. She said the company is fielding a team of 50 riders. For the past few years, Dallas Voice has fielded the largest team, but Microsoft could present a challenge.

In addition to what those riders will raise, the company donates \$17 an hour for volunteer time. As the team's riders and additional volunteers participate, the contribution from the company will grow.

The Irving/Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce,

the city of Irving, and the Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau are also sponsors of this year's LSRFA.

"For us in the hospitality business, the gay and lesbian community is very much a part of our family," Irving CVB Executive Director Maura Allen Gast said. "The cause is near and dear to our families. We don't have an industry without the GLBT community."

She said that the city has gotten involved in a number of runs and other events. For the Sydney Olympics, she said the triathlon tryouts were held in Irving because of similar topography and climate. She called Lone Star Ride "a good size, the right time and right place."

- David Taffet

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Trans woman's ticket could spur changes

Gay Parkland board member says hospital needs LGBT liaison, written policy after Paula Witherspoon is cited for using women's restroom

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer taffet@dallasvoice.com

An openly gay board member called for Parkland hospital to add an LGBT liaison and adopt written policies this week after a transgender woman was ticketed for using a women's restroom at the facility, in a case that made national news

Dr. Roberto de la Cruz, a gay member of Parkland's Board of Managers, met with Paula Witherspoon on Wednesday, May 2, a week after she received the citation.

Witherspoon, a transgender woman, was cited for disorderly conduct by hospital police on April 25. Officers wrote the citation for the class-C misdemeanor after a complaint was lodged by someone who saw Witherspoon coming out of a women's restroom.

Witherspoon said she was at the hospital with her husband, Billy Lorentz, who had a follow-up appointment after suffering a heart attack.

"I live full time as a woman," Witherspoon said.
But she said hospital police told her they
weren't there to decide

whether she was guilty.
"Then they wrote me a ticket," she said.

The ticket lists Witherspoon as a man and her name as Paul.

Before meeting with Witherspoon, de la Cruz said he spoke to Parkland interim CEO Thomas C. Royer.

"He's aware of my

outreach and encouraged my effort," he said.

Dr. Roberto de la Cruz

De la Cruz told Witherspoon he wanted to apologize in person and talk to her about formulating a plan to make it better.

"The transgender community needs to feel comfortable and safe at the hospital," he said.

De la Cruz said he met with Witherspoon to get her perspective. He said he wanted Parkland to be aware of these issues, "so we're more sensitive in the future." He said he thinks there also needs to be an educational component and has already spoken to Cece Cox, Resource Center Dallas' executive director and CEO.

He said he'd like to find a Parkland employee to act as a liaison to the LGBT community to run interference when an incident happens.

And he'd like to see a written policy in place. "But that will take time," he said, asking for patience.



CITED | Paula Witherspoon was at the hospital with her husband, Billy Lorentz, who had a follow-up after suffering a heart attack. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

Witherspoon has been transitioning since 2006 and said she's never before had a problem.

"At the beginning of transition, using public restrooms is scary as hell," Witherspoon said. "Everyone's been accepting."

She was particularly surprised that there was any question about her using a bathroom stall at Parkland, not only because it's a medical facility that should be attuned to the issue, but because of the design of the restroom.

"Parkland stalls go all the way to the floor," she said.

Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality, said harassment of transgender people in hospitals is not uncommon.

In a national survey of more than 6,000 transgender people, 1 percent had been physically assaulted in hospital emergency rooms, 13 percent had been denied treatment and 16 percent had been harassed. The numbers increase when doctor's offices are included with hospitals, when the survey found 2 percent had been assaulted, 24 percent denied treatment and 25 percent harassed.

Often it is hospital security harassing the transgender person, according to Keisling, but she said that information was anecdotal. Keisling said bathroom use is always a concern.

"Every time I go into a public restroom, I know this could be the time," she said.

Keisling said many trans people just avoid using public bathrooms, which can cause additional medical problems.

Her suggestion for a practical policy was, "How about everyone just leave everyone else alone in the bathroom?"

But she said written policies should have gender identity included in the nondiscrimination statement. The restroom policy should say that everyone should use the bathroom associated with their gender identity.

Although the city of Dallas has a nondiscrimination policy that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in public accommodations, other governmental entities are exempt. Parkland falls under county government.

Had the incident happened outside a county facility elsewhere in the city of Dallas, transgender activist Marla Compton said she's confident Dallas police would have educated the person who complained. In diversity training, Dallas police are taught to honor a person's gender identity.

Compton said she has only had one incident involving bathroom use. Several years ago, members of the Resource Center Dallas group GEAR were at a restaurant. Another patron complained to management when someone from the group used the women's bathroom. The manager told that person that everyone had the right to use the bathroom.

Witherspoon, who is on parole for a 1990 indecency with a child conviction, said that receiving the ticket scared her beyond the embarrassment of being hauled downstairs from the doctor's office. She said the first thing she did after receiving the ticket was call her parole officer.

"My parole officer respects me as a transgender person," she said.

Next she made an appointment with her psychologist at the Dallas VA Medical Center. Dr. Gloria Emmert was furious when she heard the story and typed a letter for Witherspoon to carry.

"As a frequent visitor to the Dallas VA Hospital, she is expected to use facilities consistent with her external presentation, which is female," Emmert wrote. "Please assist this Veteran by supporting the application of this ethical approach in all Dallas settings."

Counselor Felishia Porter, who also sees Witherspoon, has been working with people who are transitioning for about 15 years. She said that women are more territorial about their restrooms than men.

"My girlfriend is real masculine and she gets harassed all the time," Porter said.

Her female-to-male transgender clients don't seem to have a problem, she said, but male-to-female ones do. "But that's why I provide walking letters," she said.

■ TICKET, Page 12



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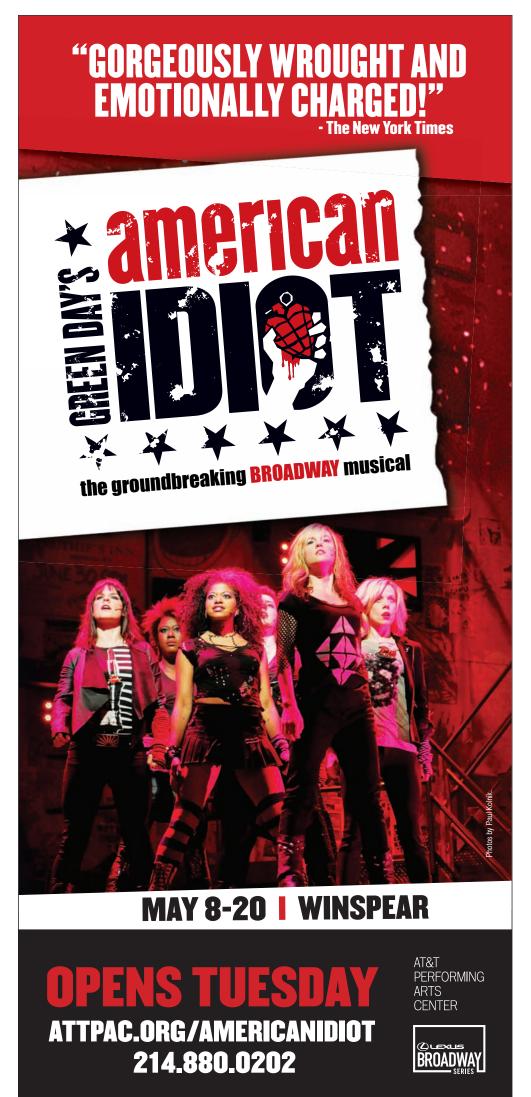
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localbriefs

LULAC hosts Pride fiesta at Kaliente

LULAC 4871 — The Dallas Rainbow Council, AIDS Arms and local businesses are hosting the second annual Cinco de Mayo Pride Fiesta on Saturday, May 5.

This outdoor festival will feature entertainment, food, art exhibits, games, and information exhibits by local nonprofit organizations. The proceeds from Pride Fiesta will benefit the LULAC 4871 — Jesus Chairez Scholarship and AIDS Arms. The event takes place in the parking lot of Kaliente Discotec, 4350 Maple Ave. from noon to 7 p.m. The event is free.

TCC holds annual auction

CIRQUE!, Turtle Creek Chorale's annual gala auction, takes place at Edison's, 1724 Cockrell Ave. in The Cedars from 6–10 p.m. on Saturday, May 5.

Last year the event raised more than \$100,000. The evening features silent and live auctions, food and a signature sangria and text notification of winning bids.

Individual tickets are \$60 and available online at turtlecreek.org.

HRC family-building workshop set

 $Human\ Rights\ Campaign's\ Family\ Project\ will\ hold\ a\ workshop\ May\ 12\ on\ options\ for\ LGBT\ in-$

dividuals and couples to create a family. This seminar will focus on individuals and same-sex couples consciously choosing to create families.

Attorney Timothy Thomas will address the unique needs of estate planning for the LGBT community and the importance of establishing estate plans in advance of surrogate pregnancies. Attorney Lauren Duffer will discuss creating a family through adoption, legalities of securing a birth certificate and accomplishing co-parent adoptions in the state of Texas.

Infertility consultant Mindy Berkson will discuss surrogacy and egg donation and the many pitfalls to avoid.

The program takes place at the McKinney Avenue Contemporary, 3120 McKinney Ave. on May 12 from 9 a.m. to noon and includes a continental breakfast.

RSVP by sending an email to Mindy@LotusBlossomConsulting.com.

Razzle Dazzle seeks volunteers

Razzle Dazzle Dallas is seeking volunteers for its all-day main event on June 9. Sign up by going to Razzledazzledallas.org/volunteer.html.

Also, although most Razzle Dazzle events are free, organizers are offering a VIP ticket special through Monday, May 7.

To purchase a VIP Passport, visit Razzledazzledallas.org/vippassport.html.

Razzle Dazzle runs from June 6-9.

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texasnews







Charlie Thomas

Sheriff taking primary challenge seriously, will also face Republican

Valdez has difficulty raising money from complacent supporters as she seeks 3rd term, but says opponent Charlie Thomas 'not a joke to me'

ANNA WAUGH I Staff Writer waugh@dallasvoice.com

Despite running as a two-term incumbent, lesbian Dallas County Sheriff Lupe Valdez said she's

not taking anything for granted in the fast-approaching May 29 primary.

Valdez, 64, is up against Democratic challenger Charlie Thomas, 23. Thomas works as a security guard and as a valet. Two Republicans are also vying for the position, so if Valdez

wins the primary, she'll have a general election opponent.

"I take it seriously," she said about the primary. "Any person contesting is a viable opponent."

Thomas is a certified peace officer and said that while he hasn't worked for a police department, he worked for UT Southwestern Medical Center as a police officer.

Thomas said he's also working on his lawn service business and doesn't have a campaign website but is still focused on his run for sheriff. He wants to increase the number of deputies in unincorporated areas of the county, as well as improve the healthcare system for inmates and use

the position to influence job creation among veterans and other underrepresented groups, he said.

Tracy Clinton, political chair for Stonewall Democrats of Dallas, said Thomas is "not a viable candidate" and didn't receive any votes when he interviewed for Stonewall's endorsement.

Clinton called Thomas running for sheriff "a bold step for someone who doesn't have much of a background in elected office," adding that he isn't sure why Thomas is running for the position.

"I hope people pay attention to the sheriff's race

just because the sheriff is such a central element of law enforcement in Dallas County and has grown even more so," Clinton said.

Valdez, Dallas County's first female, first Hispanic and first lesbian sheriff, said she takes every election seriously, and

while some have called Thomas a joke, "he's not a joke to me."

Valdez said the primary and general election are "both as serious" because of Republicans wanting to win back countywide offices.

Valdez's sexual orientation was targeted during her initial campaign in 2004 and her re-election bid in 2008, but she said she doesn't think it will be an issue this year because of her accomplishments.

"Now it's kind of ignored," she said. "If they're against the fact that I am a lesbian, they always look at the fact of what's being done."

Kirk Launius, one of the Republican candidates

■ SHERIFF, Page 11

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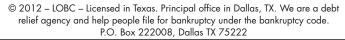
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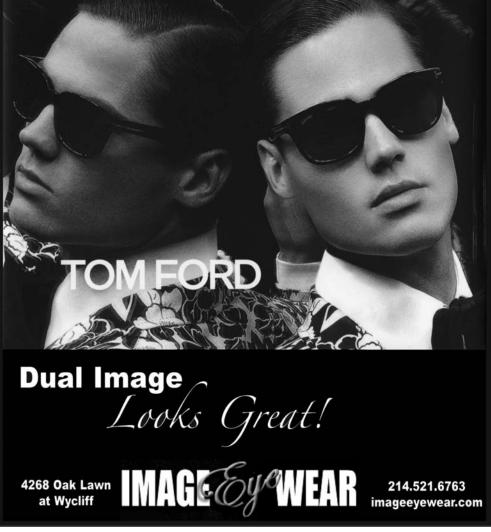
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texasnews

Gay GOP leader Schlein again takes on husband of anti-LGBT activist

Ex-Log Cabin president lost precinct chair race to Homer Adams — who is married to Eagle Forum President Cathie Adams — by 3 votes in 2010

ANNA WAUGH | Staff Writer waugh@dallasvoice.com

After losing two years ago by just three votes, gay Republican leader Rob Schlein is again challenging Homer Adams — the husband of antigay activist Cathie Adams — for precinct chair in Far North Dallas.

"The reason I'm running again is I don't want to risk Dallas prosperity being ruined by some of the liberals that comprise the Democratic Party. So, I'm advocating for a change in strategy and tactics," he said. "I'm just going to go out there and do it again and see what the voters decide."

Schlein, president of Metroplex Republicans of Dallas, said he wants to grow the county Republican Party to help more Republicans get elected by reaching "new voters that traditionally the Republican Party doesn't speak to." He also wants to tailor the party's platform to become a "more modern and welcoming party" by replacing some of the negative language about the LGBT and

other minority communities to "more general conservative positions.'

"I think rather than speak to specific policies about any minority community, the platform would be served to speak in high-level terms such as strengthening families, however those families are defined," he said.

Formerly the president of Log Cabin Republicans of Dallas, Schlein said everyone in his precinct knows about his involvement with the organization because Adams' campaign literature in 2010 mentioned his affiliation with the group. After the Dallas chapter of Log Cabin Republicans was dechartered by the national organization last year, Schlein started Metroplex Republicans.

He said he's unsure if the mention hurt his campaign because he lost by so small a margin.

"I don't know if hurt or not," he said. "I mean, I came within three votes of winning."

Precinct 1800, renamed after redistricting to 2041, is still in far north Dallas.

Homer Adams said he has been precinct chair for 12 years and enjoys "informing people on the issues and candidates." Adams is the husband of



Rob Schlein

Eagle Forum President Cathie Adams, known as one of the most anti-gay voices in Dallas.

The precinct is the largest Republican precinct as far as turnout in the county with 1,800 to 2,500 people normally coming out to vote, Adams said, adding that the turnout is already so good that it would be hard to excite voters if they are not already impassioned for election year.

"If people are not excited about this upcoming November race, then they can't get excited about

anything," he said.

As for growing the party and becoming more inclusive, Adams said Schlein has voiced his ideas at the central district meeting but "it was not accepted at all and that's all I can say about it."

Dallas County Republican Party Chairman Wade Emmert said he became involved in the county party in 2007 and none of the precinct chairs have been openly gay.

Emmert said he was unsure if there have been

Omar Narvaez, president of the Stonewall Democrats of Dallas, said there are 20 openly LGBT Democratic precinct chairs for the county's 219

Emmert said Schlein is "making some inroads in that precinct" and that while many people know he is gay, he is "more than that. He's also very much a fiscal conservative and pushes conservative values."

"The real goal of the precinct chair is to motivate their precinct to get out and vote," he said. "If a precinct chair is effective, then I think it doesn't matter how long they've been there because the precinct chair has developed relationships. If a precinct chair is not effective, then obviously there needs to be a change."

The county Republican Party has been more inclusive over the last few years "than we have in a long time," Emmert said, adding that he thinks the party should continue to be so.

"I think the party does need to be more inclusive, not to any particular demographic, but I think we as a party need to realize how to disagree on issues but still work together on the big issues,"

"As long as everybody realizes that my goal is to win elections, I'm going to talk to anybody that wants to vote Republican or I think I can convince them to vote Republican," Emmert added.

Schlein said that changing the platform to represent conservative principles and removing the negative language would help "reflect the demographics of our county" by exciting the younger generation and help Republicans win countywide elections.

"If they want to start winning elections locally, I think it's crucial [to change the platform]," he said, adding that some people believe if Republicans are not elected this cycle, they may not win the county back. "This really is a make-or-break-it time for a lot of people's viewpoints for the local GOP party because if you can't show that you can win elections, it really becomes difficult to recruit quality candidates."

Emmert said both Schlein and Adams are involved in the party and voters will chose which of the two should represent the precinct.

"I've seen Rob around. He's been involved, but Homer has been, too," he said. "They represent two different views and that's kind of what I think makes the party great. I think Homer and Rob have been cordial to one another and we'll see how it plays out."

■ **SHERIFF,** From Page 9

for sheriff, is a Navy veteran and former Dallas police officer who owns his own security company.

He said he's running to provide stronger leadership amid concerns that there is low morale in the sheriff's office.

Although Valdez's sexual orientation has been an issue for past Republican candidates, Launius said "it's not for me" because if elected he would be "sworn to protect all the citizens of Dallas

The other candidate listed as running in the Republican primary, Renee Christian, said while her name will appear on the ballot, she's suspended her campaign for "personal reasons."

Valdez said employee disgruntlement and pay raises are always brought up during elections and she expects those areas to be mentioned again.

Most importantly, she said Republicans will target her in an effort to win back the county. Valdez and three Democratic judges won countywide races in 2004, in a precursor to the sweep of 2006, and the county has remained solidly blue ever

"I am known as the person who started the flow, so guess who they're coming after?" she said. "They're coming after me with loaded guns and complacency is what I fear my supporters have."

Many supporters assume she'll win, creating a lag in fundraising, Valdez said.

And with so many political fundraisers in the spring, Valdez said she'll have to wait until fall, when she needs to gear up to combat the Republican nominee.

"By this time in normal elections, I have yard signs everywhere," she said. "You know what, there's no money this year."

Proud of many things she's done as sheriff, Valdez said her single largest accomplishment has been the jail passing state inspection for the last

Valdez said this and other successes have resulted from her leadership, cooperation and ability to compromise.

"If people want something, then you compromise and work together," she said.

Valdez said there are always areas that need work, and she wants to continue the improvements by engaging with the community, increasing professionalism among staff with customer service and focusing on humane treatment of in-

Elections hold Valdez accountable, she said, something she's grateful for with the opportunity to inform voters of the progress she's made.

"Every four years I have to be kept accountable, but I keep myself accountable," Valdez said.



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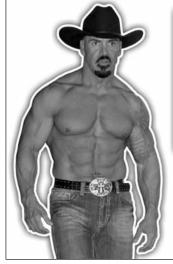
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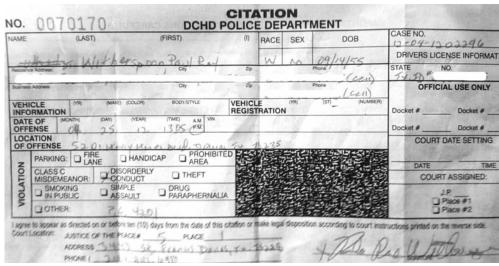
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texasnews



FACING A FINE | The ticket shows Witherspoon is charged with class-C misdemeanor disorderly conduct.

■ TICKET, From Page 6

In 2006, she gave one to Witherspoon.

"She is, at present time, undergoing psychological therapy in preparation for SRS (sexual reassignment surgery)," Porter wrote. "Treatment requires the candidate to live full time as a woman prior to surgery. Therefore, she should be treated with respect and afforded all the rights and privileges of a woman."

Ken Upton, supervising senior staff attorney in Lambda Legal's Dallas office, said he was having trouble understanding the charge against Witherspoon. Disorderly conduct was marked on the ticket, and Penal Code section 4201 was written.

Upton said the lewd conduct portion of that section of the penal code was all that could have applied.

But for that portion of the code to apply, he said, Witherspoon would have had to act "intentionally or knowingly for a lewd purpose." Since she went into a private stall, that indicates there was no lewd intent, Upton said.

Witherspoon said she didn't know whether there was even anyone else in the restroom.

"I went in, did my business, washed my hands and left," she said.

And the letters from her counselors indicate she was following doctor's orders rather than acting out of lewd intent.

Upton said Parkland would have trouble de-

fending the case.

"The officer doesn't know if anyone else was in there," he said, adding that the officer's testimony would be hearsay.

And if the complainant wasn't in the restroom, that person was not a witness to any lewd behav-

He said the officer probably thought Witherspoon would either pay the fine or the charge would be dismissed.

"And he doesn't care," Upton said.

He said the officer could not write a ticket for simply using the wrong bathroom.

'That's not a crime in Dallas," he said.

Officials at Parkland issued a statement saying they were looking into the incident.

"We have verified that on April, 25, 2012, Parkland Police responded to a complaint from a concerned female patient regarding her allegation that there was a male in the female restroom," spokeswoman Charise Thomason wrote. "Because of the complexity of the issue, the incident is currently under review.

Parkland strives to treat patients, visitors and staff with dignity and respect, as well as provide a safe environment at all times."

On Thursday, May 3, Witherspoon took Lorentz back to Parkland for another emergency. Before using the restroom, she called de la Cruz. He arranged for someone in hospital administration to walk her to a bathroom.



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Andy Smith, First UMC, Sterling's to receive Crystal Hope awards

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer

taffet@dallasvoice.com

Andy Smith, First United Methodist Church Dallas and Sterling's Bookkeeping & Tax Service will receive 2012 Crystal Hope Awards at the Bloomin' Ball on Saturday, May 5.

Smith is director of corporate philanthropy at Texas Instruments, the presenting sponsor for this year's Bloomin' Ball, an annual fundraiser benefiting AIDS Intefaith Network. Smith has been a board member for AIN for eight years and served as chair for three. He also is a board member for the Center for Nonprofit Management, the Dallas Coalition for HIV/AIDS Services, Senior Source and the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas. He has committee positions with EducateDallas, United Way Worldwide Global Corporate Leadership Advisory Council, and the Museum of Nature and Science's Corporate Council.

"He has maintained years of commitment to AIDS Interfaith," said AIN Executive Director Steven Pace. "He's key to our relationship with Texas Instructments. The resume goes on for pages and pages. He uses his professional skills and abilities in every way you can name."

First United Methodist Church Dallas has had an active AIDS ministry for 23 years and has



STERLING REPUTATION | Kevin Gardner, from left, Jon Chester and Gilberto Castillo of Sterling's Book-keeping & Tax Service regularly host 'SNL @ Daire Center,' a weekend meal program for AIN clients.

worked with AIN since 1989.

"So many people connected with AIDS Interfaith have come from that church including a board member with the longest tenure," Pace said. "They've supported us in so many ways. They have a huge commitment to social justice and caring for the poor."

He said the service has gone beyond just the one agency but extends to the supper club at AIDS Services of Dallas as well.

Sterling's Bookkeeping & Tax Service has been an active supporter of AIN for more than 10 years including its fundraising, volunteerism and regular hosting of "SNL @ Daire Center," the weekend meal program for clients. Partners Jon Chester and Gilbert Castillo founded Sterling on the principles that every client is a partner and that the company will only be successful if the client is successful.

"John and Gilbert have given years of service

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to AIN," Pace said. "They've served on committees, given money, offered their professional skills and knowledge, no matter what we've needed."

They have also chaired the Great Gatsby, a fundraising event for AIN, for several years.

He said they have a commitment to serving those with HIV/AIDS and to prevention.

AIN was founded in 1986 by clergy and pastoral and lay counselors to provide spiritual and emotional support services to persons living with HIV/AIDS. In 1991, it expanded its services to reach traditionally underserved populations. In 1999, it absorbed some of the key programs of Oak Lawn Community Services.

Today, AIN provides 10 different client services and HIV/AIDS prevention programs that serve 2,000 people living with HIV/AIDS, and makes more than 10,000 contacts with other at-risk individuals in targeted communities.



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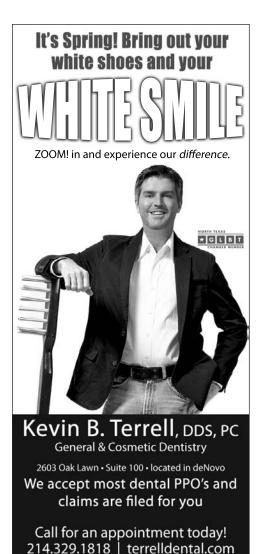
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nationalnews

Scouts face fresh flak for gay ban

Board member resigns in protest of lesbian den mother's removal

JOHN SEEWER | Associated Press

A board member for an Ohio regional Boy Scouts group who resigned to protest the removal of a lesbian den mother said he wants the national organization to review its ban on gays.

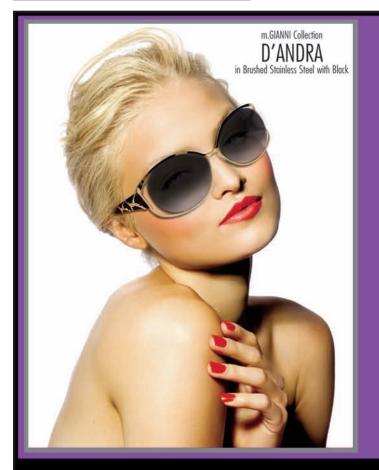
The Boy Scouts of America's policy of not allowing gays within its ranks has been debated for more than a decade since being upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court. It is facing renewed questioning in eastern Ohio after Jennifer Tyrrell, the mother of a 7-year-old scout, was thrown out in April.

David Sims resigned from the Ohio River Valley Council's board Friday, April 27 after learning

SCOUTS, Page 16



RALLYING THE TROOPS | Jennifer Tyrrell has traveled the country to protest the Boy Scouts' ban on gays since her removal in April as den leader for the troop of her son, Cruz Burns, 7. (Associated Press)



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Right-wing attacks blamed for gay Romney adviser's resignation

Richard Grenell quits just 2 weeks after becoming campaign's foreign policy expert, citing 'hyper-partisan discussion of personal issues'

LISA KEEN I Keen News Service

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's openly gay adviser on foreign policy resigned Tuesday, May 1, just two weeks after the campaign announced his role.

According to the Washington Post, which broke the story, Richard Grenell "resigned in the wake of a full-court press by anti-gay conservatives." But Grenell, in a statement to the Post, said only that his ability to "speak clearly and forcefully on the issues has been greatly diminished by the hyper-partisan discussion of personal issues that sometimes comes from a presidential campaign." Grenell's statement also thanked Romney for his confidence in Grenell's ability to serve the campaign on national security and foreign policy issues and for Romney's "clear message to me that being openly gay was a non-issue for him and his team."

The Post quoted Romney campaign manager Matt Rhoades as saying the campaign is "disappointed that Ric decided to resign from the campaign for his own personal reasons."

"We wanted him to stay," said Rhoades, "because he had superior qualifications for the position he was hired to fill."

Most gay activists see Grenell as a victim of the Republican Party's strong right-wing base.

R. Clarke Cooper, head of National Log Cabin Repubicans, echoing Grenell's statement, blamed Grenell's departure on "hyper-partisan discussion of issues unrelated to" Grenell's national security qualifications. Cooper said Grenell "was essentially hounded by the far right and far left."

National Stonewall Democrats Executive Director Jerame Davis said Grenell was "mercilessly hounded by religious conservatives." To Davis, Romney's appointment of Grenell was never serious, but just a "crassly cynical political move by Romney to fool LGBT voters into believing he's not as anti-gay as his statements would have you believe."

Davis criticized Romney for "silently [letting] the bigoted wing of his party control his personnel choices."

Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese also criticized Romney for his silence.

"The fact that Grenell is gone so quickly after a right-wing uproar," said Solmonese, "is a troubling harbinger of the kind of power that anti-gay forces would have in a Romney White House."

Jimmy LaSalvia, head of the national gay conservative group GOProud, said: "I still can't believe that in 2012 there are still people like Bryan Fischer and Tony Perkins, who would rather keep a gay person from having a job on a presidential campaign than have Mitt Romney assemble the

best foreign policy team possible. On a day when foreign affairs and national security are at the forefront, it's too bad that Governor Romney doesn't have the best spokesman possible speaking on his behalf"

Fischer, a policy official with the American Family Association, criticized Grenell's appointment, characterizing Grenell as a "gay activist" and suggesting he would be trying to promote a



Richard Grenell

"homosexual agenda." Perkins, head of the Family Research Council, noted that Grenell publicly criticized President Bush for opposing the U.S. endorsement of a pro-gay statement by the United Nations.

Another right-wing anti-gay activist, Gary Bauer, criticized the appointment of Grenell, saying that it showed unwillingness by the Romney campaign to reassure conservatives in the Republican Party.

"Conservative pro-family leaders," Bauer said in an April 25 email to supporters of his current organization, Campaign for Working Families,

ATTACKS, Next Page







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nationalnews

ATTACKS. From Previous Page

"are disappointed because Grenell has been an outspoken advocate of redefining normal marriage." He noted that Grenell "once caused a controversy by trying to have his partner listed as his spouse when he worked at the U.N." Grenell asked to have his partner listed, the same as the spouses of other U.S. delegation employees, in a **United Nations directory.**

But Bauer's criticism of Grenell's appointment was somewhat tempered by his acknowledgement that "homosexuals" worked in the administrations of President Ronald Reagan and the two

And Grenell's own cryptic explanation — citing "hyperpartisan discussion of personal issues that sometimes comes from a presidential campaign" — left room for uncertainty about what was really behind his abrupt resignation.

Grenell, 45, lives in Los Angeles and was due to start work at Romney's national headquarters in Boston on Tuesday. Such a move would enable Grenell to marry his longtime partner, Matthew

Personal issues were also a focus of early criticism of Grenell's appointment, as media reports gave considerable attention to Grenell's Twitter posts making unflattering observations about GOP presidential long-shot Newt Gingrich's current wife, Callista, openly gay Pulitzer Prize winning commentator Jonathan Capehart, and MSNBC's openly gay political commentator Rachel Maddow, among others. Those posts came to light just as the clamor was subsiding over a remark from openly gay Democratic strategist Hilary Rosen that Romney's wife, Ann, had "never worked a day in her life."

Grenell's qualifications to serve as a national security and foreign policy adviser to Romney seemed unquestioned. Grenell served the administration of President George W. Bush, as a spokesman for the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. He was also appointed by Ambassador John Danforth in 2004 to serve as an alternative representative of the United States to the U.N. Security Council. And he served numerous other prominent Republicans, including New York Governor George Pataki, former South Carolina Governor Mark Sanford, and San Diego Mayor Susan Golding.

The Romney campaign's willingness to appoint an openly gay man to such a prominent position also seemed to indicate that the campaign was prepared to go after the one in four gay voters who tend to vote Republican. Grenell's departure could make that task more difficult.

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■ SCOUTS, From Page 14

of Tyrrell's story.

"Ms. Tyrrell's removal goes against my fundamental beliefs of how we should treat our fellow human beings and is, in my opinion, wholly discriminatory," he said in his resignation letter released by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. Sims achieved Scouting's highest honor, Eagle Scout, as did his father and grandfather. He said he understands that the ban is legal but thinks it's time to re-examine the policy.

Tyrrell, of Bridgeport, Ohio, called his resignation a huge statement. "I'm just wondering how many board members, how many scouts that they have to lose before they change the policy."

Gay-rights groups have taken up Tyrrell's cause, starting an online petition to get the Scouts to change their policy. Tyrrell said that within the past week she has heard from dozens of people, including some current Scouts who are gay.

"It's sad," she said. "These kids are fine examples of what a young man should be, and they have to hide their true selves."

The Scouts say that as a private organization they have a right to exclude gays. The organization has long said that it understands that not everyone agrees with its stance, but it believes Scouting is not the right place for youngsters to be exposed to issues of sexual orientation.

Tyrrell said she was told in April that she could no longer volunteer as den leader for about a dozen first-graders because she was gay. She said the decision came after she was asked to take over as treasurer and had raised questions about the finances. She had known about the Scouts' ban on gays when she first volunteered in September, but she said a local cub master told her that it didn't matter. The Boy Scouts of America said last week that a fellow pack leader later made a complaint and that the organization followed its policy by removing her.



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coverstory

Rewriting history

Recently outed State Board of Education member George Clayton vies to become the first candidate elected in Texas as an openly gay Republican

JOHN WRIGHT | Senior Editor wright@dallasvoice.com

There was a moment when George Clayton considered throwing in the towel.

It was last November and Clayton, a first-term Republican member of Texas' State Board of Education from Richardson, had become the subject of an apparent whisper campaign concerning his sexual orientation.

After the 62-year-old Clayton put an end to the rumors once and for all by publicly acknowledging he's gay, commenters on news sites predicted he wouldn't stand a chance of getting re-elected in District 12, which includes all of Collin County, one of the most conservative urban areas in the nation. And Clayton was starting to believe it.

"There was a moment after this broke that I thought well, I'm not going to pull out, but maybe I'll just suspend the campaign," Clayton told Dal-

las Voice in an exclusive interview last week.

Clayton called a meeting with his brain trust, which includes his campaign manager and partner of 34 years, Jim Southworth, as well as his sister, Dallas County District Judge Teresa Hawthorne.

"They were against me pulling out altogether," Clayton recalled. "So I said OK, let's move on with this. We'll go down the road, and if it gets really, really rough, then we'll meet again, but it has n't."

In fact, Clayton said his sexual orientation hasn't come up at all on the campaign trail since then, even during the many candidate forums he's attended in the district.

Clayton, believed to be the first openly gay Republican officeholder in Texas' history, said he realizes his sexual orientation may hurt him among some primary voters on May 29 — when he faces three GOP challengers. But he said he's also heard



UNIQUELY QUALIFIED | Clayton, shown at a board meeting last year, is the only educator in the race. He serves as special projects coordinator at Thomas Jefferson High School in Dallas. (Associated Press)

from plenty of Republicans in the district — which has a population of 1.7 million and also includes portions of northern Dallas County — who are totally supportive.

"It's amazing, and it has been encouraging, because I didn't want to spend the rest of the campaign having that discussion, and that's where it would have gone if I hadn't said anything," Clay-

ton said. "What they were hoping is that I would try to cover it up, Nixon-ize the damn thing, or deny it, lie about it, stonewall, circumvent it in some way.

"All that would do is create more problems for me, and I've got plenty of those already," he added. "And if it killed off the campaign com-

■ HISTORY, Next Page





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coverstory



34 YEARS AND COUNTING | Clayton, right, and his partner, Jim Southworth, met at Throckmorton Mining Co. in 1978. Southworth also serves as Clayton's campaign manager. (John Wright/Dallas Voice)

■ HISTORY, From Previous Page

pletely, and there was always that risk, then it killed it off. But I never thought that it would, and it hasn't."

Deep political roots

Clayton said he and Southworth first devised their strategy for dealing with potential rumors about his sexual orientation — by responding honestly and forcefully — when he ran for City Council in Tampa, Fla., in 1987.

"We had had this discussion as far back as Tampa, that when somebody comes up and attempts to slap me down, the best thing I can do is slap back harder than they have," he said.

Clayton wouldn't need the strategy in the 1987 race. Although the issue didn't come up, he lost anyway.

"I had no business on that council," he said. "I didn't have a clue what I was doing."

Regardless of his defeat in that first campaign, Clayton had always seemed destined to run for public office.

As a student at Garland High School, he was elected president of his sophomore, junior and senior classes.

In 1968, at age 19, Clayton became the youngest delegate to the Democratic National Convention, representing Dallas.

"The Democratic Party was somewhat different in those days," Clayton said. "When George

McGovern and Jane Fonda took control of the party, it didn't fit me anymore. I switched to the Republican Party long before the Reagan revolution, when it became very fashionable to do that."

Clayton said he knew he was gay from a very young age, and although he never hid it, he "didn't get on the rooftop and announce it either."

He and Southworth met in 1978 at Throckmorton Mining Co., which was the first gay bar in the Cedar Springs area — on a Tuesday night.

"I never went out on a weeknight," Clayton recalled. "He walked in, and we started talking, and we've been talking ever since. One day we're going to get it settled."

A year later, the couple moved to Florida, where Clayton earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of South Florida.

He became heavily involved in the Hillsborough County Republican Party in Tampa, serving on the Executive Committee and chairing many fundraisers. Although Clayton and Southworth regularly attended party functions together, there was never an uproar.

"I just went about my business like everyone else did," Clayton said. "I thought I was entitled to. I still do."

After the couple moved back to Dallas in 1999, Clayton decided to leave a career in real estate to become a teacher at North Dallas High School.

"It was fairly obvious from the time I walked into a building that something serious had happened from the time I left public school," Clayton said. "The primary thing that had happened was

that management of education had been wrestled from teachers and handed to politicians in Austin, Texas — and you talk about mismanaging something ..."

Clayton spent 12 years at North Dallas, where he served as English department chair and academic coordinator, before recently being named special projects coordinator at Thomas Jefferson High School. Among other things, Clayton said he now helps prepare teachers for changes in testing requirements.

Officials in Austin, Clayton said, have created an enormous "testing industry" that has "taken over" public education in Texas.

"It's marginalized the teachers, but in some cases it's almost made the teacher obsolete," he said. "The teacher is now a testing coordinator, a testing facilitator, and that's when I looked around and said, 'Where do I go?' The first thought is, get in politics."

As a district employee, Clayton was barred from running for DISD's Board of Trustees. So he turned his attention to the State Board of Education, which writes K-12 curriculum for Texas schools.

Shocking upset

Clayton quickly discovered that his SBOE representative in District 12, Geraldine "Tincy" Miller, had never been an educator. Miller had served on the SBOE for 26 years without opposi-

Now 74, Miller is married to Vance Miller, the son of late Dallas real estate mogul Henry S. Miller Ir.

Clayton said Ms. Miller had a sense of entitlement about the SBOE seat, acting as though she owned it

"She didn't take me seriously," he said.

It was a combination of Miller's complacency and his strong grassroots campaign, Clayton said, that propelled him to a shocking upset in the 2010 primary. His sexual orientation never came up, and he defeated Miller by a margin of 3,000 votes, or 52 percent to 48 percent.

"I had so many teachers out working for me, and many of them Democrats," Clayton said. "They saw a need for an educator on the board, especially from this huge urban area.

"She's never worked in a public school sysbeing threatened with their jobs."

Clayton said his victory devastated Miller, who didn't respond to a request to be interviewed for

"I'm told she practically went catatonic," he said of her reaction on election night.

Two years later, Clayton said Miller has set out to win back her seat at all costs, vowing to spend more than \$50,000 of her own money on the race. Two other Republican candidates are also challenging Clayton — Gail Spurlock and Pam Little.

Lois Parrot is unopposed in the Democratic Primary, but the district is heavily Republican, and the GOP nominee is all but certain to win the seat.

Clayton estimated his three GOP challengers will spend a combined total of \$100,000, while he expects to raise less than \$10,000.

'That's two and a half teachers' salaries for a government position that pays nothing," he said. "I have to ask myself just what it is I've done wrong."

Whisper campaign

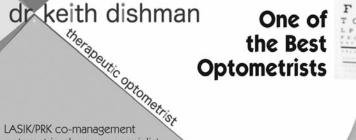
Dan Quinn, a spokesman for the Texas Freedom Network, a progressive group that monitors the SBOE, said unlike in the years leading up to Clayton's election— when the board drew national attention for its battles over science and U.S. history — there haven't been many controversial votes in his 16 months on the board.

Clayton has consistently been a "swing" or moderate Republican vote, Quinn said. The SBOE is currently made up of 11 Republicans — six of whom are hard-right social conservatives who vote as a bloc — and four Democrats.

"He takes his job seriously as a representative for the people in his district," Quinn said. "George Clayton's votes have generally been with the five traditional conservatives."

Quinn said in 2010, District 12 was "the last race we were looking at," as TFN simply assumed ■ HISTORY, Next Page

tem," he said of Miller. "She's never had to. She's never lived on \$45,000 a year. She's never had to. ... I'm not begrudging her her money — I'd like to have some myself — but I do resent a multimillionaire thinking she can represent teachers who are making \$45,000 a year and are constantly



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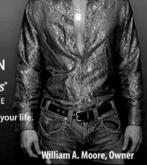
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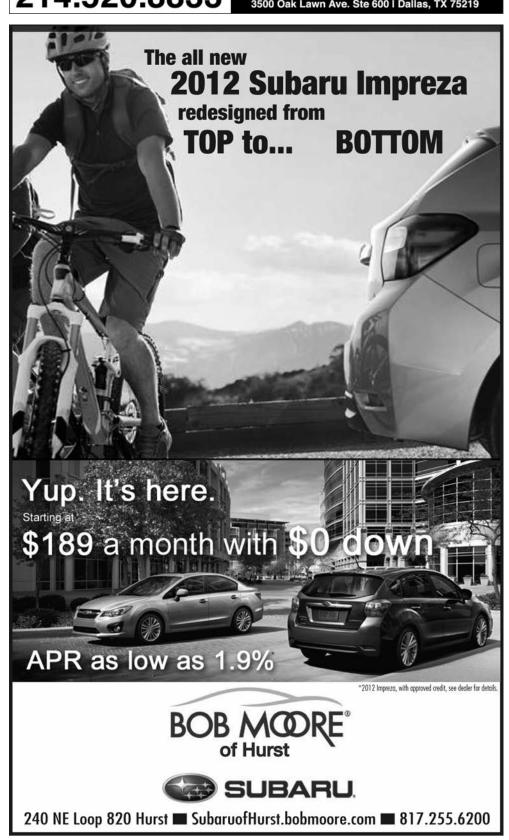


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coverstory



OUT FOR REVENGE | Geraldine 'Tincy' Miller, shown at a board meeeting in 2008, served for 26 years with no opposition. After losing to Clayton in 2010, the 74-year-old Miller reportedly plans to spend more than \$50,000 of her own money this year in her bid to win back the seat. (Associated Press)

■ HISTORY, From Previous Page

Miller would win. Although the group doesn't endorse in primaries, Quinn condemned the gaybaiting tactics used against Clayton.

"Quite obviously whether or not he's gay makes no difference at all in how he does his job as a State Board of Education member, and it's appalling that right-wing groups up there would think that this is an appropriate thing to do, to smear somebody in such a way, as if being gay in the first place is something to be ashamed of," Ouinn said.

Rumors about Clayton's sexual orientation first surfaced on blogs as early as October 2010, but they didn't gain traction until late last year, when the president of the Golden Corridor Republican Women, Susan Fletcher, sent an email to board members reporting on an interview she'd done with Miller.

The GCRW has members in Collin, Dallas and Denton counties, and Fletcher's interview with Miller focused on hot-button issues including evolution and abstinence-only education. At the bottom of her email to board members, Fletcher wrote of Clayton: "What are his living arrangements in Richardson? With whom does he live? It's not appropriate to comment further — but this needs to be investigated."

In Clayton's response sent to media outlets confirming that he's gay, he alleged that in addition to the GCRW, Miller herself was behind the whisper campaign. He now says he has no concrete proof of that, but was basing it on the fact that Miller was a party to the interview with Fletcher.

"Anything like that has to start somewhere, but I steer clear of that nonsense," Clayton said. "I just go out and talk about education. Maybe Tincy didn't instigate it, but she planned to take advantage of it. I was not going to allow that to happen. I was not going to give her any room to wiggle."

Fletcher, meanwhile, claims her comments about Clayton were taken out of context. Fletcher told Dallas Voice her suggestion that Clayton needed to be investigated was related to his "position on sex education in the classroom and whether or not his personal life indicated there may be an agenda."

"Because it was a private e-mail, an explanation of what needed to be investigated was not necessary," Fletcher wrote in an email last week. "BOE candidates should expect these kinds of questions regarding their educational philosophy — as one's personal life/world view frequently influence[s] the policy decisions they make. As a constituent of District 12, I am advocating for an abstinence only curriculum when it comes to sex education. I do not want the school teaching about heterosexual or homosexual topics, as that opens the door for an unhealthy lifestyle."

Donna Garner, a socially conservative activist from Waco who's been involved in SBOE races, issued a statement withdrawing her endorsement of Clayton after learning he was gay.

"If Clayton is indeed a homosexual, then we as voters must be concerned about re-electing him to the SBOE since the Board will soon begin the process of writing and adopting Health curriculum requirements for all Texas public school students," Garner said in the November statement.

Contacted last week, Garner told Dallas Voice she had "nothing more to say on this issue after having made my initial statement."

"Gail Spurlock is the candidate we are supporting because she is an authentic conservative and holds our same traditional values," Garner said in an email.

"When I say 'we,' I mean those people across Texas who believe that schools should teach knowledge-based academic skills, largely objectively tested, instead of making the public schools a place for social engineering," she added.

Spurlock's campaign didn't respond to a request for an interview. Little, meanwhile, said she would have to "respectfully decline" an interview with Dallas Voice.

Running on his record

Clayton said Spurlock, who's running on an ultraconservative tea party platform, doesn't even have a college degree, while Little currently works as a clerk at a fence company.

"If I'm more qualified, it's because I know more about curriculum education," Clayton said. "It really disturbs me to know that one of these women, gracious as they are, will go on that board, but it could happen."

At candidate forums, Clayton said his challengers typically begin by declaring that they're the only "real Republican" or "true conservative" in the race, before continuing the narrative throughout their remarks.

Clayton, meanwhile, focuses on education, and unlike the others, he's able to provide real-world examples based on his experience.

"That's why at the end of these meetings, I always come away feeling a little better," Clayton said. "They're relying on their political agenda to see them through, which tells me that if they get on the board, it's their political agenda that's going to be their priority on the board."

Even though Clayton's sexual orientation hasn't come up at the candidate forums, he realizes people may be discussing it privately. But he said he has no way of knowing that, and even if he did, there isn't much he could do.

"I'm going to have to ride this thing through," he said. "I'm going to rely on the good hearts and the intellect of the voters in my precincts, and Collin County especially, and rely on their intelligence to know the difference between a qualified person to be on the board, and people who have political ambitions and political agendas.

"Do I think it will hurt me? The answer is I'm sure it will among some voters, and maybe some voters who voted for me last time up in Collin County," Clayton said. "But do I think I still have a chance? I think so."

TFN's Quinn said Clayton's "going to have to be tough" and focus on his record, as well as what he wants to accomplish on the board going forward.

Quinn added he has no doubt the whisper campaign against Clayton is continuing.

"There may not be real public things said or done, but I can guarantee you that's going on behind the scenes," Quinn said. "One would hope

we've reached the point in our society that people can run for office and be judged on their positions on the issues and not their sexual orientation. The unfortunate thing is, the Republican Party in Texas is extremely homophobic."

Denis Dison, a spokesman for the Washington, D.C.-based Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, said the problem isn't necessarily confined to Texas.

Of the 530 openly LGBT officials the Victory Fund has identified nationwide, just 20 are members of the GOP.

"Republicans are a fraction of the out officials in the country, which is something we'd like to see

change," Dison said. "Even though you have plenty of people working in politics who are Republican and gay, the idea that they would be out about that is an even newer phenomenon in the GOP than in the Democratic Party."

Since being outed, Clayton has spoken at a meeting of the gay group Log Cabin Republicans, which also held a fundraiser for him at his home. But he's declined to seek the endorsement of the Victory Fund, saying he didn't want to run as "the gay candidate."

"True equality to me comes without having to precede your name with a label," he said.

At the same time, Clayton acknowledged that for him and Southworth, his status as Texas' first out GOP officeholder is a source of pride.

"That's not lost on us," he said, adding that if he's re-elected, the significance will only grow. "Something else that's not lost on us is, if I win this election, it's going to bring that up even more, I know it will, at which point because I have come out, it frees me up a little bit to be more frank and above board, and I will be, and I promise you that.

"But I've got to win the damned election," he said. "If I lose the election, it's going to be, 'I told you so.""



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viewpoints

Gays get abused in VAWA debate

Hutchison's effort to exclude LGBT victims from domestic violence bill shows there's a lot of work still to be done on this critically important issue

he threat of LGBT domestic violence evidently remains a mysterious and inconsequential issue to many American lawmakers and their constituents, even after decades of discussion in the alternative media about its prevalence and severity.

It became clear during the recent debate about LGBT domestic violence in connection with the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 by Congress that many conservative politicians neither understand the issue, nor care what happens to LGBT victims. The apathy to the violence exhibited by some politicians should shock anyone who believes everyone deserves protection from physical and sexual abuse by oppressors, particularly inside their own homes by the people with whom they live.

The renewal of the VAWA featured an expansion to include protections for LGBT victims of domestic abuse for the first time, and it gave antigay forces a platform to express their disregard for some groups' human rights. The expansion also included provisions for granting emergency visas for illegal immigrants who are victims of domestic violence.

One of the more shocking remarks was made by Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, a Republican from

Dallas, who enjoys a surprising amount of support from LGBT constituents in light of her conservative, anti-gay voting record. Hutchison and 14 other Republicans wound up voting for the act, which passed the Senate 63 to 31, but only after she offered an alternative piece of legislation that omitted LGBT and immigrant victims of violence from the reauthorization.

In presenting her rejected alternative legislation, Hutchison said she had "worked with many of my colleagues to have a substitute that has the same

coverage but is better in other ways." There is no way to view Hutchison's remarks as anything other than a heartless expression of indifference to the plight of LGBT people and illegal immigrants who suffer violence in their homes at the hands of their partners and spouses. No matter how many LGBT people come forward to defend Hutchison as "nice" and "gracious," she has revealed herself to be as compassionless as every other bigot that promotes anti-gay and anti-immigrant discrimina-

The Senate version of VAWA ensures protection of all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking regardless of





LEAVING OUT GAYS, IMMIGRANTS | Texas Republican Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, left, offered a version of the Violence Against Women Act that would omit LGBT and immigrant victims. Rep. Sandy Adams, R-Florida, plans to introduce a version similar to Hutchison's in the House.

their sexual orientation or gender identity, but the Republican-controlled House of Representatives version that is expected to be voted on in May mirrors the Hutchison model. Drafted by Republican Rep. Sandy Adams of Florida, the House version of VAWA omits protections for LGBT people and excludes emergency visas for illegal

In yet another telling statement revealing either ignorance about the issue of LGBT domestic violence, indifference about the problem or more than likely both, Adams said her version of VAWA was designed to ensure "taxpayer re-

> sources help victims - not Washington bureaucrats." She added, "It is my hope that colleagues in both the House and Senate can put politics aside and support this lifesaving leg-

> If the House version of the VAWA passes, then differences in the bill would probably be negotiated in a conference committee. As it stands now, the Senate version would recognize LGBT people as underserved populations, prohibit discrimination based on sexual ori-

entation and gender identity by service organizations and allow states to use VAWA funding to support LGBT programs related to domestic violence. The House version would offer no guarantees for LGBT people.

David Webb

The Rare Reporter

The Texas Council on Family Violence includes an LGBT Caucus and it advocates for education to combat the myths that it claims help perpetuate LGBT domestic violence and prevent substantive efforts such as the pending federal legislation to combat it. One of the biggest myths is that battering and abuse do not exist in samesex relationships, and the problem is confined to men battering women, which would appear to be the fallacy driving the agenda of Rep. Adams.

Other myths about LGBT domestic violence include that it only affects certain socio-economic groups in the LGBT community, that it is a mutual-battering phenomena, that LGBT people can easily leave abusive relationships and that it is caused only by substance abuse, stress, provocation and other similar factors. All of those myths are easily debunked by the facts, according to the family violence organization.

Despite widespread support from social justice advocates, domestic abuse social workers and other progressive thinkers, mainstream America obviously never got the message about LGBT domestic violence. It's doubtful the mainstream media ever paid much attention to the problem

The debate in Congress has focused attention on how much work is left to be done on the issue of LGBT domestic violence, not only in terms of providing relief and services to the victims but also in raising public awareness.

It appears that the more than two decades of discussion about the problem has failed to attract widespread attention in the LGBT community, and it may not be on the radar of younger LGBT people at all.

There are at least four national resources regarding LGBT domestic violence: Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project (www.gmdvp.org), Cambridge, Mass.; National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Denver, Colo. (www. ncadv.org); National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, New York, N.Y. (www.avp.org); and National Domestic Violence Hotline, Austin (800-

For anyone in the LGBT community who is suffering in a domestic violence situation, those resources are available to answer questions and suggest solutions. And for LGBT communities where a local anti-domestic violence program has not yet been established, there's no better time than now while the topic is in the forefront to

David Webb has covered LGBT issues for the mainstream and alternative media for three decades. Contact him at davidwaynewebb@yahoo.com.



(Dallas Voice, 4145 Travis St., Third Floor, Dallas TX 75204).

St. Paul church faces foreclosure after pastor backed marriage equality

Hardy Haberman

Flagging Left

Grace Community UCC, which lost 72% of members over support for gay rights and got \$15K donation from Cathedral, still needs a miracle

appily-ever-after is a plot device used in fairy tales to button up the story and leave the reader feeling that everything is right with the world.

Although our real-world stories sometimes have happy outcomes, they rarely fall into the "happily ever after" category. Real life is a little

A few months ago I told a story about a church in St. Paul, Minn., that was struggling to keep its doors open after it took the courageous step of becoming LGBTQ-affirming and -accepting.

The Rev. Oliver White had signed onto the United Church of Christ resolution affirming "equal marriage rights for all people, regardless of gender."

That got him a less than happily ever after. Seventy-two percent of his congregation walked out and left him and his church holding the bag a big bag of debt.

That's where the fairy tale aspect of the story starts. The Cathedral of Hope UCC here in Dallas came to the rescue and raised a whopping \$15,000 to bring the equity loan payments for White's church current. That would have been a nifty story with a really nice happy ending, were it not for a couple of things.

First, the church is still looking at a loan with an exorbitant 23.5 percent interest rate, and worse still the lender wants a payment of \$165,000 on June 1 or the church will owe \$170,000 the following month and face foreclosure.

Meanwhile, the Rev. White and his congregation have been looking for a bank that will refinance the property and save their church.

Situated in the poorest neighborhood in St. Paul, Grace Community

Church isn't an appealing prospect for a bank. Although the congregation has shown they can sustain a decent monthly income, the banks would like to see a two- or three-year track record of fiscal responsibility, and that is not an option right now.

Secondly, the church has problems other than

financial. Because of the publicity from their decision to be affirming of LGBTQ rights, and recent national notoriety brought on by the story in March of their surprise support, White has been barraged with a stream of threatening phone calls, vile emails and worse.

During a recent wedding held at the church, people drove by in the vehicle and shouted anti-gay epithets as shots rang out. Luckily no one was injured, and ironically it was a straight wedding.

As I have said previously, sometimes we in the LGBTQ community forget that those who stand with us for justice sometimes find themselves paying a price.

When I spoke with White, he lamented that his church was so distracted by its financial woes, yet he

emphasized how important he felt his congregation's position of equality was. It is a matter of justice, and that is something Oliver White is passionate about. He is also passionate about his church. It is a small beacon of hope in a pocket of despair. It is the heart of that small community.

After looking at the fundraising efforts of the



The Rev. Oliver White

Obama campaign, White was struck by an idea. Perhaps seeking a large donation was a problem, but seeking very small ones, as little as a dollar a person might result in the real happy ending they are seeking.

The math is simple, if 200,000 people sent a dollar each, the problem would be solved. The reality is less simple, and the struggle for survival of a small justice-driven church in a predominantly African-American neighborhood of St. Paul is far from a fairy tale.

Just in case there is a chance for a "happily ever after," the church's address is Grace Community United Church, 986 Forest St., St Paul, MN 55106.

Might be worth a dollar or two to see how the

Hardy Haberman is a longtime local LGBT activist and board member of the Woodhull Freedom Alliance. His blog is at DungeonDiary.blogspot.com.



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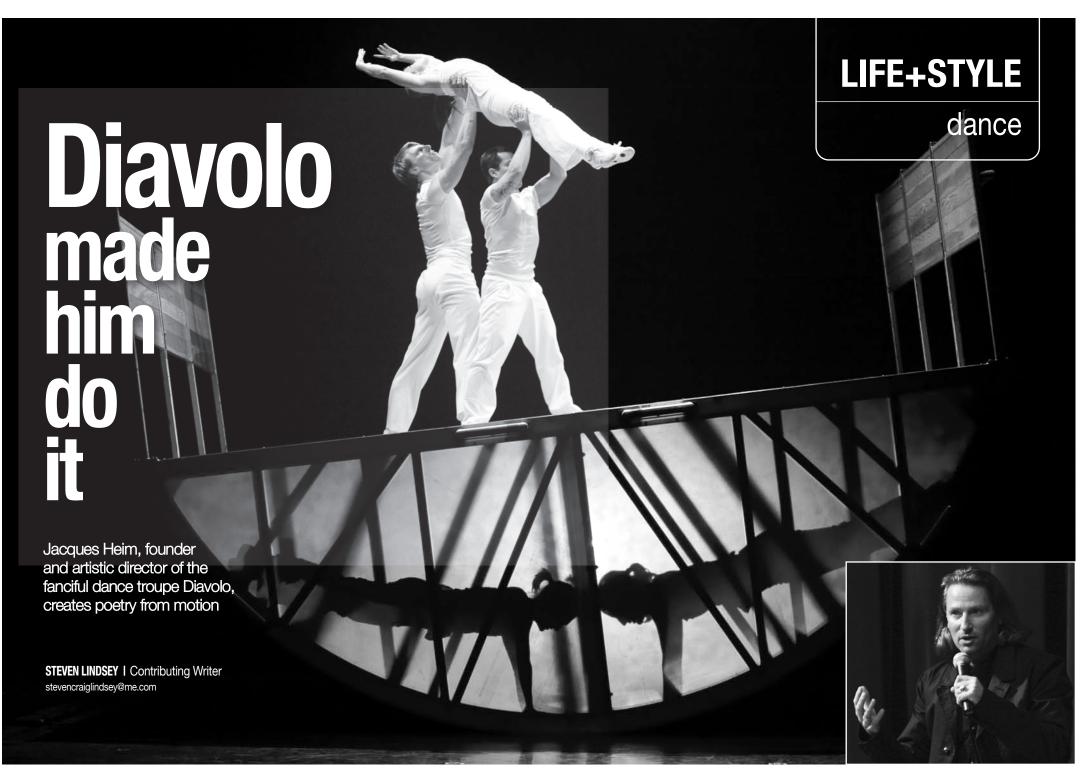
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Is Romney's hiring of a gay advisor aimed at swaying LGBT voters?

- Yes: 69 percent
- No: 22 percent
- 163 votes cast
- Unsure: 9 percent



FIRST MOVEMENT | Jacques Heim, inset, pushes the boundaries of dance with Diavolo, mixing the human form and technology.

DIAVOLO

Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St.

May 4-5. \$45-\$65. ATTPAC.org.

hen Jacques Heim founded Diavolo Dance Theater in 1992, he probably wasn't expecting it to become an officially recognized *cultural treasure* by the city of Los Angeles. And now, for two performances only, Dallas gets to discover this legendary jewel in all its brilliance.

Diavolo deftly combines a company of dancers, gymnasts, athletes and actors to form a team that has a reputation for putting on

elaborate shows that transcend the simple notion of what modern dance is all about. The Dallas show is entitled *Fearful Symmetries*, the second installment of a trilogy commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic. It premiered in 2010 and features music by John Adams.

"Fluid Infinities is an abstract piece that starts as a cube. This cube can represent the answers to where do we come from? and where are we going? It can represent a super-power, religion, anything the audience wants to see it as," says Heim. "The dancers are dressed like abstract factory workers who deconstruct, reconstruct and alter the cube to create new environments and try to understand what it is all about. Eventually they realize the answer doesn't lie with the cube, but within themselves. The audience really will in-

terpret what it means to them individually."

Perhaps the most important aspect of the show is that, according to Heim, you don't even have to understand it to appreciate it. Regardless of deeper context, the show is so visually stunning that audiences can't help but be mesmerized.

"There's a little something for everyone, it's not just dance," he says.

Yet Diavolo is somehow greater than each of the individual shows that make up its repertoire. It's a place for artistic growth, and seeing the progression of each performer is something that has inspired Heim for 20 years.

"I want to continue to experience that relationship with them and their journeys. If I am to dream for the future, I would like to see us open a training school where we could encourage and develop so many more dancers for a life in the arts."

Heim, who once choreographed the show KA for Cirque du Soleil, says the creative process for staging Cirque shows and Diavolo shows is the same with but one major difference.

"The show *KA* is like Diavolo on steroids," he says of Cirque's "unlimited budget."

Though that doesn't mean to expect anything short of stunning in *Fearful Symmetries*.

"There are so many elements to coordinate with scheduling, rehearsing, design, building, timing and, of course, costs are always a huge factor to consider and try to control. The bigger the event, the more cooks there are in the kitchen, so it's a huge amount of pressure to get it all right," Heim explains.

And from the reaction of audiences worldwide and the company's continued growth and prosperity, he gets it right every time. Even behind the scenes, Diavolo is an ever-evolving entity, becoming more diverse as the years progress.

"When we first started the company was entirely straight, and it was chaotic! Bringing in some gay members actually evened it out and helped to create a balance within the group," he says. "We have a mix of real and unique artists in our company and that includes gay, straight, white, black, Asian — you name it, we represent it"

Heim offers up one final bit of advice to anyone reading this story.

"You can't just read about Diavolo. The only way to understand it is to experience it," he says excitedly. "You have to be there!"





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CHRIS-LIKE | Thor (Chris Hemsworth) and Capt. America (Chris Evans) fill the gay comic book lover's need for himbo beefcake in Joss Whedon's 'The Avengers.'

THE AVENGERS

Robert Downey Jr., Chris Evans,

Mark Ruffalo, Chris Hemsworth.

Rated PG-13. 140 mins.

Now playing in wide release.

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

When I was a kid, my favorite comic books were the ones where superheroes teamed up: Aquaman and Superman, Justice League, Spider-Man Meets The Hulk. But movies are something different. It's one thing to *draw* such pairings; it's quite another to wrangle movie-star egos into the same film.

Indeed, it's almost Joss Whedon's greatest feat as director of **The Avengers** that, in 140 minutes, he gives the likes of Robert Downey Jr., Samuel L. Jackson, Scarlett Johansson and Jeremy

Renner each time to shine. This isn't some '70s disaster flick where character actors take on supporting roles so they can die nobly — these folks are *superheroes*. Ain't *nobody* dyin' here.

Well, almost nobody. When you're dealing with movie franchises, survivability is at least as important as plot, and Marvel has a whole lotta franchise built into this series, which capitalizes on the two *Iron Man* movies, two vastly different *Hulk* movies, and last summer's one-two punch of *Thor* and *Captain America*. And there are more to come.

Each of those films was good in its way, but the magic of *The Avengers* is melding the diverse styles and tones into one unified action pic. Whedon fits the pieces together (from the powerful "tesseract" of *Capt. A.* to Thor's nemesis Loki to Tony Stark's peripatetic powers) into a cohesive storyline that never feels program-

matic.

Fans of the Marvel universe have long preferred it to DC Comics because its heroes tended to be more complete human beings — flawed, and with complex backstories. In action movies, that's often the first thing abandoned, and it certainly is here ... at least for the first hour or so. After the heroes assemble following some setpiece smash-'em-ups, we get more of the character.

One of the successes of Whedon's screenplay (and casting) is the development of the Hulk's alter ego, now played by Mark Ruffalo (after abortive versions with Eric Bana and Edward Norton). Ruffalo projects the perfect

tweedy professor look; you can feel he's suppressing his rage but believe he has it inside to come out. (His eventually transformation more than halfway through provides the first genuine pathos in the film.)

Another savvy decision is to keep the villain a moving target. Oh, it seems to be evil demigod Loki (Tom Hiddleston), but he hypnotizes Hawkeye (Renner), and SHIELD director Nick Fury (Jackson) seems to have his own hidden agenda. It's as convoluted as a Cold War spy thriller at times, but also as unpredictable.

But for viewers like me, it's the gay vibe of the superhero genre, gloriously explored with the casting of hunky Chris Evans as Capt. America, Chris Hemsworth as Thor (his voice alone oozes warrior-royalty) and Renner, plus Downey's patented smarm which could easily get him a place in a drag show. You go, Iron Girl.

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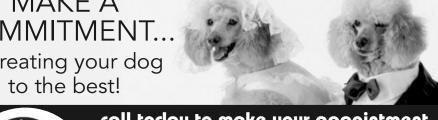


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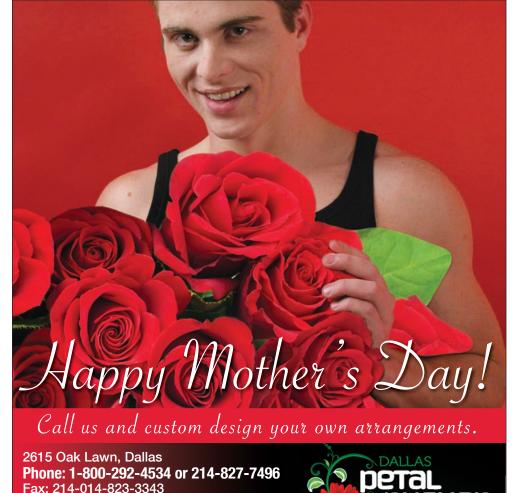
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Simple or sleek? Bold or brash? Whatever your style, invitations make a strong first impression

BY RICH LOPEZ



hen same-sex couples decide to wed, tradition can go out the window. But even the funkiest of weddings still need to get the word out, and so the invitation remains a fix-

From creative wording to fabulous design, the invitation has evolved into a fashionable element of the matrimonial process, adding punch to any ceremony. But Mark Bennett of Papyrus reminds that it also serves a major purpose to keep in mind when designing your own.

"What people forget is that it is the very first impression of the entire event," Bennett says. "Guests get excited based on what they get in the mail. Some people may say the bride coming down the aisle is the biggest impression, but none of that matters if people aren't there."

Bennett is Texas area manager for the stationery chain, which provides a lot more than birthday cards and thank-you notes. And he's been seeing more same-sex couples come in to select invitations prior to the big day. As a gay man himself, Bennett finds it particularly exciting to help LGBT couples take that step. And while the ordering process is the same, an invitation for gay couples does have unique aspects.

"With guys, they obvious want something more masculine and usually more geometric," he says. "But I would say they tend to be more traditional regarding design."

Wait — gay men?

"OK, traditional with flair," Bennett laughs.



tative, depending on the type of couple they are. But overall, some get emotionally attached

And "the look" can be anything. Papyrus offers almost infinite possibilities for that perfect invite, from color combinations to calligraphy or even special touches.



Bennett says "pocket" invites are popular and that colors tend to follow fashion. But really, it's in the eye of the brides and grooms. Papyrus has met with success with same-sex couples for their vast design options and for having the wherewithal to create out-of-the-box invitations alongside the classic. Even when a couple may not know what they want,

a stationery consultant can lead them to their design. Once they offer their design ideas, they then work with the couple to finalize.

"First, we want this to be an enjoyable, comfortable experience," Bennett says. "Then this becomes really about putting together theirs and our ideas and creating whatever they want it to be. And then we put it all together by hand so they really do get a unique invitation."

In short, Bennett's mission is to give customers exactly what they want.

"We really do focus on always being able to say 'yes,'" he says. "This is comforting for us

and the customer and we want them to feel great about what they got. At Papyrus, we really can make whatever they want no matter how out of the box. If they want fabric, we'll do it. If they want the invites in a box or mailing tube, we do that. If they even want Swarovski crystals, we can do it."

Just give them enough time. While Papyrus doesn't turn away "emergency" events (read: couples who procrastinate), he encourages planning enough time ahead to order and receive the invites well before the mail-out date.

"Our average turnaround is three to four

weeks from the date of ordering," he says. "And an invite should go out six to eight weeks prior to the event. I tell people to start about five months before [the ceremony] to make these decisions."

Couples also need to leave time to inspect proofs with a detailed eye.

"When they get the proof, it's common for people to say 'It looks great, put in the order.' They really need to look at the date, the spelling. That's the No. 1 mistake is not going over their proofs in detail," he says.

Nothing gets a marriage off to a rockier beginning that misspelling your future mother-in-law's name.

For more information visit PapyrusOnline.com.

ENVELOPE PLEASE | Mark Bennett of Papyrus is especially happy to serve same-sex couples looking to add some flair to their wedding preparations. (Rich Lopez/Dallas Voice)



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Community Unitarian Universalist Church — 2875 E. Parker Road, Plano, 972-424-8989. Communityuuchurch.org. Rev. Patrick D. Price. The Unitarian Universalist Church performs weddings and supports full marriage equality.

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Unity Church of Christianity - 3425 Greenville Ave. 214-826-5683. DallasUnity.org. Rev. Steve Collaborationsday. Performs holy unions, commitment ceremonies. Its gay pastor is supported by the congregation.

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(Big) day planner

From a DIY reception to over-the-top gala, gay event-planner-to-the-stars Brian Worley says the best way to enjoy your wedding day is to hire someone else to do all the work

BY RICH LOPEZ

Brian Worley first used his talent for staging movie premieres to mount his friend's wedding — that's what BFFs do. But he soon discovered he had a knack for making someones' "special day" even more special. From that unlikely start, Worley has added A-list weddings to his repertoire.

For 11 years, Worley and his company YourBASH! has produced big events, including weddings. Celebrity clients like Foo Fighters' Dave Grohl and *Beverly Hills 90210*'s Ian Ziering have entrusted him with their wedding days. He's also done his fair share of same-sex ceremonies. But famous or not, the one thing he tells everyone while planning a wedding is this: Enjoy the planning part, because the event is really for the guests.

"First and foremost, don't put the day on a pedestal," he counsels. "That's my biggest piece of advice. The couple do all this planning but then they are having to take pictures while the guests are having cocktails and doing all their other duties. No matter how much money they are spending, I tell them to enjoy the process of planning the event."

Originally from Austin, Worley majored in film at the University of North Texas. He moved to California to pursue his film career but found his talents matched elsewhere.

"Who knew this is what I would be doing," he says. "I fell into this career really but I really love what I do. I still get to be creative. I'm the kind of guy who feels things happen for a reason. Now I'm in the middle of planning five weddings, an *American Idol* finale party and another movie premiere."

For Worley, he sees weddings now as parties that have given way to modern celebrations. With same-sex unions, there isn't that much tradition to build on so the couples can make their own rules. Whatever those may be, the goal is to have a beautiful day and take care of as much of the preproduction as possible. And to enjoy more of the day — hire a planner.

"The benefits of having a planner is that the couple or the hosts don't have to worry about what's going wrong, if there's enough food, stuff like that," he says. "What people forget is that the plan-

ner can stay behind the scenes and fix any problems. Guests should never know what's happening and the couple can't afford to be bothered."

But is a planner in the budget? Worley explains that a planner may actually save money.

"First, it helps to hire one anyway," he says. "But as planners, we use a lot of the same vendors and they have a better feel for that. So we give vendors work and business and they likely offer us better deals. A regular client won't get that without one."

Even if you want a planner, the planner must also want *you*. Worley interviews his clients as much as they interview him. Hiring a planner not only helps with the wedding, but you also add to the family. Worley says the level of involvement is so high, that most planners have to spend more time with the family than any of the members of the wedding.

"You start learning the dirty little secrets of the family when it comes to the seating chart," he laughs. "But I've become really good friends with my clients. But I always work to get the business out of the way and then have fun."

Even if you decide not to hire a planner, Worley offers these pieces of advice.

"Choose the location first, because if it's not available, you're not getting married," he says. "Book your videographer and photographer to capture the memories and your entertainment. Caterers, florists, anyone else, will fall in place, but those are musts."



THE MAN WITH THE PLAN | As a premier event planner, native Texan Brian Worley has shared his reception ideas on such TV shows as WE's 'Platinum Weddings' and Lifetime's 'Get Married.'

Worley assures that planners have their clients' best intentions in mind and they, like the couple, want every bit of it to be perfect.

"There are people who are there who love you and care about you so whether it's a big wedding or not, have a great time with those people. We'll take care of the rest."

For more about Brian Worley, visit Your-Bash.com.





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Mother of the brides

Amy Evans and Trish McKinnerney didn't have a party planner, just their own creativity and one devoted parent beaming with pride at their lesbian wedding

B renda Rhodes, like most moms, looked forward to the day when her daughter would finally tie the

Of course, when your daughter is gay, you don't necessarily hold your breath.
Or rather, you didn't — but things

Or rather, you didn't — but things change.

Rhodes is the kind of woman who likes

Rhodes is the kind of woman who likes to put everyone at ease. "I appreciate you taking the time to call," she chirps on her outgoing voicemail message, "and I hope you make it a great day!"

That attitude of enthusiasm and generosity of spirit gives a down-home joie de vivre to the 57-year-old, Bible-studying mother of two.

"Woman marries another woman" is more akin to "dog bites man" than "man bites dog" in this day and age, but for gay couples who crave parental approval not to say involvement — it's still a refreshing story to hear.

Rhodes' daughter, Amy Evans, married her longtime girlfriend, Trish McKinnerney, on a bright Texas spring day last month. The service took place at Off the Grid, an old power station that has been converted into an airy, lofty event space, complete with exposed brick walls, industrial-chic ducts and plenty of light. It took the happy couple a year to plan and prepare for, and they did a lot of the work themselves.

Evans and McKinnerney handcrafted every decoration, ornament and subtle touch for the 300 invited guests, who arrived through the hand-built archway onto a neatly trimmed lawn covered in flower petals. Guests were given home-crafted birds' nests with pods in them. Inside the pods Evans' crawere sunflower seeds, a symbol of new life.

McKinnerney. Coincide Rhodes' ex-husband fother came out as g courtesy Amy Evans)

Evans' crawer Sunflower Seeds, a symbol of new life.

"It was a fairy tale come true," says Rhodes, who participated proudly every step along the way. "She had been married before, but I could tell she was truly happy. They were both just beaming. And they had been pouring their hearts into this for an entire year All this came out of my daughter's brain."

It was an unexpectedly genteel ceremony considering that, other than McKinnerney, Evans' One True Love is roller derby. Known as Professor Kaos, she plays for the Dallas Derby Devils; the two met when McKinnerney tried out for the team. And, while she decided the *sport* wasn't quite her style, player Evans certainly was. Now, the team is very much a part of both their lives, hanging out often at the couple's home. Rhodes often joins them.

"They lovingly call Amy 'the scrapbook queen' and they call me 'PK's mom,'" Rhodes says. The derby girls did much of the "heavy lifting" for the ceremony, Rhodes says.



MOTHER LOVIN' | Nothing comes in the way between Brenda Rhodes, right, and the wedding day of her daughter Amy Evans, above left, and her partner Trish McKinnerney. Coincidentally, Rhodes' ex-husband and Evans' father came out as gay. (Photos courtesy Amy Evans)



Evans' creativity wasn't inherited, Rhodes insists — at least not initially. "I didn't have a creative bone in my body until I died of a heart attack in 1996 and came back," she says. "Then all of a sudden I did."

Evans had been married twice before and had a son (who walked her down the aisle), but Rhodes wasn't fazed when the new betrothed turned out to be a woman.

"It didn't surprise me at all," Rhodes says in a soft Texas accent. "I already suspected Amy might be a lesbian or at least bisexual. Her father he and I were married 12 years, and while we were married discovered he was gay. It was such a shock to me, I checked books out of the library, so I could come to terms with it. I was determined that no matter how they grew up, she and her brother would respect their father."

So there you have it: Two brides, one roller derby team, a gay dad, and one very sweet, very proud mom who came back from the dead.

That's pretty hard to beat.

— Jonanna Widner

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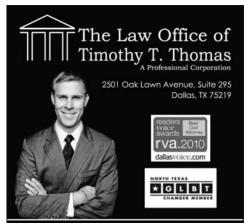
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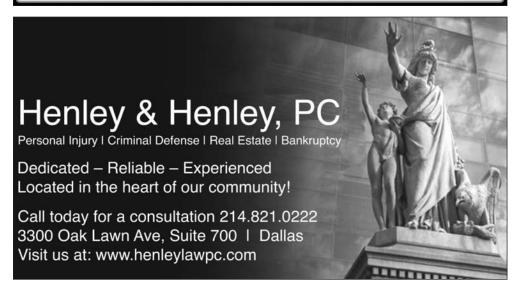
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Local singer Leslie Frye will perform 'The Wind Beneath My Wings' at your ceremony, but he really doesn't want to

BY RICH LOPEZ

eslie Frye is more than happy to sing at your wedding, but if you select a song that's been performed countless times before at millions of other weddings, he may have words with you. He keeps it friendly, but Frye also wants couples getting married

to have an extra-special day, and special means unique. And that *Titanic* song just doesn't cut it.

"God help me if I have to sing 'You Raise Me Up' by Josh Groban again," he laughs. "I get 'I Hope You Dance' a lot. But 'Wind Be-

SING YOU A SONG | Leslie Frye's heart won't go on if couples pick trendy tunes and cliché pop standards for their weddings, but he will work to come up with a perfect song for the couple's future memories.

neath my Wings' may be the top of my please-don't-ask-me-to-sing-that song list."

It's not that Frye won't serenade new couples with their choice of music, but as a person who truly believes in the magic of the ceremony, he wants to contribute tunes that haven't been done to death. People tend to gravitate either toward trendy songs or traditional wedding hymns, but Frye is intent on working with the couple to create something original.

"I sang at a wedding recently for some dear friends and I just love finding a song that fits them perfectly," he says. "I'll even rewrite some words to fit the occasion of a same-sex couple. And really, those traditional or obvious songs are fine, but I always say I want it to be a song they love, not one they think I should sing."

If you *really* wanna hear that Celine Dion earworm again, Frye won't dismiss you. He'd just prefer to search for the meaning it may have to justify it. And every so often, a tune just isn't going to work.

"Someone wanted 'Sweet Home Alabama,' and you just can't translate that into a church with a piano and a voice. But I don't get asked to do Lady Gaga a lot," he laughs. "Usually people come open-minded, but there are some who are strong headed about what they want. But we'll always discuss it.

Frye, who also performs with the Turtle Creek Chorale, has built his reputation by word-of-mouth, fast becoming a favorite for the Cathedral of Hope congregation. Add to that his gregarious personality and genuine regard for providing an emotional touch to the ceremony, and Frye has garnered many fans. Event services manager at COH Travis Lee-Moore is an enthusiastic supporter.

"Leslie can bring down a house of 50 at, say, the Interfaith Peace Chapel, or a couple thousand at the Meyerson," he says. "He is so very talented and never misses an opportunity to leave his audience in stitches or tears or somewhere in between. His rendition of 'You Are My Home' from *The Scarlet Pimpernel* was a beautiful addition to the wedding we just performed."

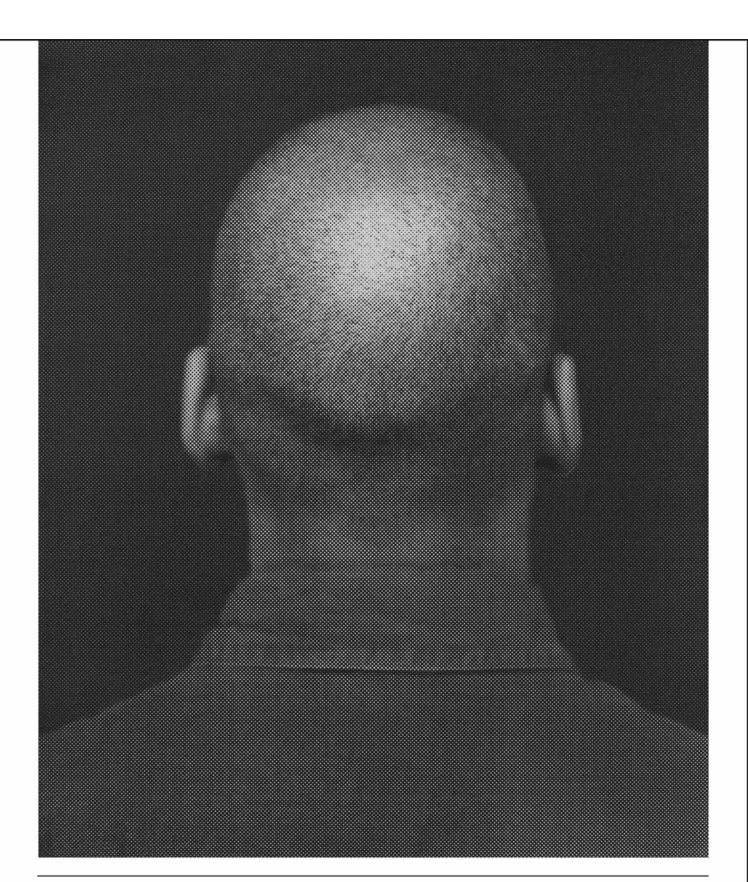
By day, Frye is an ultrasound technician where he gets to tell expectant mothers if they are having a boy or a girl. As a voice major in college, he longed to be a performer, but the reality of it was all too obvious.

"Well, I needed to eat, "he chuckles. "I never considered myself a wedding singer but I do consider myself a singer who has sung at many weddings."

And it's no wonder. He doesn't just sing at weddings, he wholeheartedly believes in the procession of them all. Whether gay or straight, he's seen up close that the dynamic of love is the same. For him, a gay wedding looks the same as any straight one.

"I hope [the community] gets to a level where we stop seeing ourselves as different," he explains. "Love is the same journey for everyone! I feel blessed to live in this time to see that. Other than maybe some lyric changes, there's no different when I design a music program for a couple. It's wonderful."

Which sounds like he's the perfect guy you want singing at your wedding.



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Glenn Ligon: AMERICA is organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art. Major support for the exhibition is provided by the National Committee of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Pictured: Self-Portrait, 1996. Silkscreen ink and gesso on canvas. 48 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist. Photograph by Ronald Amstutz. © Glenn Ligon

Oh so Wright

From Opry to Oprah, Dallas Lesbian Festival headliner Chely Wright endured a wild but cleansing coming out process

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JONANNA WIDNER I Contributing Writer jonanna.widner@gmail.com

The story is now well-known, but hearing Chely Wright tell it again makes it no less terrifying. "I had a gun in my mouth," she says. "A 9 mm."

The morning six years ago when she held a

gun in her mouth — that rockbottom, cold winter Nashville morning — she could feel her thumb squeezing in infinitely miniscule increments of space, just around the trigger, just this

close to squeezing too hard. Wright had already achieved her dream: She was a country music star — perhaps not a superstar, but with a solid career, a No. 1 hit to her name ("Single White Female"), a fistful of awards and up-and-comer's accolades, she was definitely a success.

She was also deeply closeted. She had lied to

herself, to the public, to her colleagues, to the press, to good-hearted boyfriends (most famously to former boyfriend and legit country superstud Brad Paisley), to her parents. She watched Logo "with my blinds drawn." Finally, her four-year relationship with another woman had finally collapsed under the weight of years of deception.

And so she put a gun in her mouth.

But something stopped her. She put the gun down, staggered upstairs to her bed, and collapsed. The next morning, "I got on my knees and prayed to God," she says. "I didn't hear a big booming voice or

see a dude in a robe, but there's no doubt in my mind he spoke to me. What I understood was 'You have to come out.'"

Time, healing, self-acceptance: Maybe these are the reasons Wright can now talk about her suicide attempt so matter-of-factly. She came out almost exactly two years ago, at age 39. Once she

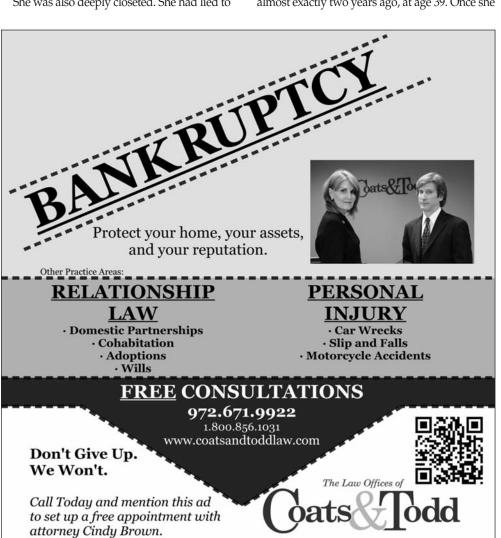


made the decision, she approached it with the same fervor she had applied to her career: flying out of the closet, guns blazing, via a cover story in People and the simultaneous publication of her memoir, Like Me. She appeared on Oprah.

Since then, she's released little music (her last album was 2010's Lifted Off the Ground), but she's been open and public with LGBT issues like a house afire, with that special verve enjoyed by the newly free. She's performed at a number of Pride festivals and been named a national spokesperson for GLSEN. The autobiographical

documentary Wish Me Away, which began as a video diary of the days leading up to the big announcement, has been making the film festival rounds since last year. She even married LGBT activist Lauren Blitzer (whom she met two weeks after coming out). In other words, Wright isn't just out. She's *O-U-T*.

But just as important as her sexual orientation is her faith. Her book, interviews and lyrics all are threaded with spirituality. She is at heart a country gal, raised in a Kansas town of fewer than 2,000 people where she spent her childhood



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with her butt on a pew and the spirit in her heart. If her relationship with Christianity has shifted somewhat, her belief has always been there.

"Someone asked me the other day, 'Do you think you'll go back to a religious practice?' I said 'I never left.' It is my belief that God delivered me from my darkest hour."

Beloved as Wright may be, statements like that put her at odds with some in the gay community. The tension many feel toward the church is understandable, she says. "When an entire community has been maligned for so long, when you've been told [by religious groups] that you are less than a person, why would you want to stick around for that?" she says.

It was partially the specter of God's judgment — or at least, what she had been told all her life, by her parents, by her church, by the mores of country music itself — that had kept her ashamed of herself, that almost led her to pull the trigger. Wright's story is a reminder of the silent, suffering souls who struggle still with coming out.

"I marvel at the skill set I was able to develop to tell myself I was happy and OK in regards to the crimes I was committing against myself, against my own integrity," she now says.

But if Wright's story evokes the desperation of the closet, it also reminds us of the joyous unshackling that occurs once the door opens.

"Nothing is as hard as hiding who you are," she says. "You never know how good freedom is going to feel until you feel it in your veins."

Twisted Broadway

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The best part of Dee Snider's latest album is the opening sound gritty guitar drive. This could be the beginning of the next Twisted Sister release. Only it's not. With a slight shift, the metal frontman begins his hard rocking version of the showtune standard "Cabaret" — and thus starts our trip down Broadway like you've never heard before.

Snider has a knack for churning out metal versions of standard songs. Twisted Sister's *A Twisted Christmas* morphed delicate Christmas carols into major headbangers without losing the spirit. He works that same magic on the gayest of music: showtunes. And he succeeds.

The fun part of *Dee Does Broadway* is when the song works better in this genre than their original. I never had an interest in *Sweeney Todd*, but his rendition of "The Ballad of Sweeney Todd" is stellar. The darkness of the show's story merges with his hardcore delivery into a thrilling track.

Heavy metal fans may not flock to this album but they wouldn't be disappointed if they did. The guitars rock with dangerous flair and the drums smash hard without restraint. Snider stays true to his rock roots without a doubt and while he may not be the best singer to deliver these tunes, his heart's into it enough to stay afloat.

That doesn't mean it's always an easy listen. His "Mack the Knife" lacks the charming swagger it requires. He opens the song with its usual jazzy feel, but explodes into a muscular riff. But even in his normal voice (read: loud), the song itself is overshadowed by the music. Feel free to skip the track.

The same almost happens for "Whatever Lola Wants" from *Damn Yankees*, where he teams with Bebe Neuwirth. This version misses the song's sexy undertones, but instead turns into a wicked tune that alters its intention. The trick is a good one, but veers too far off course to maintain.

He gets back on course with the raucous "The Joint is Jumpin." Snider duets with his eldest son, Jesse Blaze Snider, who has a healthy set of lungs himself. Everything about this track rocks. The chorus of horns over that hard metal is a smart layering of sound. And that guitar solo is to die for.

I waited with anticipation for track 8, "Luck Be a Lady Tonight." Teaming with Clay Aiken, this is the musical equivalent of *The Twilight Zone*. The song starts off gently only to screech into high gear. The juxtaposition is a fun one. Aiken clearly wins in the slower intro, but he holds his own against Snider's shrill vocals. Aiken can actually belt out a heavy metal tune and sounds in the vein of Ozzy Osbourne or Don Dokken. The potential that this song could have been a train wreck is easily dismissed and it turns out to be the best track on the album.

Snider was smart to keep the tracks down to a dozen. The aggression wears a bit thin, but he balances it out with fascinating collabs. Patti LuPone, Cyndi Lauper and more add distinct textures to level out Snider's growling.





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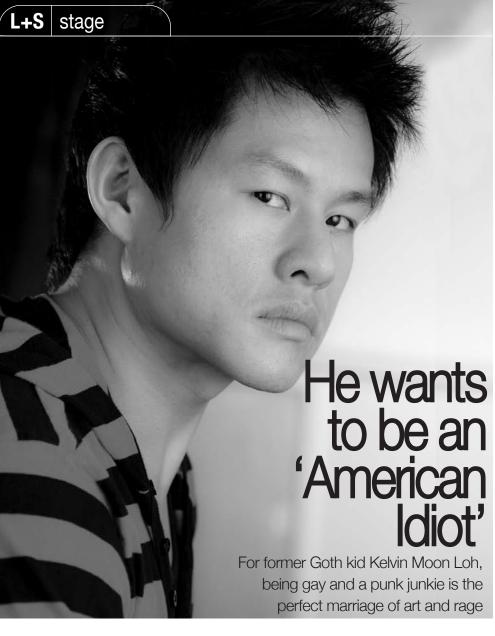
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ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Life+Style Editor jones@dallasvoice.com

Kelvin Moon Loh knows what it's like to be an outsider. In high school, he was the gay kid who hung out with the theater crowd, but also the Goths.

"I was one of those punk kids, wearing guyliner from age 12 to 18," he admits. For Loh, those threads — gay and punk — felt seamless and natural. What was odd about being on the distaff side of society, both musically and sexually? **AMERICAN IDIOT**

Which is why it has always struck him as odd that punk music too often has an undeserved reputation as homophobic.

Nothing could be further from the truth, Loh

So when he heard about the casting call for the national tour of American Idiot, Loh made it his mission to get on board. But why?

"I get asked that question a lot," he says. "I'm the only out gay man in the entire cast, and in the history of the show, there have only been three. It hasn't attracted a gay talent base, and I wonder what it is about this piece that spoke to me so loudly? It basically is the rage."

The punk rock opera, based on the concept album by the iconic band Green Day, spoke to Loh as a musical theater queen, a rock aficionado and as a gay man.

"[Queercore punk band] Pansy Division was one of those groups that, growing up as a gay man, I was impressed by. They know who they are. Even in high school and watching the punk scene, they were the misfits and the outcasts. They were the alternative kids and I felt right at home there," Loh says. "Green Day was a big

champion of Pansy Division.

That's what I was attracted to."

Punk rock, he says, fits hand in glove with the gay rights movement.

"The music is about standing up not just loud and angry, but proud. The only way for you to hear us is to stand with rage and a little bit of violence. There are just as many gay anthems in the punk movement as in disco and from Lady Gaga, just nobody realizes that," he

The chance to bring that energy to the stage was one of the things that attracted Loh to Ameri-

"It's cutting edge — a new form of musical theater," he says. "There are a lot of jukebox mu-

 $\textbf{OH MY GOTH} \hspace{0.1cm} | \hspace{0.1cm} \text{As a gay man and Goth teen, Kelvin Moon Loh identified as an outcast} - \text{which meant}$ he fit right into the cast of 'American Idiot."

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ATTPAC.org.

The naked gunt

There's a fine line between a spoof and a parody. The former evokes the source material being lampooned but gives it a new take, like Al Yankovich songs. But a parody, while it can contain elements of spoof, often makes its point merely by turning a microscope on what makes up the source material — say, the way *The Naked Gun* movies make fun of the entire cop melodrama precisely by recreating their tone and seriousness with consummate sincerity. It's sort of like what Nietzsche said: If you stare into the abyss long enough, the abyss stares back into you. You don't need to *try* to satirize some things — they might just be waiting for you to have noticed they were silly all along.

It was pretty savvy, then, of playwright Jamie Mor-

ris to have discovered that such a lauded (if genrespecific) film like *The Silence of the Lambs* was ripe for parody, but there it is, in Uptown Players' drag comedy **The Silence of the Clams**, staring right into you. Whodathunkit?

Morris still invokes spoof to make his points, from funny riffs on the characters' names (Clarice Startling, who's easily frightened; Hannibal Lichter, who enjoys cunnilingus) to the cheesy title to the very act of having our heroine played by a man in drag (Austin Tindle). But where the genuine parody bleeds through is in realizing that you can still keep much of the original movie dialogue intact and the jokes almost write themselves. (In the movie, Buffalo Bob sought to skin women to make them into a human "coat;" here, Beaver Bob skins the FUPA — the "fatty upper pussy area," a phrase that will haunt

my dreams for a decade — to make designer merkins.) It's *The Carol Burnett Show* with a potty

The downside is that Morris hasn't really rewritten it enough, at least at times: The ending is still the movie's ending, which is disturbing but not funny, and many of the jokes almost demand a rim-shot (lots about Jodie Foster being lesbian). But Tindle, Mathew Butler in a surprisingly accurate reinterpretation of "Lector" and Mikey Abrams as everyone else in the story know how to "commit to the bit" — that is, throw themselves head-first into parody mindset. Not playing for laughs may be the most humorous way to get them ever devised. Bravo, Clarice. Now fly, fly, fly! — Arnold Wayne Jones

The Rose Room at Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Through May 20. UptownPlayers.org.



sicals out there where they take a catalogue of songs and slap them together. But when Green Day wrote it, they wrote it *as* a rock opera. Just to see the popular music put onstage and reimagined in a non-stop, in-your-face, punk music way with lots of heart to it is remarkable."

Even though the plot lacks any gay characters *per se*, there's much that he reads into it.

"What resonates to me is this is the idea that making the most of the circumstances you are given in life. Nothing is right or wrong, but it's what is true for me. We are in control of our own fates. There is no black or white, it's completely gray. It really is the story of an anti-hero."

One thing that has impressed Loh from the start is how the behind-the-scenes folks on *Idiot* are masters of the musical theater form, while savvy about the subject matter.

"The team that assembled American Idiot are no Broadway newbies," he says. "The only people who were new to it were Billie Joe Armstrong and Green Day. All these people understand all the rules of what a Broadway musical should be, and then they transform it and push it to the edge."

When I mention to Loh that old-school Broadway star Tommy Tune called *American Idiot* his favorite recent musical, he was gobsmacked ... until he realizes the interplay between the classic and the new.

"Really?! Well, to be honest, there's a sincerity to Tommy Tune's work and we try to do that. It's not about being angry or yelling onstage, but about being as honest as possible. Punk is about presenting music in the simplest, most raw manner," Loh says.

Still, he admits *American Idiot* is something of a hard sell to traditional B'way audiences.

"The farthest south we've gone is Raleigh," he says. "There are some moments that are the walk-out moments: There is simulated sex and simulated heroin use onstage. That can be too much for some people."

But, he says, what makes *American Idiot* unique is that it reaches a whole new demographic not usually drawn to musical theater.

"You have your old-time subscribers who have bought tickets, plus this Internet fanbase of musical theater fans who want to see the piece. But *then* you have another part, who are just pure, hardcore Green Day fans. You have all those three groups of theatergoers stuck in one place and every night and together, they come rising to their feet. I've never seen anything like it. You'll leave remembering every part of it."



39









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Meat market

Perry's imbues an unexpected Asian flair to the traditional steakhouse

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

It's so hard to find a place to get steak in Dallas.

No, it *really* isn't.

There are three foods Dallas does better than just about anyone: Tex-Mex, corndogs and beef. Honestly, the middle item is of questionable merit, though deep-fried *anything* has its place. And the best Tex-Mex comes in a wide variety or venues, from hole-in-the-wall taquerias to gourmet twists from the likes of Dean Fearing and Stephan Pyles.

But steak? That's a specialty that always comes with style.

The traditional steakhouse oozes richness as much as a medium-rare ribeye doused in béarnaise. It's supposed to — we're Americans, who like our meat bloody. (We love our air-conditioning, but like everyone to think we just returned from the hunt.) Beef is expensive and luxurious, and the setting should project that.

That may make a restaurant like Perry's Steakhouse — the high-end Houston-based restaurant across from the Ritz-Carlton in Uptown — feel intimidating. It's vast and moodily lit, with dark woods and a wall of wine probably worth more than your car. But classy does not equate to out-of-reach.

Perry's has always struck me as occupying a middle-ground on the snob scale: It's fancy enough to impress without veering into a boisterous good-ol'-boy hang or a funereal, violin-soaked mausoleum. The space is roomy but cleverly laid-out, with a terraced dining area and cool-ass party room downstairs. It's accessible —

a statement as applicable to the food as to the atmosphere.

One aspect of Perry's that sets it apart is its creative tweaking of the classic steakhouse menu. The kitchen leans toward Asian flavor profiles more than creams and heavy sauces. At least, that was my experience sampling a *prix-fixe* dinner with wine pairings. Dried fruits and aromatic spices replace butter and pepper thrown at every dish without detracting from its richness.

Sure, there's red pepper coulis on their sea bass, but it merely gives structure to the Southeast Asian flavors. The fish is crisply seared, the inside cool and fleshy. The fish is oily and rich, which supports the spicy accents.

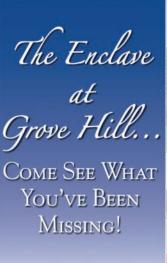
That profile soars with the duck confit, where the sweetness of dried orange rind, figs, apricots and other fruits meld with the fatty duck and lofty aromas of star anise, tumeric and cardamom for a heady preparation. (The dish came perfectly paired with a pinot noir that was the best wine of the night.)

New York strip has never been my first-choice in cut (it's easy to overcook, its lack of fat coming off as dry), but the preparation here — aged, rubbed and tender, fanned against a crispy garlic polenta medallion and al dente roasted carrots — surprised me with its elegance. The staff wisely styled it with a house Meritage that's worth a glass any time.

At a steakhouse, dessert is a given. While our crème brulee may seem predictable, it was the only thing on the menu that was.

Perry's offers a five-course dinner throughout May (\$95 per person with wine pairings, \$65 without) for any size party. PerrysSteakhouse.com.

NEW YORK STATE OF MIND | The New York strip at Perry's is perfectly tender in an elegant preparation that includes garlic polenta and roasted carrots. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)





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Saturday 05.05

Guitar goddess

Marissa Paternoster is rather diminutive compared to her bandmates in Screaming Females, but the out frontwoman is a guitar giant. Six strings don't have a chance against her shredding skills. The punk trio scored major buzz with its fifth album Ugly and recent gigs at SXSW. Now we get to hear them scream for ourselves.

DEETS: With Leg Sweeper and Final Club. Queen City Hall, 115 N. Carroll Ave. 8 p.m. \$5. FrontGateTickets.com



Saturday 05.05

Chihuly in effect

The marriage of Dale Chihuly and the Dallas Arboretum seems like an obvious one. His gorgeous glass sculptures against a natural landscape are a match made in heaven. Chihuly at the Arboretum opens this weekend and runs through Nov. 10, so you have some time to see this magnificence up close. And trust, it really is.

DEETS: Dallas Arboretum, 8525 Garland Road. \$15-\$20. DallasArboretum.com.

Sunday 05.06

Another shade of purpleAs the Dallas Purple Party looms over this weekend's nightlife, SXS Productions gets in the game with the Chill Sunday Purple Party Edition. The afternoon event features Charlie Phresh and Los Angeles DJ Casey Alva, left, for a chillaxing time that benefits AIDS Services of Dallas.

DEETS: Foundation Room at House of Blues, 2200 N. Lamar St. 2 p.m. \$5.







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sunday



SARAH'S SONG | Singer Sarah Jaffe celebrates the release of her latest album 'The Body Wins' at the Granada Theater on Saturday.

FRIDAY 05.04

COMMUNITY

Dallas Fresh Leather monthly meeting. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. 7 p.m. NLA-Dallas.org.

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

Oak Lawn Group for Gays meets weekly. St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 6525 Inwood Road. . 7 p.m. For more information, call 214-868-7350.

Unwired Dallas. Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA) meets for those wishing to quit using crystal meth. New Hope Fellowship Church, 2438 Butler St. 7 p.m. Free. Crystalmeth.org.

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

ART

214 Trans4M featuring the work of Daniel Kusner and Bryan Amann. The photography exhibit features trans and female impersonating models against Dallas landmarks playing off the conservative tones of the city. Kessler X+ Gallery, 1230 W. Davis St. Through May 20. TheKessler.org.

COMEDY

Dysfunctional Divas. Steven Jay Crabtree continues in his unscripted comedy playing multiple characters of various genders. Pocket Sandwich Theatre, 5400 E. Mockingbird Lane. Through Saturday. 11:15 p.m. \$12 (plus one food item minimum). PocketSandwich.com.

THEATER

The Magic Flute. The Dallas Opera presents six performances of Mozart's whimsical opera. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. Through Sunday. \$29–\$129. DallasOpera.org.

SATURDAY 05.05

COMMUNITY

Cirque Carnival: Turtle Creek
Chorale's 2012 Gala. The annual
gala auction presents an evening
of celebration and extravagance
reminiscent of the carnivals of Rio
and Venice. The event will include
silent and live auctions, golden
ticket raffle, travel packages, food
and refreshments and live entertainment. Edison's, 1724 Cockrell
Ave. 1 p.m. \$60–\$125.
TurtleCreek.org.

Dallas Open Days Tour of Gardens. Focusing on five unique gardens in Dallas, the tour is part of the Garden Conservancy's Open Days program. \$5. Visit GardenConservancy.org for details

Cottonwood Art Festival. Now in

its 44th year, the twice-a-year event features an array of art, food vendors and national live music acts. Cottonwood Park, 1321 W. Beltline Rd., Richardson. Through Sunday. 10 a.m. Free.

SPCA of Texas Pet Grief Counseling monthly program helps those who have lost an animal cope with their loss. Dealey Animal Care Center, 362 S. Industrial Blvd. 1 p.m. 214-651-9611.

Dallas Gay Roleplayers Club. Gamers meet to play and discuss role-playing games from sci-fi to fantasy. Half Price Books Community Room, 5803 E. Northwest Highway. 3 p.m. 214-360-0833 ext. 222.

Cathedral Couples potluck dinner and social. For location, call 972-252-7124.

Dallas FrontRunners fun run. Runners and walkers at all levels welcome. Meet under the statue at Lee Park at 8 a.m. They convene after for breakfast in the area. FrontrunnersDallas.org.

Legacy social group of adults 50 or older from Cathedral of Hope. Monthly potluck or outing. 972-387-3345.

BROADCAST

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

CONCERT

Sarah Jaffe, John Singer Sergeant, Zhora. The buzz grows for local singer for her latest album *The Body Wins*. She has received accolades from NPR, Pitchfork and Glamour. The show is her official album release. Granada Theater, 3524 Greenville Ave. 8 p.m. \$25–\$35. GranadaTheater.com.

SUNDAY 05.06

COMMUNITY

Unemployment Support Group meets weekly to explore employment search and unemployment concerns and led by a professional career advisor. Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 2:30 p.m. CareerAssistanceMinistry@gmail.com.

Interweave meets for lunch. Community Unitarian Universalist Church, 2875 E. Parker Road, Plano. Noon. 972-248-9343.

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

Gaymsters bridge club. Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 2 p.m.

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

Resounding Harmony holds weekly rehearsals at Oak Lawn United Methodist Church, 3014 Oak Lawn Ave. 7 p.m. ResoundingHarmony.org.

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

MONDAY 05.07

COMMUNITY

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

United Black Ellument's Hot Topics. A weekly discussion group for black gay and bi men, 18-29. U-BE in Deep Ellum, 3116 Commerce St., Ste. C. 7 p.m. UBEDallas.org.

Leadership Lambda Toastmasters meets to improve public speaking and leadership skills. Oak Lawn Library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road. 6:30–8 p.m. 214-543-5860.

The Women's Chorus of Dallas holds rehearsals. Sammons Center for the Arts, 3630 Harry Hines Blvd. 7–10 p.m. 214-520-7828.

Mindful Monday Meditation hosted by Fit for Faith. Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 7 p.m. CathedralOfHope.com.

TUESDAY 05.08

COMMUNITY

QLive! Open Mike Night is a weekly event for potential comics. One rule: Be funny. Percussions Lounge, 426 S. Jennings Ave.10 p.m. QCinema.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.

Sista to Sista support group provided by AIDS Outreach Center. Meets every first, second and third Tuesday. AIDS Outreach Center, 400 N. Beach St., Fort Worth. 11:30 a.m. AOC.org.

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

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

WEDNESDAY 05.09

COMMUNITY

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

American Veterans for Equal Rights North Texas Chapter meets. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan. 7 p.m.

FUSE Activity Nights. The "official FUSE hangout night" with games, food and more meets. 7 p.m. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. 214-540-4435. DFWFuse.com.

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

BROADCAST

Lambda Weekly. LGBT radio for North Texas. This week's guest is Erin Moore from Stonewall Democrats. 89.3 KNON-FM at 7 a.m. LambdaWeekly.com.

THURSDAY 05.10

COMMUNITY

Dallas Gay and Lesbian Bar Association monthly luncheon meeting. Belo Mansion, 2101 Ross Ave. Noon. 214-540-4460.

PFLAG Dallas. Northaven United Methodist Church, 12101 Preston Road. 7 p.m. 972-77PFLAG.

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. Rotary International is an organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide, who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world. Hully and Mo's, 2800 Routh St. 11:45 –1:00 p.m. DallasUptownRotary.org

this week's solution

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CELEBRITY BIRTHDAY

By Jack Fertig

Rick Santorum turns 54 on Thursday. The former U.S. Senator from Pennsylvania is looking to be a top pick for the vice presidential nominee on the GOP ticket. Santorum, who has consistently been an ardent opponent of LGBT rights, suspended his run for the presidential Republican nomination in April.



TAURUS Apr 20-May 20

Be daring. Say what's on your mind. Personally and professionally you're looking fabulous. Hard work is sure to be rewarded. You could even luck out on the lotto on the 13th.

GEMINI May 21-Jun 20

The less you say, the more people will listen. Busy as your brain is, the stars promise a closed trap and an open mind will bring you lots of new information, insight and respect from others.

CANCER Jun 21-Jul 22

Your energy and ambition are cranking up. Keep your eyes open for opportunities, but exercise judgment. Gossip is a tempting distractions. Keep your mind focused on the prize.

LEO Jul 23-Aug 22

All eyes and ears are focused on you. How you turn a sudden shock into an opportunity impresses everyone around. Think quickly, show spontaneous foresight and recruit help.

VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

You're the queen of details, but look at the larger picture. Get a clear view of how those details work best. Explore new ideas, tastes and feelings. Celebrating the sensual will prove practical.

LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Your ruler Venus is pushing you to get slutty. You'll have time to explore your sensual, adventurous side. Consider ground rules, good sense and protection.

SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

Brutal honesty with your friends will alienate folks you should value personally or professionally. If you want brutal honesty, start on yourself and your current direction in life.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 20

Charms and good work gets you ahead at work, but your partner is the secret weapon to cement connections that will promote you. Your competitive streak is coming out. Keep it light.

CAPRICORN Dec 21-Jan 19

A critique of your work feels devastating. Learn what you can from that. There's always room for improvement and the lessons here can be just what you need to push forward.

AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Family arguments prove to be blessings in disguise. Sexual adventures can go wrong. Be very careful. Remember you have nothing to prove.

PISCES Feb 19-Mar 19

Open communications with those close to you can prove very lucrative, or at least help you focus on what really matters. Keep your ears open and let family and friends know what you want.

ARIES Mar 20-Apr 19

Solving problems at work is mired in obstruction. Work off the frustration with exercise. You're edgy and impatient; be nice to colleagues. The good news: Money is coming your way.

THIS WEEK

The sun conjoins Jupiter in Taurus offering a bright spot in the economy, both global and your own. Venus is in close aspect boosting that optimism, but Eris is also in aspect so real gains require hard work.

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

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bitter girl







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First Lesbian

Solution on page 45

Across

- 1 Four-posters for foreplay, for some
- 5 Deep throat sound
- 9 Astronaut Schirra
- 14 Carbon compound
- 15 Soft drink favorite
- 16 Homer-erotic tale?
- 17 Barry Humphries' Dame
- 18 One that attacks the fly with the tongue
- 19 Fruit of Greek myth
- 20 With 55-Across, short title of the History of a
- Lesbian Community coauthored by 36-Across
- 23 JFK info
- 24 Angular opening
- 25 Bad-mouthed
- 27 Like some porn
- 29 Brought into alignment
- 31 Request to Sajak
- 32 "Climb Ev'ry Mountain" mountain
- 34 Son of Prince Valiant
- 35 "Beatle Bailey" dog
- 36 Teacher of the first course on lesbianism in the
- 40 New York college
- 41 Mandela org.
- 42 P. Hearst's kidnappers
- 43 One that's hairy and has a master

- 44 Some are urban
- 46 Hispanic family org.
- 50 Robin Williams'_ ___ Photo
- 52 Simpson case judge
- 54 Nuts or bananas
- 55 See 20-Across
- 58 Chew the ass of
- 59 Edible pocket
- 60 Bit to split
- 61 Long in the past?
- 62 Tops a cupcake
- 63 Wang in fashion
- 64 Transvestite boast?
- 65 Pub projectile
- 66 Biblical garden

- 1 Director Kidron of Oranges Are Not the Only
- 2 Agnes Moorehead role
- 3 Anonymous dads for some lesbian families
- 4 Supporter of bedroom activity
- 5 One who gets screwed by an agent?
- 6 Go on foot
- 7 Jerusalem server
- 8 Took no chances
- 9 Needed some Viagra?
- 10 Honolulu hello
- 11 Patricia Highsmith and others
- 12 Playwright Arthur
- 13 Ft. trios
- 21 Concern of Todd Oldham
- 22 Changes, as the Constitution
- 26 To God, to Caesar
- 28 Syllables of triumph
- 30 Dressing type
- 33 Pretend to have an erection?
- 35 Track shape
- 36 It can't go long enough to get to Uranus
- 37 She played tomb raider Lara
- 38 Having balls
- ___ Me (Lily Tomlin movie)
- 40 Illegal same-sex vow, in most states
- 44 Cheap wheels
- 45 She doesn't have sex with men
- 47 Chewed the scenery
- 48 Aplenty
- 49 One who's out
- 51 Makes oneself hard to find
- 53 Say "Bottoms up!"
- 56 Costa_
- 57 Became a donor
- 58 Cost-of-living meas.







A Couple











LIFE+STYLE

scene



Paul and Esteban at the Brick/Joe's.



Cameron and Jose at Station 4.



Frank and Joseph at the Round-Up Saloon.



Jevon, Mark, owner Randy and Justin at Cherries.

Hopefully you have an outfit for this weekend's Dallas Purple Party. Any shade will do but lavender is always nice. The opening party Ignite goes down Friday at Station 4. The beats go on at the afternoon pool party Rise at the Crowne Plaza **Downtown** and then later with The Purple Party at the **South Side Music Hall**. Spend your afterhours at **Resurrection** at the **Dallas Grand Ballroom**. Finish out the weekend with the Sunday night Glow party at Plush. Whew! We're tired already. But all that dancing benefits AIDS Services of Dallas and what better way to put your feet to work? ... Arlington folks can partake in the ${\bf All\text{-}Star}$ ${\bf Drag}$ ${\bf Show}$ every Friday and Saturday at 1851 Club. Kiana Lee hosts the night away while DJ Tasha and Johnny Wayne spin out the music. For the newbie dragsters, hit up Tara St. Stone who hosts the new Amateur Drag Show every Wednesday. ... Don't forget to read our story on country star Chely Wright in this issue. She's headlining the Dallas Lesbian Festival on Sunday. Sue Ellen's converts the back parking lot into an outdoor venue for the day long festival that includes Everyone's Ex, Kristin Majors and the Funk Soul Muthas and more. ... Fort Worth spot Studio Eighty presents the Best of the Best Talent Night every Sunday with host Bobbie Laine. ... DJ Blaine Soileau hosts Release Saturday night at the Dallas Eagle. Cool off a bit every Tuesday with the club's Bare Chests and Bare Backs night. ... DJ Micah Banes is back from West Hollywood if only for a short time. He hosts his '80s themed happy hour Cocktails Friday at Alexandre's with a live performance by $\mbox{{\sc Kyan Loredo}}.$ Then he DJs at $\mbox{{\sc Chefs for Farmers}}$ on Sunday at

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



Thomas and Bea at TMC: The Mining Company.



Emily and T. at Sue Ellen's.



Dancer at the Tin Room.









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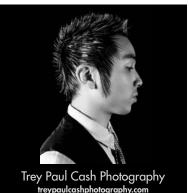
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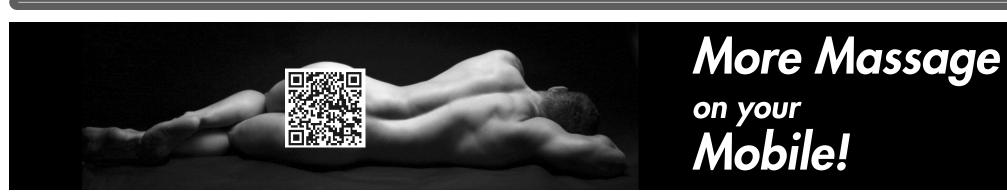












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