

City of Dallas makes 'It Gets Better' video

Mayor, city manager, 13 gay employees appear in message to LGBT youth
Workers from code compliance to attorney's office get emotional as they talk about coming-out experiences

■ TEXAS NEWS, Page 9



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PHOENIX RISING

Gay-run Ranch Hand Rescue continues to revolutionize veterinary medicine while saving abused animals, nurturing wounded people

■ COVER STORY, Page 6



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With Youth First Texas in disarray, board chair calls special meeting

Youth First Texas board chair Chris Cognetta has called a special meeting of the board for Thursday, Jan. 17, "to consider and act on the resolution to reorganize the Youth First Texas Board of Directors (including removal of all current members of the Board of Directors)."

"It's time for new leadership to take on the challenges of the next decade," Cognetta said.

A year ago, a number of YFT directors either rolled off the board or were not re-elected because the remaining members felt the organization needed a more active, working board.

One of the remaining board members, Jeremy Liebe, expressed concern recently that financial entries were not being kept up to date. He said he pulled some reports off the computer in December and there had been no updates since October.

Liebe's term ended in December and he was not re-elected for the current year.

A number of community leaders reportedly expressed their concerns at a YFT board meeting Jan. 8, including Wayne Davis of Dallas Bears, Robert Delgado of the United Court of the Lone Star Empire and Jeffrey Payne of Leather Knights. Representatives from the Dallas Tavern Guild, Cedar Springs Merchant Association and Texas Gay Rodeo Association also attended.

"Our major donors were upset," said board member David Freudiger.

One concern is that a high percentage of the organization's budget goes into administrative costs with a small amount for youth programming. Freudiger said he's only interested in what's best for the youth and agreed that over the past two years there's been some board dysfunction.

Since YFT is run by a working board, he said, part of the solution is identifying the skills and functions needed and then growing the board to fill those positions.

He said the collective knowledge of running a nonprofit among those who attended the meeting was huge, and he wants to tap into that knowledge.

He said there was little he could predict before next week's meeting but thought the situation required major changes to the board.

"It's about moving forward," Freudiger said. "We're going to correct the problems and create the best environment for LGBT youth."

Liebe said: "Youth First Texas needs leadership in place that the community has confidence in so that the community continues to provide funding for the youth."

Cognetta said the organization's financial position is stable with enough money in the bank now to operate for six months. Liebe agreed with that estimate.

The meeting will be at 7 p.m. Thursday at YFT, 5201 Harry Hines Blvd., and is open to the public.

— David Taffet

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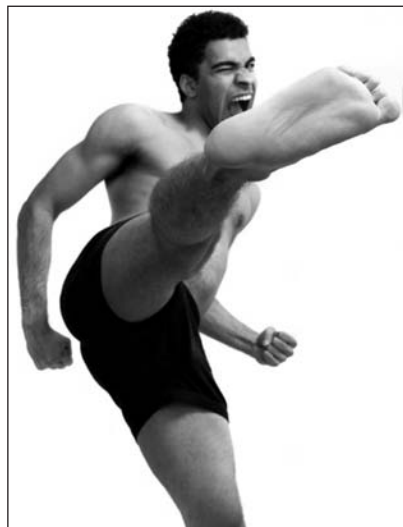


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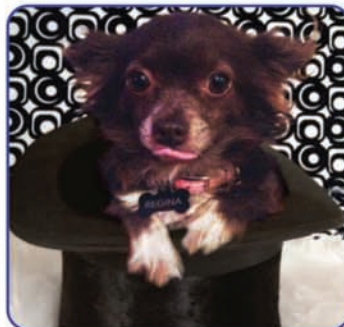


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Phoenix rising

Gay-run Ranch Hand Rescue continues to revolutionize veterinary medicine while saving abused animals, nurturing wounded people

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

ARGYLE, Denton County — When Bob Williams founded Ranch Hand Rescue, he had three goals: to create a sanctuary for abused and starved farm animals, to rescue those animals with accountability and to help people.

But Williams could never have imagined that within a few years the ranch would be revolutionizing veterinary medicine while helping everyone from juvenile detainees to wounded warriors, anorexics and amputees.

After Williams suffered a stroke several years ago, he and his partner Marty Polasko moved to Argyle from California.

On their property, Polasko opened American Pet Spa & Resort to care for pets in a way that perhaps only gay people would understand — complete with webcams for owners and swimming lessons and satellite TV for dogs.

Meanwhile, Williams created Ranch Hand Rescue as a safe and controlled environment where animals that ordinarily would be euthanized are happily living out their lives or recovering before moving on to lives with new owners.

In a few severe cases of abuse, animals have had to be euthanized. In most cases, animals lucky enough to end up at Ranch Hand Rescue receive cutting-edge veterinary care. The latter include the first horse to be fitted with a prosthetic leg — which made international news a few years ago — and now, the first horse to receive stem-cell treatment.

Williams won't euthanize animals that tell him they want to live. Yes, he communicates with the animals, usually by placing their heads to his heart and by telling them they're safe.

And Phoenix, Williams insists, wanted to live.

"I looked into his eyes and knew he wasn't giving up," Williams said.

When Phoenix arrived at Ranch Hand Rescue last January, he'd suffered an injury resulting in the loss of his hoof, hoof wall and a portion of his coffin bone. The coffin bone is the small lower-most bone in a horse's leg, just above the hoof.

A year earlier, Williams dealt with another horse with a similar problem.

Midnite, a miniature horse, has become Ranch Hand Rescue's star. After being fitted with a prosthetic lower leg, he quickly adapted and began walking. He's been featured on Animal Planet and helped Houston Mayor Annise Parker inaugurate a new Houston park and playground designed for children with handicaps.

Williams calls Midnite a natural and estimates the horse has met more than 10,000 people since being fitted with his new leg.

A donor recently provided a horse trailer outfitted to transport



HORSE WHISPERER | Bob Williams, founder of Ranch Hand Rescue, tends to Phoenix, reportedly the first horse to receive stem-cell therapy. The cream-colored portion of Phoenix's hoof, right, consists of regenerated tissue. (Photos by David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

Midnite safely, and this summer Williams plans to take him on a national tour.

So when Phoenix arrived, he, too, was fitted with a prosthetic. But when Phoenix's coffin bone rotated, the prosthetic could no longer help him. Because he was missing about a third of the coffin bone, doctors wanted to euthanize him, which is standard practice.

Williams refused. He consulted with some of the best equine veterinarians in the country and came up with an innovative treatment.

Dr. John Bitter, an Argyle vet, operated on Phoenix's leg using a procedure called tendon cutting. Working with a company called Nano Fiber, Bitter harvested stem cells and injected columns in the horse's leg.

Seven months later, after spending much of that time in a cast, Phoenix walks normally wearing just an artificial shoe as the rest of the hoof regenerates. He apparently has no pain.

Williams said this is the first time stem-cell treatment has been used in horses. He said he's been told by experts that this could not only change veterinary medicine, but also lead to treatments for paralysis in humans and regenerating human tissue.

But saving the horse and advances in veterinary care is only part of the story for Williams.

"Our equine therapy program is so successful, we have to hire a second therapist," Williams said.

Williams said once people connect with horses, he sees improvement sometimes on a daily basis.

"It's extremely successful for people who don't do well in an office [therapy] environment," Williams said.

When news of Midnite's successful prosthetic made news, Williams began getting calls from doctors and parents. He received numerous requests about children who were about to undergo am-



putation and wanted to meet the horse.

Justin Watson recently took over much of the day-to-day operation of the ranch to allow Williams more time for the extensive fundraising needed to operate the sanctuary.

Watson has been amazed at the reaction he's seen to children interacting with Midnite.

"If this little horse can do it, then I can do it," children often say, according to Watson.

Another staff member is Kim Mills, a licensed therapist with a certification in equine-assisted therapy.

"Horses key in to our body language," she said. "Horses help you see what's going on with a person."

Mills said that when her patients are around the animals, their defenses come down.

Among those patients are children with anorexia, who help feed emaciated animals.

"They can see their body image in the horse," she said, adding that those in addiction recovery experience similar benefits. "It really does seem to help."

As a military veteran who spent 18 months in Afghanistan, Watson encourages other vets and their children to come to the ranch as part of their recovery.

"When we get back, we need sensitivity," he said.

Those coming back from war with PTSD are always on high alert, Mills said. The animals help calm them down. But the therapy works for their children as well.

"It's powerful for kids who wonder why mom or dad is different since coming home," Mills said.

Some people come to the ranch afraid of horses and start with one of the miniatures, which tend to be gentler. After starting slowly, they'll tell Mills, "I think I want to meet a larger horse."

Feeding and grooming animals is effective for children with low self-esteem. The ranch recently began working with the Denton County Juvenile Department.

"Their empathy really comes up quickly," Mills said.

She said donkeys are phenomenal for people working through severe traumas, deaths or unexplained loss.

"People gravitate toward them," she said.

But the donkeys are specific in who they choose to bond with.

Some people relate to Al, a llama who takes to certain people but doesn't particularly like to be touched. Al helps teach people boundaries, she said. She said that Pegasus, a horse who was battered and doesn't want to be touched in certain places, relates well to clients who've been abused.

Mills said working with a horse was particularly effective with one transgender client. The animal was loving and accepting. Mills said she watched as the client's "authentic self came out," helping ease her transition.

In 2012, Ranch Hand Rescue took in 25 animals needing critical care. Williams calls the Denton County sheriff's department the best in the state in following through with prosecution against animal abusers.

He was particularly disappointed in the recent outcome of a case in Collin County. Six horses were seized after being beaten and severely neglected, one was euthanized, one died and the other four took six to 13 months to rehabilitate. The Collin County District Attorney's office pros-

online extra

For more photos from Ranch Hand Rescue, go to DallasVoice.com/Category/Photos.



MINIATURE HORSE A BIG STAR | Midnite, a miniature horse, made international news when he became the first to receive a prosthetic limb two years ago. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

ecuted, but a jury found the abuser not guilty in October.

After a recent call from Garza County near Lubbock, one horse died before Williams arrived.

"We usually get there in time," Williams said. But rather than dwell on failures, Williams focuses on successes.

"Phoenix's biggest problem is he's stir crazy," Williams said.

He said the horse was getting a new shoe fitting

soon and they'd re-evaluate whether to give him more space to run around. Currently, Phoenix is kept in a round pen to limit his activity while the leg heals.

As the ranch's success with rescuing farm animals in new and innovative ways grows, the waiting list for people to get into the equine-assisted therapy program does too.

"Animals change us in positive ways," Mills said. ■



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deaths

Brent Clayton Larmer, 52, passed away Saturday, Jan. 5, 2013.

Brent was born March 6, 1960, in Fort Worth. He was a graduate of Southwest High School and Oklahoma State University. Brent had a great personality, which made him a successful sales associate at Park Place Volvo in Dallas, and he was beloved by family and friends. The family would like to sincerely thank his friends, Carlo Barone, George Tometich, John McCall, Victor Taylor and Larry Singleton; as well as his colleagues and boss, Rob Schweizer, who all gave very special attention to Brent during his stay in the hospital.

He was preceded in death by his father, Ernest R. Larmer. He is survived by his mother, Joan Williams and husband, Jim; twin brother, Seth R. Larmer and his wife, Kathy; brother, Jay Williams and wife, Angel; sisters, Jamie Clapa and husband, John, Jodi Devlin and husband, Brendan, and Jeana Rudolph and husband, Doug; and many nieces and nephews.

Services were held Wednesday, Jan. 9, at Agape Baptist Church in Fort Worth, and interment was private.

In lieu of flowers, friends may honor his memory with a gift to a charity of choice.

Carl E. Schmitt, 63, passed away peacefully on Jan. 1, 2013, at St. Paul Hospital in Dallas from complications of cancer.

Carl was born Dec. 20, 1949, in Ohio. He had lived in Dallas for 30 years and worked part time at Lowe's as a kitchen designer.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Wilma Jean, and father, Edward Schmitt.

He is survived by his partner, Dex Crawford of Dallas; and friends, Sandee Lowe, Tim Myrick, Stanley Guy, Lee Rodger and Richard Gower, all of Dallas.

Services will be at 10 a.m. Jan. 26 at the Episcopal Church of St. Thomas the Apostle. 6225 Inwood Road, Dallas.



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MANAGING THE MESSAGE | Dallas City Manager Mary Suhm, right, said she came up with the idea to film an 'It Gets Better' video after seeing the Austin Police Department's. Suhm said she then pitched her proposal to Mayor Mike Rawlings, who felt it was a great idea and wanted to be involved.

City of Dallas films 'It Gets Better' video

Mayor Mike Rawlings, City Manager Mary Suhm, 13 gay city employees appear in segment produced for project aimed at LGBT youth

ANNA WAUGH | Staff Writer
waugh@dallasvoice.com

A city of Dallas video is now among the more than 50,000 "It Gets Better" videos meant to inspire LGBT youth and let them know a better future is ahead despite current challenges.

The video, released exclusively to Dallas Voice this week, features 13 gay and lesbian city employees from different departments who discuss growing up, coming out, bullying and working in Dallas. Mayor Mike Rawlings and City Manager Mary Suhm are also in the video and speak about their pride in the city's diverse makeup.

Suhm said she came up with the idea after she saw the Austin Police Department's "It Gets Better" video featuring gay officers in September. Suhm wanted to take the idea and expand it to include all city employees to demonstrate diversity's importance in the city's workforce.

"It's really important that the city workforce mirror the community that we live in and that we serve," Suhm said. "I think the message is it's a good place to work, it's a safe place to work, that

we need everybody, we need everybody's ideas and energies. I want everybody to feel comfortable to be a part of our workforce."

Suhm then brought the idea to Rawlings, who said he thought it was a great idea and wanted to be involved. He said he hopes the video shows that people are accepted in Dallas regardless of their sexual orientation and that it will help struggling LGBT youth overcome obstacles in their lives.

"Hopefully it says at the top of the city we believe in two things. One, acceptance regardless of someone's sexual orientation. And second, as a young person that's struggling, getting bullied or abused in some manner, that you can power through this and while it's difficult other people have come through it," Rawlings said. "I've been through difficult times and we all face our own

challenges and you've got to persevere. And hopefully somebody might say that a mayor who cares about this issue could give me hope."

Stephanie Laffin, secretary of the It Gets Better Project Board of Directors, said Dallas is among several other municipalities, including Chicago, San Francisco and Seattle, to make a video. She said cities that participate in the project have a meaningful impact by showing how welcoming they are to citizens and employees.

"It is so important to show LGBT and queer-identified people that there are safe and welcom-

online extra

Watch the video at DallasVoice.com.

■ IT GETS BETTER, Next Page



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■ IT GETS BETTER, From Previous Page

ing cities and towns, guided by supportive leadership," Laffin said.

Frank Libro, director of the city's public information office, said Suhm asked him to work on the project. Being in his position for more than seven years and being openly gay, he said he knows a lot of employees and approached his gay colleagues about being in the video. The response was overwhelmingly positive.

He conducted all the interviews over two days in November. Libro, who also appears in the video, is among employees who get emotional on camera while speaking about their youth.

"I think that each city employee that participated in the video takes viewers on a journey through some difficult times in their life but also ultimately shows viewers how their life got better and how they found a community and employer that accepts them, values them and appreciates their creativity, talent and voice," Libro said.

The video was made at a cost of \$4,100 and funded by private donors Ed Oakley, Gregg Kilhoffer and Caven Enterprises. Libro hired two makeup artists and a professional editor to shoot and edit the five hours of interviews. After watching about 60 "It Gets Better" videos to get an idea of how he wanted Dallas' to be produced, he said he oversaw six different versions before selecting the final one, which is about 13 minutes long.

Along with incorporating the traditional feel of the project's videos by sharing personal stories, Libro said having Suhm and Rawlings speak about how welcoming the city is as a place and as an employer sends a stronger message.

"With the mayor's participation and Mary's part telling people who may be looking at the city as a potential employer that it is a safe place to be and you are accepted here, I think that's a really important message," Libro said.

Patti Fink, president of Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance, said she was proud that the city took the initiative to make the video, and it demonstrated how supportive the city is of its LGBT citizens and employees. "I think taking the initiative to do something in support of the LGBT community is advocacy and leadership," she said. "That speaks very well of the leadership at City Hall."

Other city employees featured in the video are: Mark Doty, historic preservation officer; Theresa O'Donnell, director of sustainable development and construction; Detective Laura Martin, LGBT liaison for the Dallas Police Department; Joey Zapata, assistant city manager; Melissa Miles, assistant city attorney; John Rogers, assistant city attorney; Gary Sanchez, Councilwoman Delia Jasso's assistant; Patricia Marsolias, director of civil service; Margarita Ortiz, code compliance officer; Stephanie Flores, code compliance officer; Betty Swinners, volunteer coordinator; Kevin Lefebvre, senior environmental coordinator. ■

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Rep. Mary Gonzalez sworn in

AUSTIN — Of the 150 voices swearing to do their democratic best in the Texas House at the state Capitol on Tuesday, Jan. 8, only one belonged to an out pansexual: El Paso's history-making 29-year-old educator Mary Gonzalez.

Gonzalez became the first openly LGBT female to serve in the Texas Legislature, the first known pansexual elected official in the nation and the first woman to serve District 75. Oh, and she's also the youngest member of the 83rd Legislature.

Safe to say, there are some eyes on Gonzalez. "Today was a really wonderful experience," Gonzalez told Dallas Voice on Tuesday afternoon after the House's first session of the year. She brought a number of friends and family members to her first day of work, including her father — "my Republican father!" noted Gonzalez, laughing — and her girlfriend.

Gonzalez effectively won her seat in May 2012 when she won the Democratic Primary in El Paso's District 75, where there was no Republican challenger. Gonzalez was the first LGBT candidate elected to the Legislature since Glen Maxey, D-Austin, left office in 2002. During her campaign for the seat, Gonzalez's challengers kept bringing the conversation back to her sexuality. It's a topic she doesn't shy away from, but she also tells the Dallas Voice that it is not, and shouldn't be, the sole definer of her political career.

Now that Gonzalez and her staff are busy moving into her sparsely decorated office in the Capitol, she's ready to get to work — especially since it'll give folks something to talk to her about besides her sexual orientation.

"One of the reasons identity has been so central to my public persona is because there's nothing else," said Gonzalez. "I haven't been able to take votes yet, I haven't been able to give, hopefully, amazing speeches yet. So I hope to fill the void of information out there."

As the youngest member of the House, she's also part of a new generation of politicians who focus on intersectionality, recognizing that race, gender, class and other identifiers can't necessarily be separated from each other.

"It is a little bit suffocating to only be known as



Rep. Mary Gonzalez

this queer, lesbian, pansexual representative," said Gonzalez. "While that's important to me, it does create an invisibility to other parts of me. I don't want it to overshadow the work I want to do to serve my district."

Gonzalez calls intersectionality the "lens" through which she "views the world," and embraces the different aspects of who she is: Latina, working class, pansexual. Through that "lens," Gonzalez says she'll look at three major issues during the session: agriculture, the border and education.

First up is a dairy farm bill that could help shore up Gonzalez's economically struggling district. She remembers her first time walking into the agriculture council meeting "all dolled up" and surrounded by older white male legislators: "They're like 'Who are you?' I grew up on a dairy farm!"

She'll also be working on issues surrounding a new international bridge in El Paso, tackling how to "manage growth and development" in a way that doesn't create more colonias, border settlements with little-to-no infrastructure or access to sanitation and water.

In the long term, Gonzalez will focus on creating a state work-study program, confident that it would be "huge" if she can show "how work study programs help students graduate." And as for LGBTQ issues, she's working on those, too, hoping to co-author bills with Dallas Democratic state Rep. Rafael Anchia.

Whatever happens over the next 139 days, Gonzalez certainly doesn't intend to cut herself, or her staff, any slack: "I want it to be the most progressive, most inclusive, most welcoming office to everybody who comes in."

— Andrea Grimes



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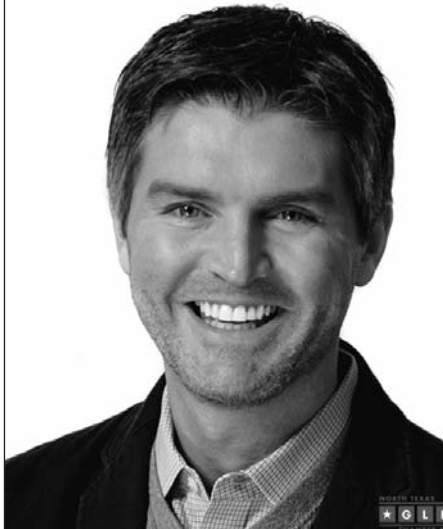
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■ texasnews

Main Event: We made 'no effort to discriminate' against gay couple

ANNA WAUGH | Staff Writer
 waugh@dallasvoice.com

PLANO—A gay couple who went out for date night to Main Event are claiming discrimination after the manager told them they were not family and asked them to leave.

Alberto Lesmes and his partner Chad Hemp went to the entertainment center at 3941 Central Expressway Sunday, Jan. 6, for a night of bowling. When their bowling lane continued to have technical difficulties, they requested a new lane.

Once the couple began to bowl in the new lane, a child from a large group next to them kept bowling in their lane. Lesmes said his partner went up to ask if they could be moved again. When Lesmes saw his partner get upset, he went over to speak to the manager on duty.

The manager was already irritated, Lesmes said, and said they were causing a problem by asking to be moved again. The manager asked if they were professional bowlers. When the couple replied they were not, the manager said the venue was a family environment. Lesmes said he told the manager he was with his family. When the manager asked where they were, Lesmes pointed to his partner and said they were family and wanted to enjoy their evening.

But Lesmes said the manager refused to move them to another lane and told them that they "were not family."

"He said, 'My resolution is to refund your game and let you leave,'" Lesmes said, so they left. "He didn't want to resolve it with us. ... Instead of acknowledging that two men are here together, they just asked us to leave."

Lesmes called to speak to the manager Tuesday but was treated rudely. He said an employee questioned whether the incident even happened and referred him to corporate. Main Event staff did contact him later in the week to speak about the incident, but he was unable to talk because he was dealing with a family matter.

After a preliminary investigation into the cou-



Chad Hemp, left, and Alberto Lesmes

ple's claim, the company says there was "no effort to discriminate." Amy Johnson, director of marketing, emailed a statement to Dallas Voice Wednesday afternoon, explaining that the company was investigating the incident by talking to staff and reviewing video footage from Sunday.

"We employ and cater to guests from all walks of life, including the LGBT community," the statement reads in part. "We are very protective of any family's experience at Main Event and take every complaint and the resolution of such—very seriously. Our preliminary investigation reveals that there was no effort to discriminate. We want to ensure all of our guests get to enjoy the full experience of 'Eat, Bowl, Play.'"

Johnson also sent Dallas Voice a copy of the company's nondiscrimination policy that includes "sexual preference." Lesmes said he and his partner hadn't been to Main Event before Sunday and would never return after the treatment.

"Our goal is to hopefully bring awareness to all communities that there should be zero tolerance for any kind of prejudice based on same-sex relationships, multi-racial or otherwise," he said. "To be told we are 'not family' is inexcusable. All we are seeking is an apology for the abrupt and rude communication from management and other parties involved."

But his partner wants something more concrete. "I don't want him to apologize. I want something more done," Hemp said. "Maybe I'm reaching for something, but I am not second class. I am the same as everyone else and as for him to apologize that is not OK with me." ■

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Stonewall 'hiatus' shouldn't affect local chapters

Faced with \$30K budget shortfall, national LGBT Democratic group suspends operations, closes D.C. office but says it will reboot in 2014

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Stonewall Democrats leaders in Texas say the national organization's announcement this week that it's going "on hiatus" will have little effect on the state caucus or local clubs.

Jerame Davis, National Stonewall Democrats executive director, confirmed that the group plans to suspend operations in an exclusive interview with Dallas Voice this week. Davis said he'll continue as an unpaid volunteer while a transitional board is assembled to prepare for a reboot of the organization in 2014. National Stonewall Democrats closed its Washington, D.C. office on Jan. 1 when a budget deficit announced early in December could not be paid by the end of the year.

"A lot of decisions are being made," Davis said. "It's likely our office will be closed for most of this year."

Omar Narvaez, president of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas, said the national group going on hiatus "will help the local co-fers," which could be important in a year with municipal elections in May.

Most national memberships come from local Stonewall organizations. When a member pays dues to the local group, \$10 is passed along to Washington. In a year-end phone call to chapters, Davis encouraged them to continue sending dues to national. He said he understands they'd be paying into a hole and couldn't require it.

Narvaez said the Dallas chapter will pay fourth-quarter dues from last year, adding that the local board planned to meet this weekend to decide how much additional money they're willing to contribute. Narvaez noted that the Dallas group received benefits while the debt was incurred, so he expected the board would make



Jerame Davis

some commitment.

Narvaez added that while much of what Stonewall Dallas does is work for candidates on a local level, the group needs a national voice.

Erin Moore of Dallas, who served on the national board, declined to comment for this article.

Eli Olivarez, president of the Texas Stonewall Democratic Caucus, said closing the D.C. office would not affect Texas, but he hopes the organization relaunches quickly. Olivarez said he thinks Stonewall Democrats should become part of the Democratic National Committee, just as Log Cabin Republicans are officially part of the Republican Party.

"They have the money to fund positions," he said of the DNC.

He said Stonewall is important to the Democratic Party and in Texas Stonewall has a seat on the State Democratic Executive Committee.



Omar Narvaez

"We're the worker bees," he said. "Elected officials always reach out to Stonewall."

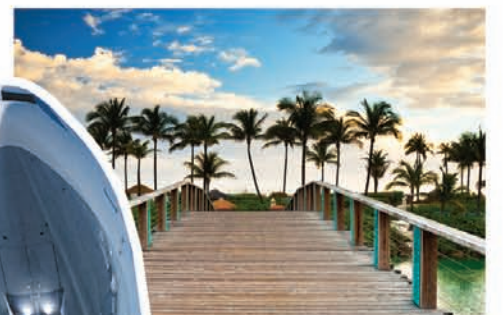
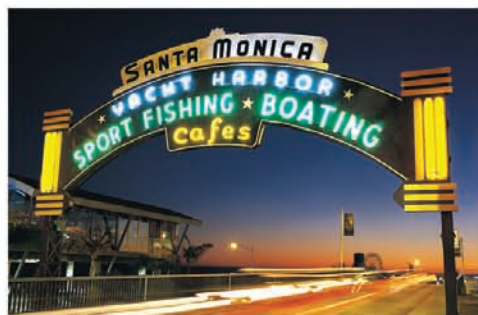
But while the national organization remains on hold, Olivarez expects the Texas caucus to become stronger and grow over the next year. Currently, he is working with groups from Fort Hood, north Houston and West Texas to form new chapters, in addition to the 11 clubs already operating in the state. He's also planning a statewide summit on April 6-8 in Austin where he hopes to attract new members and spur interest in opening additional chapters.

Davis sent an email in early December warning the organization was facing a \$30,000 deficit and might be forced to close if the money was not raised. When he became executive director in December 2011, he inherited the organization's debt.

"We've never raised enough money out of dues alone to keep the organization going," he said.

Reflecting on the past year, Davis said part of the problem was just how much money the presidential election sucked out of the pockets of donors. In addition, the Tammy Baldwin for Senate campaign siphoned funds from around the country.

"We hoped an angel would step in," he said. "That didn't happen." ■



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■ **viewpoints**

The ever-changing gay 'scene'

From public parks to Grindr and how we view AIDS, the evolution of LGBT nightlife in South Florida over 25 years says a lot about our culture

Each time I visit my parents in South Florida I am amazed by the evolution of the gay scene. It was an exhilarating, yet terrifying, time when I first came out of the closet in Fort Lauderdale in 1988. The majority of LGBT people weren't out and those who were formed a tight-knit, supportive community. This was reflected by the standard bar greeting — a hug — which was offered to friends and even strangers.

The majority of gay bars were located in out of the way places, and once inside were dimly lit and drenched in a haze of smoke. The crowd skewed older because the younger generation was still in hiding. A subset of men used pseudonyms because they were terrified of being outed.

It was a more dangerous time to be gay. When one walked on Federal Highway to get to the largest nightclub, The Copa, there was always the risk of hurled epithets or bottles. On rare occasions, police raided gay bars ostensibly looking for drugs — but there was a strong undercurrent of homophobia.

AIDS had taken a heavy toll on South Florida's LGBT community. Seemingly healthy people would be dancing one week and in hospital beds the next. One balmy August evening, I met a 22-year-old at The Copa. In my naïveté, I asked why he was wearing a winter sweater. He told me that he had AIDS and was suffering from the chills. Within two years he had gone blind, caught pneumonia and died.

The threat of AIDS was ubiquitous. People were fighting the disease, taking care of sick friends and partners, mourning the loss of loved ones, or still HIV-negative and terrified of becoming infected. The scourge both destroyed and united a burgeoning community that had no one to depend on but themselves.

It was also an exciting time to be alive. The bars were full of energy and verve. There was no Internet, so people could not meet after the bars closed and the only other option was cruising in public spaces, such as Victoria Park. Although, with a large number of men still in the closet, there were fewer possibilities to meet someone special, which created, in some cases, the loneliness exploited by the extreme right. (As usual, they were the problem, not the solution.)

By 1990, the scene had grown and largely gravitated to Miami's South Beach. This was a time of gargantuan nightclubs, thumping music and excess. It seemed, in my view, it was a grand form of escapism in the age of HIV. It was also a



PROGRESS AT A PRICE | Huge, vibrant gay venues like this one in Wilton Manors, Fla., are all well and good, but they also seem to have cost us our sense of community.

lot of fun and more young gay people began to gingerly step out of the closet. This trend was expedited by political radicalization with groups like Act-Up and Queer Nation raising consciousness and visibility. In the coming years, activist groups, such as the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) would encounter exponential growth, offering a more formal face of activism.

By the late '90s, the LGBT and arts communities had restored the glory of the once shabby and dangerous South Beach and turned it into an international destination. Rents began to rise and many LGBT homeowners cashed out. While South Beach is still a remarkable place to vacation and has a vibrant gay scene, it is no longer the Gay Mecca it was in its heyday.

The energy has now shifted to Wilton Manors, a small city near Fort Lauderdale that used to be known for its honkytonks and trailer parks. Today, the main strip bustles and bursts with well-lit bars and jumping nightclubs, such as The Manor. It has high-fashion gay clothing stores like J. Miles, and gay restaurants, such as Rosie's and Tropics. While many LGBT newspapers are closing nationwide, the local South Florida Gay News (SFGN) is thriving, offering a thick paper with real journalism.

Today, there are countless LGBT college-age youth who can barely fathom what life was like in 1988 — only two years after the Supreme Court upheld sodomy laws in *Bowers v. Hardwick*. The bar scene is more subdued and is usually packed with friends simply hanging out. The

bulk of the cruising no longer takes place in dark bars or Victoria Park, but is done, for better or worse, with private phone apps, such as Grindr and Scruff. AIDS is still a very real threat, but drugs that prolong life have diminished the immediate terror and limited public discussion of the disease.

The lives of LGBT people in South Florida are generally better, healthier, and people have significantly more career and romantic options than in 1988. On the flipside, this has meant a loss of community. Being gay is no longer sufficient to receive a hug at a bar — you actually have to have something in common with a person other than sexual orientation. This, it seems, is the price of progress.

Wayne Besen is founding executive director of Truth Wins Out, a Vermont-based nonprofit organization that fights anti-gay religious extremism. He can be reached at WBesen@TruthWinsOut.org.



Wayne Besen
Contributing columnist

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Screaming queen

Hoon Lee gives Cinemax's new crime drama 'Banshee' an unexpected dose of drag

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

As an Asian-American actor, Hoon Lee is accustomed to looking at, as he says, "a smaller spectrum of roles." So when a good one comes by, why turn it down?

That experience informed Lee's decision to take on the role of Job, the cross-dressing Korean-American gangster in small-town Pennsylvania in *Banshee*, a new series premiering Friday on Cinemax. Considering it is executive-produced by gay Oscar-winner Alan Ball, it's hard not to see the similarity to *another* of Ball's series where a rural gay man in drag seems *not* to raise eyebrows.

"Yes, when I talked to people about this role, they always referenced Lafayette from *True Blood*," Lee concedes with a chuckle.

"It's as if he asks, where can we put these guys? Amish Country! Is there a niche being created [for minority actors]? But that very question implies a problem. It's never really [an issue] to say we have another white, heterosexual male hero — it's a trope standard to the genre."

Banshee revolves around a recently-paroled thief who steals the identity of the town's new sheriff, enlisting the help of shady computer hacker Job to stay ahead of the game.

Lee has done drag for theater before, but this role upped it.

"I'd done drag once in a play, but it was a farce so it was part of that comedic thing. It was very much a new experience we all had to think about and work around. I felt the production was extremely helpful."

Lee, who is straight, has been mindful of his

responsibility not just to the character, but to the communities he represents — both LGBT and Asian-American.

"What I like about becoming part of this community of characters is, we have a sense of shaping how people *see* these kinds of characters," he says. "The more extreme the character is, the more interested I am in doing it. It does carry a risk; you are sensitive to that as [a minority]. Is this propagating some stereotype of Asian men as gangsters? The real trap is looking at things in generalities. If there's a sensational quality, that's where the problem arises."

If Job is a stereotype, it's not a bad one. Lean and handsome, Lee plays Job with a sassy personality; when two teenage girls gawk at him sitting on a beach in a designer wrap, he hisses, "This is Diane von Furstenberg! Now go get pregnant, Snooki."

Lee laughs at the reminder. A graduate of Harvard University, he brings a thoughtful, analytical approach to his role.

"What's exciting to me about Job — and I *really* enjoy this character — is, I think there's been a rich dialogue for why he does what he does. He pulls from whatever he needs to achieve his objective — that's a computer hacker mentality. That also speaks to his cross-dressing — there's a lot of power in the feminine side of the world, something men can't access.

"I don't get even asked to audition for these kind of roles very much and I think the opportunity is tremendous. If someone watches me and puts me in a container in the first few seconds, that allows me to shatter that. If they don't, they

BANSHEE

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DRAGSTER | Korean-American actor Hoon Lee took on an unusual role — that of a small-town cross-dressing gangster — in the new Cinemax crime drama 'Banshee' from Oscar-winner Alan Ball.

are waiting to see what you are."

As for the downsides of playing gay *and* drag, so far Lee has just been happy to explore a unique aspect of society. Even his folks are cool with that.

"My parents are from Korea and pretty tradi-

tional," he says. "What was really curious was, when I told them about the role, their reservations had nothing to do with drag, but the potential for me to be nude. That was funny to me. It's nice to get these reminders that your parents aren't as square as you think." ■



Cooking Channel's Beekman Boys on their amazing 'Race'

People might know Brent Ridge and Josh Kilmer-Purcell through their television show *The Fabulous Beekman Boys* on the Cooking Channel, but with their come-from-way-behind victory on last season's *The Amazing Race*, the couple is now twofers when it comes to TV fame, winning a race around the world.

"They actually recruited us," Ridge says. "We knew as middle-aged contestants — even if we trained hardcore — we weren't going to be the fastest or the youngest." So the couple 12 years strong focused on their secret weapon: trust in each other.

"When a team fails or gets eliminated, it usually stems from a team defeating itself. So we focused on how to communicate or motivate each other," Ridge says.

But why run the race at all? In addition to TV fame, they already enjoy a trendy business run out of their farm; Ridge is also a physician and Kilmer-Purcell a novelist. Was mere vanity driving them?

"There is this notion that because we're on TV, we're millionaires already, but you don't make very much money on reality TV — certainly not enough to get Josh here

at the farm full time," Ridge says. "The last five years Josh has been at the farm only on weekends. Now, with the winnings, he can be here all the time."

It was the infamously aggressive Sri Lankan sister team — The Twinnies — who many considered the boys' closest rivals. Likeably brash and never afraid to refer to the team as "the gays" or make catty remarks about them, they ended up being key factors in the boys' victory. "They really riled up our spirit and we got sassy back," Ridge says. "When we crossed the finish line, the twins were one of the first we thanked for lighting a fire under our asses."

Their run through Gotham Hall was one of last year's unforgettable TV moments, especially for gay viewers who have waited nearly a decade since Reichen and Chip won to see a queer team take it.

"Having us as underdogs, which we were, and people plotting against us I think brought up that alienation gay people have growing up," he says. "Many times, people were counting us out or never thought we had a chance. But we did it and perhaps viewers triumphed with us."

— Rich Lopez

Culture clutter in 2012

The memorable events related to Dallas living in 2012 included the following:

1. **Big Tex burns up.** The iconic Animatronic symbol of the State Fair ignited the final weekend of the fair as shocking images of the skeletal remains poured over the Internet. Personally, we weren't surprised — we always suspected Big Tex was a flamer.

2. **The Calatrava/Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge opens.** Sure, some had dismissed it as the bridge to nowhere, but actually it makes travel to the Oak Cliff gayborhood a snap now. Plus, whatever you think about its necessity, the thing's just gorgeous — a welcome addition to Dallas' already impressive skyline.

3. **The Perot Museum of Nature and Science opens ahead of schedule.** Coming nearly two months earlier than predicted, this late entry in the year — with its Borg Cube profile and strange scenic escalator — ended up being a primo destination in 2012, from the interesting exhibitions to a venue for fundraisers and other social events. Get used to coming here.

4. **Lucien Freud exhibit at the Modern in Fort Worth.** Widely regarded as one of the greatest art displays of the decade anywhere in North Texas, this exquisite collection of portraits from the grandson of the famed psychoanalyst had its own psychological components.

5. **The Dallas Way brings LGBT history online.** This project to record and preserve the LGBT history of Dallas proceeded in earnest in 2012, as UNT began archiving items to go online when sufficient funds are raised, paving a resource for gay historians for years to come.

6. **Dallas returns, just as J.R. departs.** Long promised and longer delayed, the TV series *Dallas* came back with a vengeance, scoring big ratings with the return of many original cast members. Season 2

kicks off in a few weeks on TNT, but the recent death of star Larry Hagman will no doubt make the story arcs feel bitersweet.

7. **Color of night: Dallas lights up after dark with Chihuly, Chinese lanterns.**

Never was there a better time to be outdoors after nightfall than in 2012, with both the Dale Chihuly glass "flowers" at the Dallas Arboretum and the Chinese lanterns at Fair Park. You could enjoy both exhibits during the day, but the illuminations after dark were simply dazzling.



8. **Uptown Players stages Dustin Lance Black's 8.** You can't really put this one-night-only staged reading of the Oscar winner's play about the legal battle over Prop 8 in the "stage" category — it was more politically relevant than that. Using actual court transcripts, the play boils down the hypocrisy and misinformation about gay people with moving performances from the local cast.

9. **Klyde Warren Park decks out the Arts District.** Uniting Downtown with Uptown may be the greatest legacy of the long-planned deck park, which will serve to make the isolated central business district more pedestrian friendly. We hope.

10. **The Downtown Omni Hotel becomes part of the landscape.** Although it actually opened in late October 2011, it was in 2012 that we saw the Omni not as a symbol of wrangling in city politics but as its own landmark, adding already-captivating lights displays to its Dallas-themed interiors.

— Arnold Wayne Jones



ON THE HORIZON | Both the Calatrava bridge, above, and the Omni Hotel, became essential figures on Dallas' cityscape; meanwhile Big Tex, top, stopped being one after an electrical fire sent him up in smoke.

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L+S dining

Top tables of 2012

We pick the new restaurants that helped define 2012's culinary scene



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

Restaurants change; the best restaurants want to, and you want *them* to. Consistency is a virtue, but so are innovation and seasonality. Diners want them to hire better chefs, better waitstaff, better managers. You want the décor to evolve. So a restaurant you like at one point in the year — perhaps even in one month of it — may be very different later. It's just the way of the world works.

Sometimes that change is significant: Both Campo and Monica's Nueva Cocina would have likely made my list, but aren't around anymore. Failing within a year is always a sad thing in the restaurant biz.

That is why I steer clear of naming my "top 10 new restaurants" of the year — what I liked in February might have gone downhill by December. And so, I prefer to offer my "top 10 tables" — the experiences that I remember most from the year of restaurant dining. They showed excellence with consistency of style.

In one instance, one restaurant that opened on Dec. 30, 2011, remained near the top of the list all year. Others got off to late starts.

I typically try to draw a line in the fall of what I consider "new," but so many good restaurants opened up near the end of 2012 that I had to

2012 YEAR IN REVIEW DINING

NOT FAR FROM THE TREE | The inventive dishes at Oak made it one of the best new places to eat in Dallas in 2012. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

"REVOLUTIONARY, exquisite execution..." — IU News



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fudge a bit. Some late openers may be on *next* year's list — assuming they are still around. Here then my top 10 tables of 2012.

1. **Stamped 66.** Stephan Pyles' first new concept in two years may be one of his best ever, with engaging décor, an accessible price point and a style that recalls his legendary Star Canyon, without mimicking any of the menu.

2. **Oak.** An elegant look in the Design District seemed a no-brainer, but Oak did more than impress our eyes — it thrilled my palate from Day 1, with exquisitely conceived dishes and a menu unlike anything offered in Dallas today. Invention won the day.

3. **Spoon.** *Top Chef* evictee John Tesar has nothing to complain about: His effort at high-end seafood in Preston Center is a huge success, with clever flavor profiles. Even those who don't think they like fish will be fooled into loving it. (Look for a full review later this month in *Dallas Voice*.)

4. **Mr. Mesero.** Don't be fooled by its small size, restaurant row-ish location or that its predecessor was a tacky breasted restaurant. The founder of M Group struck out on his own and hit the sweet spot with flavorful takes on familiar Tex-Mex dishes and a margarita to die for.

5. **Seasons 52.** Alas, a chain; alack, one of the best! With a brilliant concept (nothing on the menu is over 600 calories, including the luscious mini-desserts), this Florida-based concept moved to Plano two years ago but finally made

it to Dallas proper in 2012, giving healthy eating a good name for once.

6. **FT33.** If you do nothing more than stare longingly at the dishes chef Matt McCallister whips up, you'll be impressed by this chef-driven restaurant in the Design District. Although not every item soars, the promise of what is to come will keep us interested.

7. **Sissy's.** Southern cooking got its most forceful exponent, thanks to restaurateur Lisa Garza (she of *Suze*), who led the way in making fried chicken *the* hot dish of 2012. But there was so much more for a good ol' Southerner to enjoy on this cheeky neighborhood spot.

8. **Boulevardier.** It's not uncommon nowadays for restaurants to make in-house charcuterie — Brian Luscher at The Grape led the way, with Charlie Palmer and others doing it, too. To them, add Boulevardier, which offers delightful interpretations of rustic French cuisine in a bistro setting that would be at home in Paris or Manhattan.

9. **Ser.** We were so sad to see Nana go in 2012, but Ser opened up quickly, giving Dallas diners back their chance to look at their town from the best view in the city. Though pricey, the meats here are exceptional, and even the soups made us converts.

10. **Dalat.** Forget what you may have heard about this hole-in-the-wall not being "authentic" enough — Dalat's fusion of Vietnamese cuisine with Texas influences kept my tastebuds guessing ... in all the right ways. ■

TRAVEL DIARY

What are the nation's most gay-friendly cities? The Human Rights Campaign's first Municipal Equality Index (MEI) rates the public policies and legal rights of LGBT citizens in 137 U.S. cities in 50 states on 47 criteria, and 11 cities scored a perfect 100. Some of them aren't all that surprising — **Long Beach, Los Angeles, San Diego** and **San Francisco** — all in Cali; **Seattle** and progressive **Portland, Ore.** in the Pacific Northwest; **Boston/Cambridge, Philly** and of course **New York City** in the East.

The outlier that pleased us, though?

St. Louis, Mo. It was the lone city in the middle of the country so honored with 100 points. In terms of LGBT legislation, St. Louis is one of the most progressive cities in the country, with the study evaluating a city on nondiscrimination laws, relationship recognition, the municipality's employment policies, municipal services and programs, how well the municipal law enforcement responds to LGBT issues and the municipality's relationship with the LGBT community.

"We are proud to see the prominence of St. Louis," says A.J. Bockelman, exec director of PROMO, Missouri's LGBT advocacy organization. "It reflects the value the LGBT community provides to the health and prosperity of our city."

A number of other cities scored 95 or above, including **Berkeley, Palm Springs** and **West Hollywood, Calif.**; **Denver; Chicago; Hartford, Conn.; Albany, N.Y.**; and **Madison, Wisc.**

Those in the single digits are **Jackson, Miss.** and **Avondale Estates, Ga.** (8), **Pleasant Ridge, Mich.** (3), and **Baton Rouge, La.** and **Cheyenne, Wyo.** (2). And at zero? Well, there are two: **Montgomery, Ala.** and **Frankfort, Ky.** There's something sad about a state that's abbreviated "KY" doing so poorly with gay rights.

You can view the full report at HRC.org/MEI.

If you want to start saving for your big trip in 2013, the best way to go about it might be with **MyTab.co** (note: *Not .com*, but just *.co*). This social gift exchange allows you to add dollars to your online travel card. Customers can set up an account on the website, as well as wish lists. Folks can contribute to it instead of buying you presents for birthdays, graduations or anniversaries, consolidating your gifts in one place. It's like crowd-sourcing for air fare. And MyTab offers discounts via its Match MyCash service, which generates competitive bids from travel businesses competing for your bucks.

— Arnold Wayne Jones



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Stephen Sondheim's *Putting It Together* is a musical revue celebrating the composer's incomparable career. The production showcases the songs of Sondheim with such shows as *Sweeney Todd*, *Follies*, *A Little Night Music*, *Company*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and more.

Featuring nearly 30 Sondheim tunes, *Putting it Together* is performed by five people thrown together at a party in a Manhattan penthouse, exploring the many facets of relationships including the follies of dating, marriage and everything that happens in between.

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Saturday 01.12

DIVA holds new member clinics

If you wanna get your butt moving after all the holiday indulgences and the gym isn't calling your name, consider signing up to play in the Dallas Independent Volleyball Association. The group is holding a series of six new member clinics, beginning Saturday but also Monday and Wednesday of this week. It doesn't matter your skill level — there's always room for one more DIVA.

DEETS: Polk Rec Center, 6801 Roper St. Jan. 12, noon–2 p.m.; Jan. 14 and 16, 7–9 p.m. DIVADallas.org.

Saturday 01.12

Dumae marks 30 years of fundraising

What were you doing in 1983? Well, Don Jenkins was creating an alter ego that would live on 30 years. Drag diva Donna Dumae has been a staple on the North Texas charitable scene for 30 years this month, and she's celebrating by returning to her hometown and where her first Imperial Family was located in Fort Worth, raising money for AIDS Outreach Center Food Pantry.

DEETS: Club Reflection, 608 W. Jennings St., Fort Worth. Cocktails at 5 p.m., curtain at 6 p.m.



Monday 01.14

Sondheim gets 'Put Together' at WaterTower

Now that the holidays have ended, many theater companies are back on the boards, starting this week. Probably the gayest of them will be at WaterTower Theatre, where Bob Hess, Diana Sheehan and other theater all-stars join together in this production of *Putting It Together*, a musical tribute to the songs of Broadway legend and gay icon Stephen Sondheim. It's in previews all weekend, but Monday is opening night ... and there's nothing like an opening night!

DEETS: Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Jan. 11–Feb. 3. WatertowerTheatre.org.





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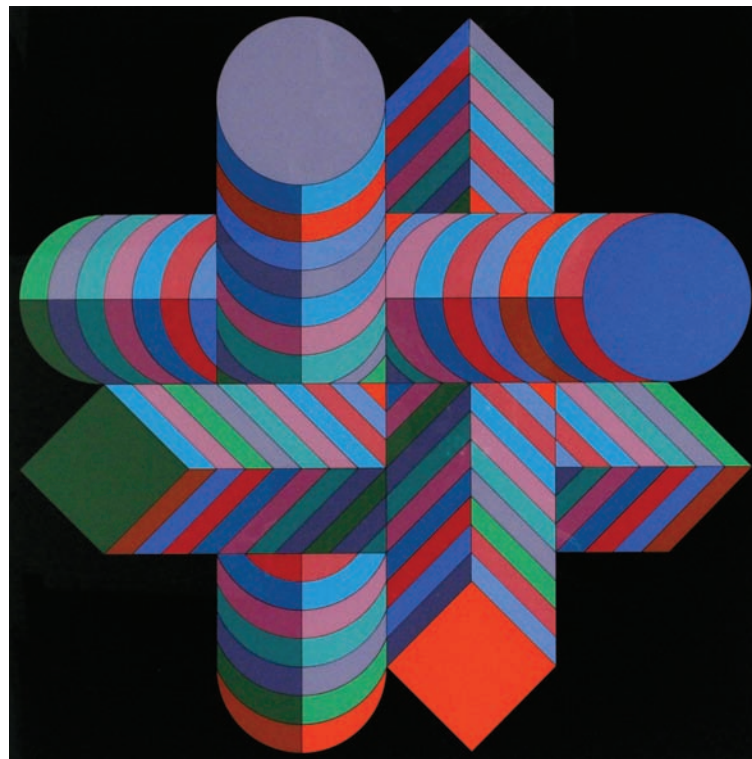
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calendar



PSYCHEDELIC | The dizzying art of Victor Vasarely opens the MADI Museum's first exhibition of 2013 Friday.

FRIDAY 01.11

THEATER

XSR:Die! Pegasus Theater's latest "Living Black & White" production, set backstage at a play. Written by and starring Kurt Kleinmann, and directed by Michael Serrecchia. Performed at two locations. Eisemann Center for Performing Arts, 2351 Performance Place, Richardson. Through Jan. 20; MCL Grand Theater, 100 N. Charles St., Lewisville. Jan. 24-27. \$15-\$35. PegasusTheatre.org and ATTPAC.org.

A Behanding in Spokane. Dark Irish playwright Martin McDonough's American-set play launches Second Thought Theatre's 2013 season. Bryant Hall at the Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through Jan. 26. \$22.50. SecondThoughtTheatre.com.

Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo. Rajiv Joseph's Pulitzer finalist examines the war in Iraq through the eyes of a dead jungle cat. Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Jan. 11-Feb. 9 (in previews through Jan. 13). \$10-\$50. Theatre3Dallas.com.

Penelope. Undermain moves out of their underground space for this play, written by Tony winner Enda Walsh (*Once*). City Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. Jan. 12-Jan. 26. \$10-\$30. Undermain.org.

Putting It Together. A musical revue of the songs of Stephen Sondheim, presented by WaterTower Theatre. Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Jan. 11-Feb. 3 (in previews through Jan. 13). WaterTowerTheatre.org.

FINE ART

Optical Spaces: The Art of Victor Vasarely opens at the MADI Museum, 3109 Carlisle St. Jan. 11-April 7. (Opening night reception starts at 6:30 p.m. for general public.) Free. GeometricMadiMuseum.org.

Posters of Paris: Toulouse-Lautrec and His Contemporaries. An exhibition of rare posters from the

French belle epoque. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through Jan. 20. \$14. DallasMuseumofArt.org.

On the Silk Road and the High Seas: Chinese Ceramics, Culture and Commerce. New exhibit of centuries-old pottery and sculpture, at the Crow Collection of Asian Art, 2010 Flora St. Through Jan. 27. CrowCollection.org.

Frank Lloyd Wright's Samara: A Mid-Century Dream Home. Furnishings and designs by the renowned architect are brought to life. Arlington Museum of Art, 201 W. Main St., Arlington. Through Feb. 17. Tuesdays-Sundays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (open Sundays at 1 p.m.) ArlingtonMuseum.org.

Anne Frank: A Private Photo Album. An exhibit featuring 71 private

photos of the Frank family, taken by Otto Frank. Dallas Holocaust Museum, 211 N. Record St. Through March 31. Open daily. DallasHolocaustMuseum.org.

BROADCAST

Malibu Country. New sitcom co-starring Lily Tomlin as Reba McEntire's pot-smoking mom. Ch. 8 at 7:30 p.m.

COMMUNITY

High Tech Happy Hour, a monthly mixer for gay folks in the tech field, but open to anyone. Komali, 4152 Cole Ave., Suite 106. 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Unwired Dallas. Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA) for those wishing to quit using crystal meth meets Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. 7:30 p.m. Free. Crystallmeth.org.

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

SATURDAY 01.12

COMMUNITY

Dallas FrontRunners fun run for all levels. Meet at the statue of Robert E. Lee at Lee Park at 8:30 a.m.; brunch follows. FronrunnersDallas.org.

Fuse: Core Group for gay men ages 18 to 29. Resource Center Dallas, 2701 Reagan St. 2-5 p.m. 214-540-4435. GetYourFuseOn.com.

BROADCAST

Lambda Weekly. LGBT radio for North Texas. This week's guest is Bob Williams from Ranch Hand Rescue. Williams' enterprise is the subject of the cover story this week. 89.3 KNON-FM at 11 a.m. LambdaWeekly.com.

SUNDAY 01.13

WORSHIP

Cathedral of Hope. Traditional service at the United Church of Christ congregation. 5910 Cedar Springs

browse

For a more complete Community Calendar online, visit Tinyurl.com/dvevents.

submit

To submit an item for inclusion in the Community Calendar, visit Tinyurl.com/dvsubmit.



SONDHEIMANIA | It's a Stephen Sondheim-centric week, with 'Putting It Together' at WaterTower in Addison and 'West Side Story' arriving for a week at Bass Hall in Fort Worth. (Photo courtesy Carol Rosegg)

Road. 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. CathedralOfHope.com.

The ONE Church, 5427 Philip Ave. Services 6 p.m. Dallas1Church.org.

Breath of Life Interfaith Mindfulness Fellowship. LGBT-friendly "meditation and more" event. Inspired by Buddhist spirituality, all faiths welcome. Deaf interpretation provided. Dallas Meditation Center, 727 S. Floyd Road, Richardson. 5 p.m. Donations accepted. InterMindful.com.

COMMUNITY

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

MONDAY 01.14

COMMUNITY

Stonewall Group of Narcotics Anonymous. Meets daily at noon and 7:30 p.m., 5353 Maple Ave. #130 (entrance at rear of building).

Stonewall Democrats of Tarrant County. Tommy's Hamburger Grill, 5228 Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth. 7 p.m. 817-913-8743.

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

TUESDAY 01.15

THEATER

West Side Story. The reimagined version of the classic musical by Authur Laurents, Stephen Sondheim and Leonard Bernstein plays for a limited run at Bass Hall. 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth. Jan. 15–20. BassHall.com.

COMMUNITY

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

The ONE Church, 5427 Philip Ave. Bible study 7:30–10 p.m. Dallas1Church.org.

WEDNESDAY 01.16

COMMUNITY

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.

Dallas FrontRunners fun run for runners and walkers at all levels. Meet at the statute of Robert E. Lee at Lee Park at 7 p.m. Dinner to follow. FronrunnersDallas.org.

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

THURSDAY 01.17

THEATER

Zero. Actor-playwright Danny O'Connor's one-man show about male relationship was one of Dallas Voice's top 10 productions of 2006. Studio Theatre at the Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Jan. 17–Feb. 9. ZeroThePlay.com.

COMMUNITY

The ONE Church, 5427 Philip Ave. Fellowship 7:30–10 p.m. Dallas1Church.org.

this week's solution

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CELEBRITY BIRTHDAY

Zak Spears turns 48 on Tuesday. The muscular, hirsute star of porn films for Falcon Studios since 1993. He also appeared in gay filmmaker Gregg Araki's 1995 non-porn indie film *The Doom Generation* under his birth name, Khristofor Rossianov.



CAPRICORN Dec 21—Jan 20

You could use time and space to sit back and review the way things stand, but it's probably not going to happen because you're in the midst of reaping the best from what your life has birthed in the last three years.

AQUARIUS Jan 21—Feb 20

The pace is slowing down just long enough for you to catch your breath. In the midst of a lot of stress, your life has been boosted from one level to the next. By the time you read this, you will be preparing for the next phase of whatever comes.

PISCES Feb 21—Mar 20

Things that happened a long time ago have been popping up to remind you how far you've come. This could include very significant people returning at a critical point in time. All of these things mean something. You have lived long enough to know that what goes around comes around.

ARIES Mar 21—Apr 20

The next time you stop thinking about yourself long enough to notice what's going on with someone else, you'll be amazed to find out that others are having a tough time dealing with your nonsense.

TAURUS Apr 21—May 20

This is all about what belongs to who and/or who belongs to what. The bigger part of you would be fine if you wound up losing it all. In some small way you understand that possessions don't make us who we are.

GEMINI May 21—Jun 20

Just when you were getting ready to bail, in the midst of the craziest scenario you're looking at the other side of the worst of it. For a few weeks do your best to hold steady and strengthen your position enough to prepare for the next go-round.

CANCER Jun 21—Jul 20

Your plans may need some adjustment. Remain open to the idea that none of this is up to you. In the long run, those closest to you may have more to say about it than you do. Changes in their reality are bound to spill over and affect you.

LEO Jul 21—Aug 20

Too much external pressure has combined with the stuff you do to yourself to create a sense of being a prisoner inside your own life. It doesn't have to be this way. The need for drama, and the desire to be center-stage has twisted up your priorities.

VIRGO Aug 21—Sep 20

It's always a mixed bag with you; everything's OK on the surface, but the inside story is a mix of anxiety that you can't put your finger on. If you feel more neurotic than usual, the things that distract you are ringing up enormous amounts of fear.

LIBRA Sep 21—Oct 20

No one can tell you what others will do. Second guessing people is a tricky sort of business. You're going to have to let your instincts guide your choices because when logic and reason no longer apply, your mind is bound to make a mess of it.

SCORPIO Oct 21—Nov 20

You can't account for the way others seem to overreact everything you do. I'm not sure it's about not being receptive; it feels more like someone needs to maintain the boundary that keeps their identity intact.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 21—Dec 20

The need to make room for others' idiosyncrasies is always the issue; you're about to lose it as far as that goes. In the coming weeks the pressure to be OK with just about anything will see you calling on your sense of humor.

Kyle's Bed & Breakfast by Greg Fox

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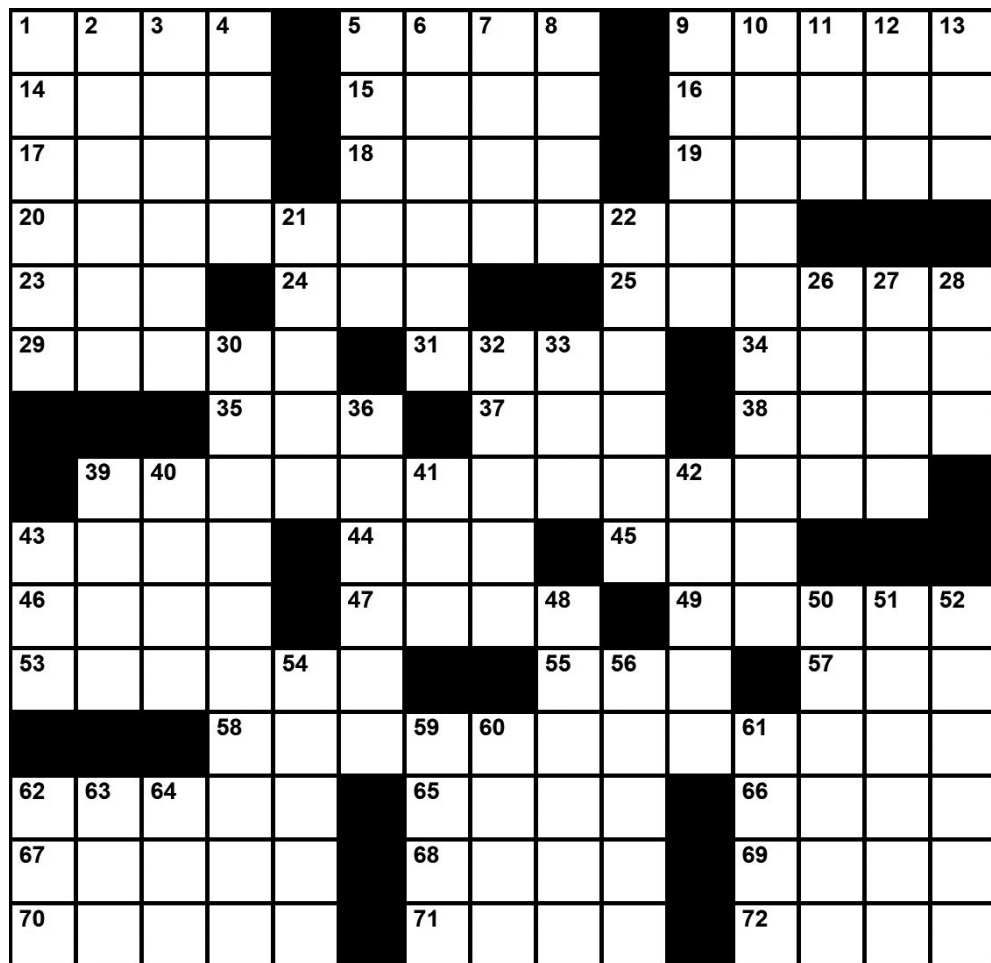
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I Dreamed A Dream

Solution on page 25

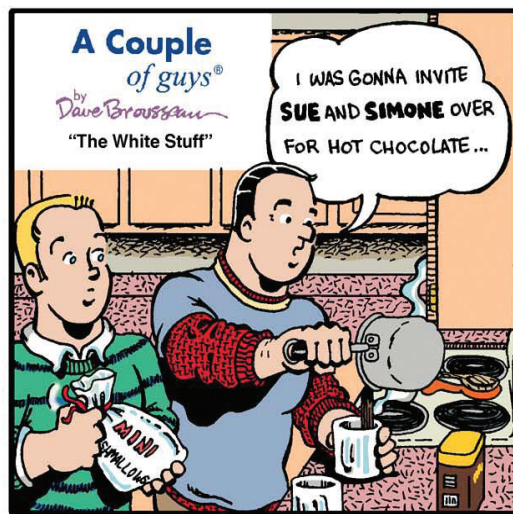
Across

- 1 Bones partner
- 5 Second fruit eater
- 9 Go lickety-split
- 14 Give a hang
- 15 Vincent Lopez theme song
- 16 Word before "ho!"
- 17 End note
- 18 Rachel's TV show
- 19 Playful aquatic critter
- 20 Javert portrayer in 39-Across
- 23 Barely get by, with "out"
- 24 *Once Upon a Mattress* legume
- 25 Begin stomping grounds
- 29 They go into drives
- 31 *Funny Girl* holder
- 34 Skin moisturizer
- 35 Letters on the Internet
- 37 Org. for Bama and LSU
- 38 Mardi Gras follower
- 39 Gay fave movie of 2012
- 43 Vidal's Breckinridge
- 44 California has a big one
- 45 Maiden name preceder
- 46 Gaza Stripper, e.g.
- 47 Some like them hot

- 49 Come out in the long run
- 53 Howard of *Gone With the Wind*
- 55 D.C. lobby group
- 57 Collection suffix
- 58 Fantine portrayer in 39-Across
- 62 Begins, on Broadway
- 65 Somewhat, in music
- 66 Bus Stop playwright
- 67 *Amadeus* star
- 68 Countee Cullen work
- 69 Stag party?
- 70 Pie fight sound
- 71 "The ___ the limit!"
- 72 Says further

Down

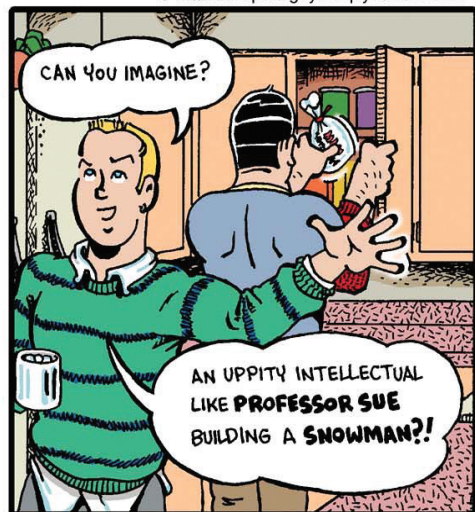
- 1 What Arlen did to *The Wizard of Oz*
- 2 Noh alternative
- 3 Murdoch and others
- 4 The L.A. Sparks strip them
- 5 Avoid going straight
- 6 Word after bottom
- 7 Map of *Desperate Housewives*
- 8 Editor Roshan
- 9 Comes in third
- 10 Hugh Jackman played him in *The Boy from Oz*
- 11 Enjoy orally
- 12 Wife without in-laws
- 13 Aachen article
- 21 Coarse salt in the tub
- 22 Tin Man slicker
- 26 Helm location
- 27 Seemingly forever
- 28 Rent or allow
- 30 Ted of gossip
- 32 Former NFL player Tuaoilo
- 33 Musket attachment?
- 36 Prick up one's ears
- 39 Ancient harp
- 40 The Gay '90s, and more
- 41 Boy in a Johnny Cash song
- 42 Tree with triangular nuts
- 43 Grand ___ seizure
- 48 Kevin of *American Beauty*
- 50 Occurred to (with "on")
- 51 Like Dorian Gray
- 52 They might be charging
- 54 Map legend, usually
- 56 Water molecule threesome
- 59 Omar of *ER*
- 60 Pan foe
- 61 Elton John Broadway musical
- 62 Satisfied cries, perhaps
- 63 Type of tent
- 64 Wing for Julia Morgan



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Friends' night out at Station 4.



Friends' night out at the Hidden Door.



Justin and Rachel at the Rainbow Lounge.

Miss Gay Texas 2013 Madison Devoreaux and Miss Gay Texas State at Large 2013 Natasha P. emcee with special guest performers Xacora Cayne Martinez, Mattie Madison, Kelly O'Neill and Bill Lindsey for the first prelim for Miss Gay Texas State and State at Large on Jan. 13 at The Brick. ... Krystal Summers and Jenna Skyy host Mr. Rainbow 2013 at the Rainbow Lounge on Jan. 15. The show stars Texas All American Gent 2013 Rico Demornay and the winner takes home \$500. ... Jenni P. is the host at Sunday Service at JR.'s Bar & Grill on Jan. 13. Then the bar holds a CD release party for CIARA's new ferocious dance-floor single and video "Got Me Good" from the upcoming album *One Woman Army* on Jan. 15. ... Kickback appears at Sue Ellen's on Jan. 11 and Anton Shaw and the Reason on Jan. 12. Then Sunday is Fish Fry Bingo. ... Mark Alan Smith headlines at Alexandre's on Jan. 11. The Matt Barron Band performs on Jan. 12 and Anton Shaw appears Jan. 16. ... Jada Fox hosts with special guests Thursdays at Woody's Sports and Video Bar. ... DJ Roger brings all the great old country classics to Wild West Wednesdays at the Round-Up Saloon. ... Jan. 12 is Second Saturday Karaoke at Barbara's Pavillion in Oak Cliff. ... Sable, Rusty and Linze present Standing Ovation, a benefit for Celebration on the Lake Church at Garlows in Gun Barrel City on Jan. 12. ... BJ's NXS holds a customer appreciation party on Jan. 16. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREGORY HAYES.

To view more Scene photos, go to DallasVoice.com/Category/Photos.



Heidi and Britt at Sue Ellen's.



Roger and Tony at the Dallas Eagle.



Chris and Kevin at The Brick.



Michael, Michael and David at Best Friends Club.



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