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Friday, September 13, 2013

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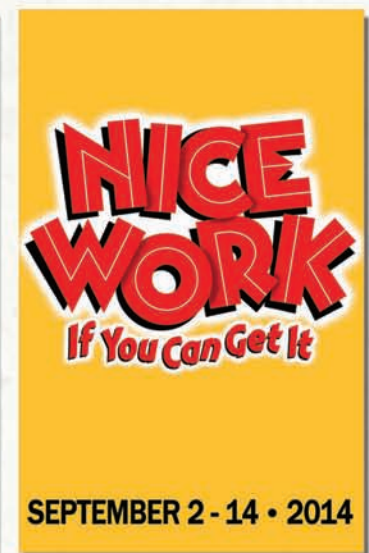
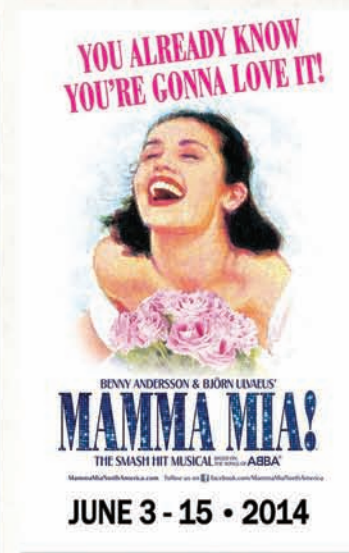
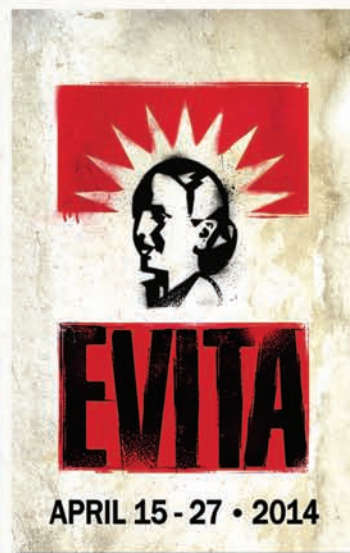
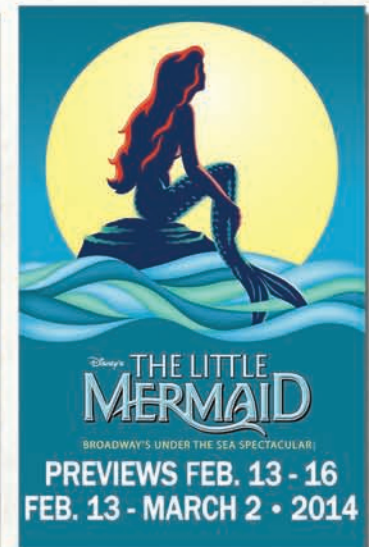


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Trans woman's death being investigated as murder

The Denton County Sheriff's Department is investigating the death of transgender woman Arteus Konyale Madden.

Madden, 34, who went by Konyale Madden on Facebook, was found dead in her home on Hayden Lane in Savannah Estates by friends on Sunday, Sept. 1, Sgt. Larry Kish told the Denton Record-Chronicle. Savannah is a small town east of Denton.

Officials thought Madden had been dead since Friday night or Saturday morning and are investigating her death as a homicide.

Investigators said they initially believed the body to be a female, but did not elaborate on Madden's identity.

Calls to Kish were not immediately returned.

Jermone Antonio Jones, a longtime friend of Madden's, told the Denton Record-Chronicle that Madden identified as female growing up.

"As a child, he [Arteus] considered himself as a female and all through school," Jones said. "He was the life of the party. If you had a party, you would want Arteus there."

The two grew up together in Longview, where Madden attended high school.

The preliminary cause of death hasn't been revealed by the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office, which covers Denton County.

The investigation is still ongoing and no arrests have been made. People with information leading to the death should contact Sgt. Kish at 940-349-1665.

Madden's funeral was Sept. 7 in Longview, according to her obituary. Her family requested donations be made in her name to MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston in lieu of flowers.

— Anna Waugh

DART board members approve DP benefits in 1st of 3 votes

DART's board, acting as a committee-of-the-whole, passed a domestic partner benefits plan Tuesday that must be passed twice more in two weeks — once more by the committee and then by the DART board. The proposal passed the Administrative Committee two weeks ago.

Cost was again an issue at the meeting.

Michael Muhammad, DART's vice president of diversity and innovative services, reported that in Pflugerville, where the school district began offering DP benefits last year, only two employees have taken advantage of the plan. He said the numbers in Fort Worth, and at Parkland hospital and DFW Airport have been similar.

Using national averages of employees who participate in DP benefits plans, Muhammad said he expects 11 or 12 of DART's employees to take advantage of the plan, costing the agency a total of \$70,000 annually including dental benefits.

To avoid a challenge by Attorney General Greg Abbott, who could claim domestic partnerships are not legal in Texas, DART is proposing offering a plus-one plan. Under the plus-one plan, an unmarried adult DART employee could cover one unrelated adult in the household. The unrelated adult must not be eligible for coverage by his or her own employer and not be eligible for government coverage. The unrelated adult must live with the DART employee and they must prove they've lived together for at least one year.

Although Muhammad gave the same presentation he made two weeks ago, board members were still confused about who could be covered. One asked why DART should cover any roommate. Another questioned whether DART has considered dropping heterosexual spouses who could get coverage elsewhere from the agency's plan. A third wondered if DART would start covering the spouses of employees in common-law marriages (it already does).

DART board chair John Danish tried to explain why the agency was using the plus-one plan rather than domestic partnerships. He said they were balancing two Supreme Court rulings recognizing same-sex marriage with an attorney general's opinion that doesn't.

When board members continued to have questions, they went into executive session for an hour.

After they returned to open session, the vote for the plan was nine in favor, one against and one abstention.

The plan must be voted by the committee again on Sept. 24. If it passes its second committee vote in the afternoon, the board will vote again that evening. The committee-of-the-whole and the board are made up of the same members.

— David Taffet

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Invasion of the Bible snatchers

■ texasnews

Proselytizing Christians descend on Cedar Springs, offending club-goers



FOR THE LOVE OF CHRIST | A group of students from Christ For the Nations Institute, above, prays on the corner of Cedar Springs and Throckmorton on Sept. 6. Two members of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, below, said they were on hand to make sure the group didn't harm anyone from the LGBT community. (Photos by Patrick Hoffman/Dallas Voice)

PATRICK HOFFMAN | Contributing Writer
editor@dallasvoice.com

A group of approximately 20-30 evangelical Christian proselytizers descended on the corner of Cedar Springs and Throckmorton last Friday, just one week before the 30th annual Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade.

The group sang songs, prayed, held hands and spoke to members of the LGBT community. Occasionally, they blocked foot traffic on parts of the sidewalk, and they left shortly after Dallas police showed up a second time after receiving noise complaints.

Also on hand were two members of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, Eve Angelica and Bertha Sin.

"There are only two of us out tonight, but normally if there are more of [the sisters], then we form a barrier around them to make sure they don't harm anyone in the community," Angelica said.

One club-goer laughed at the group as he passed by, playfully shouting: "I need to get some tonight. Pray for me, girl!" Others were confused as to the reason for the group's presence, and more than a few were offended.

"If they're really there to help, they would go to areas where help is needed — not bars," Bobby McMillon said.

Kane Haus said, "If they truly wanted to be saints, they would go with the sinners just as Jesus did because there's a lot of sin on the strip, but being gay isn't one of those.

■ **INVASION**, Page 18



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localbriefs

Jonathan's Place hosts LGBT foster and adoption event on Saturday

Jonathan's Place hosts a foster and adoption presentation for prospective LGBT parents at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 14.

Speakers will include LGBT foster and adoptive parents, a family law attorney who specializes in LGBT adoption and a representative from the Department of Family and Protective Services.

Equality Texas Foundation's All Texas Families and the Gay and Lesbian Alliance of North Texas are sponsoring the event.

Jonathan's Place is an emergency shelter for children removed from their homes and places more children in LGBT homes than any agency in Texas. Jonathan's Place is at 6065 Duck Creek Road in Garland. The presentation is free, but an RSVP to therapy@inclusivecounseling.com is requested.

Rep. Mary Gonzalez visits Fort Worth to benefit Equality Texas

State Rep. Mary Gonzalez and Equality Texas Executive Director Chuck Smith headline A Midsummer Night's Soiree at the home of Scott Green and Garrett Warren in Fort Worth on Sept. 14.

They will discuss what's new in post-DOMA Texas, what new guidance from the IRS and Medicare means for LGBT Texans and whether San Antonio's new nondiscrimination ordinance is unconstitutional.

Gonzalez, who represents an El Paso County district, is the first out member of the legislature in a decade.

The evening benefits Equality Texas. Sponsorships are available. Individual tickets are \$75 and are available online at EqualityTexas.org. The event takes place at 3905 Summercrest Drive, Fort Worth.

Death

Virgil Wallis, 58, a longtime resident of Dallas and recently of Atlanta, died Sept. 5 at St. Bernard's Medical Center in Jonesboro, Ark., after an extended illness.

A funeral service was held on Sept. 9 at Valley View Church of Christ in Jonesboro.

Virgil will be greatly missed and wonderfully remembered.

Virgil was preceded in death by his father and a



brother. He is survived by five brothers, four sisters, and numerous nieces and nephews and many friends in Dallas and Atlanta.

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Meet the good gays

New local chapter of Gay For Good enhances community's image through service projects



THIS PLACE IS A ZOO | Mark Brinkerhoff, from left, Rob Peters, Emy Lyons, Duncan Smith, Kurt Kirchner, Jason O'Neill, Thomas Christopher Renner were among members of Gay For Good who volunteered recently during the local chapter's first service project at the Dallas Zoo. (Courtest Rob Emery)

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Breeding giraffes requires quite a bit of lubricant, according to Rob Peters, the founder of the new Dallas-Fort Worth chapter of Gay For Good. Cleaning out the breeding room was a surprise project handed to members of the new volunteer organization when they arrived at the Dallas Zoo on Aug. 24.

More than 20 members of the LGBT community responded to a Facebook post looking for volunteers to take down unused cages at the Dallas Zoo animal hospital, complete an exhibit at the reptile house and work on tasks in the bird section of the Wilds of Africa.

Volunteers removed rocks and debris and put down fresh mulch under the tram line in the Wilds of Africa section of the zoo for the vulture exhibit. Cages no longer being used in the animal hospital needed to be removed. In addition, volunteers were told there would be a surprise task given once they arrived.

That surprise was cleaning out the giraffe mating house where volunteers washed out the breed-

ing room where two of the animals recently mated.

When the group asked what needed to be cleaned out after giraffes mate, they were told it can be a little messy.

"It takes a lot of lube," group founder Rob Peters said.

Peters joined Gay For Good in Boston. When he moved to Dallas last year, he decided to open a chapter here. Each month the group plans an event volunteering in the community.

"It's not about raising money," Peters said. "It's about giving of yourself."

When he joined the Boston chapter, Peters said he wanted to meet some good people who have a broader sense of community.

"It's about bridging the gap between the LGBT community and the broader community.

Dallas-Fort Worth is the 10th chapter of G4G and the first with a straight board member. For its first event, Peters was excited that volunteers representing each letter in LGBT were represented.

The zoo projects took three hours to complete. Volunteers worked on a Saturday morning from 9 a.m. to noon before going out to lunch together in

nearby Bishop Arts.

The next project involves sorting and processing clothing at the Genesis Benefit Store that supports Genesis Women's Shelter. Peters said volunteers will work two shifts in small groups of 10. Because September is Pride month with so many activities going on, he looked for a smaller event.

In October, the group plans to volunteer at the North Texas Food Bank. And for its premier Fort Worth project, it will head over to the Tarrant Area Food Bank in December.

In November, volunteers will participate in Reading Is Fundamental, the largest nonprofit children's literacy program. Around the city, 11 schools are participating and G4G will be assigned its own school.

Dan Babb knew Peters through a friend and was excited about participating in G4G.

"I've always been service-oriented," he said. "In college, I was in a service fraternity."

He said he got into the community, met new people and had fun participating.

After the first project, the women's social group The SOLID Network partnered with G4G.

SOLID organizer Tiff Cochran said her group

has already done quite a bit of volunteer work so G4G was a perfect fit.

"We wanted to do more," she said.

She said her goal was for volunteer work to be the thing to do and the number of volunteers will far outnumber the slots available in monthly projects.

Gay For Good isn't the first group to work with mainstream organizations to enhance the image of the LGBT community.

While Gay For Good brings groups of volunteers into the community, The Gay and Lesbian Fund for Dallas bundles money. Those donations benefit non-gay organizations, advancing LGBT equality through visibility.

Among the organizations that have benefited from GLFD donations are the AT&T Performing Arts Center, The Dallas Museum of Art, Parkland Hospital and KERA.

Within a year, G4G expects to have a similarly impressive list of organizations that have benefited from the efforts of its members.

G4G will have a tent at the Festival in Lee Park for new volunteers to sign up. For more info, visit GayForGood.org/dallas_tx.

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■ texasnews



ANTI-GAY TEACHINGS | Members of Christ for the Nations lay hands on one another on Cedar Springs Sept. 6. CFNI's student handbook states unequivocally that it prohibits "immoral behavior including, but not limited to: abortion, adultery, fornication, any form of extramarital sexual activity, cohabitation, homosexuality, lesbianism, and use or possession of any form of pornographic material." (Patrick Hoffman/Dallas Voice)



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■ INVASION, From Page 12

"Hand out fliers in the club. Buy water, food," he added. "Anything but protesting outside the only place where I can be me."

Kase Stolte, the leader of the evangelical group, said it was made up of students from Christ For the Nations Institute, a local religious school, and they were there to show everyone that God loves them and to pray for anyone who wanted to be prayed for.

"It's God with no strings attached," said the 21-year-old senior from the Bible college in south Dallas.

Stolte said they also have periodic gatherings in Oak Cliff and outside Insomnia Dallas on Sunday mornings as the club closes. Asked whether they chose Cedar Springs because it is a hub for LGBT nightlife, Stolte said no, but didn't give a specific reason why they picked the location.

CFNI's student handbook states unequivocally that it prohibits "immoral behavior including, but not limited to: abortion, adultery, fornication, any form of extramarital sexual activity, cohabitation, homosexuality, lesbianism, and use or possession of any form of pornographic material."

Additionally, students at Christ For the Nations — Stolte in particular — have connections to Joe Oden.

Dallas Voice wrote about Oden in late 2007 after he led a "Purity Siege" that ended up negatively impacting gay man James Stabile.

Oden and others appeared on *The 700 Club*, where they held Stabile up as an example of how someone could pray away the gay — even after they knew Stabile had renounced reparative ther-



apy and embraced his sexual orientation.

Not only is Oden the evangelism instructor at CFNI, but Stolte authored a blurb from the April 2012 edition of the Joe Oden Ministries newsletter.

"Joe has been training me by giving me the privilege to lead the evangelism team from (CFNI) Christ For the Nations Institute. This allows me to lead teams to Oak Lawn Ave (the homosexual district of Dallas) where we have seen amazing moves of the Holy Spirit," Stolte said. ■

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Lambda Legal invests in TX

LGBT civil-rights group hires 2nd attorney in Dallas-based South Central Region as fight for equality shifts to Heartland

WELL SCHOOLED | Paul Castillo, who recently joined Lambda Legal's Dallas office, is a veteran of the Department of

ANNA WAUGH | News Editor
waugh@dallasvoice.com

Attorney Paul Castillo isn't new to the legal fights surrounding civil rights issues, but now he'll be able to help fight for LGBT equality.

Castillo is the new addition to Lambda Legal's South Central Region headquarters in Dallas, giving the office two attorneys for the area that covers Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Louisiana, Arkansas, Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado.

Castillo, who started in July, said that while he's still getting a feel for the organization, he's excited about the future work he'll do.

"At this point, I'm getting my feet wet," he said about current projects. "I'm getting a feel for the organization and the region. ... I think it's a remarkable organization and I'm excited to be a part of it."

Ken Upton, senior supervising staff attorney in the Dallas office, has been the only attorney covering the region. He said balancing the workload for the region's eight states has been a challenge in the past and now Lambda's outreach can expand.

"It was just time," Upton said. "We see a lot of opportunity in the South Central Region and it all came together at a time when the board was will-

ing to put the resources into moving a lot of effort down into the Southern states."

Upton said Castillo will help the growing equality efforts in the South, especially in Texas where Attorney General Greg Abbott has continued to challenge LGBT rights from gay divorce to the recently passed nondiscrimination ordinance in San Antonio.

"This is a political system in Texas that is fighting back because I think it sees the writing on the wall and it feels threatened," Upton said. "I'm excited and I think you're going to see a lot of things happening in the next few years that are going to indicate a much higher level of engagement in this part of the country."

Castillo, a Texas native from El Paso, previously was a lawyer in private practice in Ohio and worked for the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, both in the Texas regional office and the office in Ohio. In his role he enforced federal civil rights statutes and ensured equal access to education for students. He even handled bullying and harassment complaints filed by LGBT students.

"It was a great experience and I'm very passionate about youth and certainly bullying and harassment of LGBT students and just students in general," Castillo said.

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partment of Education's Office of Civil Rights, where he dealt with anti-LGBT bullying cases. (Anna Waugh/Dallas Voice)

He said his work taught him that many parents lack information as far as where they can turn when their LGBT students are being bullied. And schools often lack knowledge or the information on their website on what students and parents should do.

Some of Castillo's cases enforced Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex.

When cases came in because a student was harassed for being gay, the law applied because while it didn't protect sexual orientation, it protected students based on the failure to conform to gender-based stereotypes.

Castillo said the cases led to the Texas Association of School Boards adding language to its model school policy, clarifying that Title IX protects a student's failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity. Many school districts adopted the language for the 2012-13 school year, when schools were already updating the state-mandated bullying policy.

"As a result of some of the settlement that we got from our cases, it just really sent a message to schools all over the country that they should take seriously complaints," Castillo said. "Just because a student is gay or is perceived as gay does not mean that [schools] don't also have potential fed-

eral obligations as well."

Castillo sees his new role at Lambda Legal as a way to create future change on behalf of the LGBT community and defend their civil rights in areas that aren't as progressive as other parts of the country.

"I think there are tremendous opportunities all across Southern states to engage and defend civil rights of all LGBT individuals, particularly in some of the areas where there are not laws to enforce, including areas such as employment, HIV and transgender issues," he said. "Lambda Legal plays a tremendous part in not only the court system, but also in terms of policymaking and cooperating with our legislators to kind of help guide them with respect to the laws that we've seen that are effective in other places."

After working for the federal government on civil rights enforcement, Castillo said he's learned that the fight for equality never ends no matter how far you've come, even with landmark U.S. Supreme Court rulings in June. But he's ready to help gain more ground in the fight.

"What I'm excited about is being a part of those changes and the changes that are to come," he said. "Even when we have laws in place, there will still be discrimination and there will be a need for people to fight for equality." ■



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COURTHOUSE WEDDING | Nikki Araguz plans to marry William Loyd after the hearing on Sept. 18. She announced the plans and introduced her new family this week that will include Charlotte, 9, and Cash, 8.

Court to hear trans widow's appeal

Nikki Araguz seeks to have marriage to late husband recognized in what advocate calls 'incredibly important' case for transgender equality

ANNA WAUGH | News Editor
waugh@dallasvoice.com

Transgender widow Nikki Araguz's battle to have her marriage recognized by the state in order to receive her late husband's death benefits is moving a step forward next week.

The 13th District Court of Appeals in Corpus Christi will hear her case on Sept. 18.

Araguz is appealing a 2011 ruling by Houston state district Judge Randy Clapp, who ruled that Araguz was born male and Texas' 2005 marriage amendment doesn't recognize her marriage to a man. Her 2008 marriage to her late husband, Thomas Araguz III, became invalid. Thomas Araguz was a volunteer firefighter in Wharton and was killed in the line of duty in 2010.

Thomas Araguz's ex-wife, Heather Delgado, then sued to have the marriage declared void so she would receive widow's benefits instead of

Nikki Araguz. Delgado claimed that she needed the benefits to provide for her two children with Thomas Araguz.

After next week's hearing, Araguz will marry fiancé William Loyd outside the courthouse to make the statement that if she can legally marry a man, her previous marriage should also be recognized by the state, according to a press release. Araguz did not return calls seeking comment.

Houston attorney Kent Rutter, the lead attorney for the appeal, said Texas law is on the side of Araguz.

Clapp's ruling hinged on the 1999 Texas Court of Appeals decision in Littleton v. Prange, which found that since a male who transitioned to female was born male, she was therefore still male. Her marriage to a male was therefore invalid because same-sex marriages are invalid under state law.

But Rutter said the Texas Legislature opened the door for transgender marriage in 2009 when it added documentation of a sex change to the identification documents people can present to obtain a marriage license. He said the 2009 statute voids the Littleton ruling.

"It is our belief that under the law of Texas, Nikki Araguz is a woman and she had a valid

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marriage to a man," Rutter said.

Transgender Houston lawyer Phyllis Frye said the Littleton ruling is problematic because it allows a trans woman who has had a sex change to marry another woman, which would be considered same-sex marriage. But because the ruling only recognizes the person's birth sex, it views the union as an opposite-sex marriage.

"In my opinion, the 1999 Littleton court was of a mindset that transsexuals are only male to female gay folks who will do anything to marry their queer men boyfriends," Frye said. "In other words, the Littleton court saw sex change surgery as being a queers' dodge to legalize their gay marriage."

In response to Araguz's case, a bill was introduced in the Texas Legislature in 2011 to ban transgender marriage. The bill would have removed proof of a sex change from the list of documents that can be used to obtain marriage licenses. A similar bill was introduced this year, but like the one from 2011, it never made it to the floor for a vote.

There is also the issue of Araguz's birth certificate.

Cristan Williams, director of Houston's Transgender Center, said the original ruling relied on Littleton and therefore Araguz's original birth certificate. Araguz was born in California and was originally listed as male on her birth certificate, but had it amended before her marriage to indicate that she is female.

Williams said Texas records keep an original birth certificate on file even if a new one is issued with changes, but California views some changes as mistakes and amends them, issuing a new original certificate. Therefore, Williams said Clapp should've recognized Araguz's original California birth certificate that listed her as female. She said the only original certificate that exists in California is the one listing Araguz as female.

Republican Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott has declined to weigh in on transgender marriage cases.

In 2010, the El Paso County clerk requested a ruling from Abbott about whether to grant a marriage license to a transgender woman and a cisgender woman. But Abbott opted not to weigh in, saying he would wait for court rulings in the Araguz case.

Abbott's decision has led transgender advocates, like Williams, to place their faith in a positive appeal ruling because of its wide-reaching significance.

"That means the result of the appeals court could affect the transition status of transgender people throughout the state of Texas," Williams said. "I think that this case is incredibly important not only to transgender people throughout Texas, but transgender people throughout the nation."

Rutter said after the hearing next week the court doesn't have a deadline to issue a ruling. He said Araguz's legal team will review the decision and could appeal to the Texas Supreme Court.

"It could be weeks, months or years," he said. "But I don't think it'll be years. We're more concerned with them getting this right than making a quick decision." ■

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Riding high

How Danielle Girdano's cross-country bike tour for equality led to a successful personal training business

PUMPED UP | Danielle Girdano didn't like the impersonal feel when she went to a trainer at a gym, so she empowers people to achieve goals with her mobile personal trainer business. (Anna Waugh/Dallas Voice)

ANNA WAUGH | News Editor
waugh@dallasvoice.com

Like anyone who's struggled with weight loss, Danielle Girdano has a personal story of how she took off the pounds.

But unlike most people, Girdano tied her weight loss goal to biking 6,400 miles cross-country to raise awareness for LGBT teen suicide and marriage equality in 2010.

In 2008, Girdano was morbidly obese and joined a gym to get healthy. She set up a fitness assessment test with one of the gym's personal trainers, who ended up telling her she had a long way

to go and made her feel inferior in the large gym setting.

"It's something that has always stuck with me," she said.

So she began taking a cycling class to shed the weight. And in 2009 she approached her cycling coach about biking across the country and doing it for LGBT rights, mainly the high suicide rates among youth and marriage equality.

"He almost tried to talk me out of it," Girdano recalled. "I started very aggressive training."

The route she chose was among the most difficult, with only two people having completed it before, one in the spring and one in the fall. So she

chose to embark on the journey in summer, taking off at the tip of Canada in early August and reaching Dallas in September in time to lead the Dallas Pride parade that weekend.

"I knew that I wanted to do something as difficult as I could find because I wanted to mirror the struggle of the community," she said.

Along the way, she added stops to little towns and universities to share the story behind her journey and the fight for LGBT equality. But the trip had many obstacles. While biking through the Ozarks, Girdano wiped out and dislocated her hip and shoulder, but she carried on.

"All I kept thinking was, I can't not finish this,"

she said.

Throughout the 6,400 miles, the heat and the exhaustion, Girdano said she kept thinking about her own struggle growing up gay, how isolated she felt and her suicide attempts.

And how she never wanted other LGBT youth to feel that way.

"That's what drove me," she said. "I think it made me feel like I was doing something."

Girdano was running on a treadmill when June's U.S. Supreme Court rulings on marriage equality came down. She said she heard the news and started crying, thinking that her Ride the Arc journey had a small part in the victory.



"There was a really small part of me that felt like I did something to help that," she said.

After the ride ended in September 2010, Girdano decided to make fitness her career. She became certified as a personal trainer and started training people out of the back of her car.

She launched D'fine Sculpting & Nutrition LLC in 2011 and still attributes Ride the Arc to her branching out and starting her business.

D'fine's focus is on personal training in areas of weight loss, nutrition, and strength and endurance. Her mobile trainers specialize in various areas from childhood obesity and diabetic weight management to pregnancy and senior fitness.

Girdano said her company uses mathematical concepts for programs that focus on body composition, not Body Mass Index, which she called outdated and misleading since its creation in the 1800s and is too focused on pounds.

But D'fine is also about empowerment as much as it's about weight loss and weight management. Girdano has always remembered how she was treated by the personal trainer years ago when she joined a gym. And she wants her clients to feel appreciated and encouraged that they can do anything.

Last year she helped oversee a five-week challenge that brought five obese participants together, each with different physical limitations, and helped them train to complete a 5K after the five weeks.

She also launched a corporate wellness program that focuses on a fitness, nutrition and work life balance.

It's the first of its kind in the nation and has won acclaim from leading fitness experts. Girdano has expanded her business to Atlanta and Chicago. Her next expansion would likely be in Texas, mainly Houston, but not until 2015.

Girdano is one of 12 worldwide professionals that sits on the prestigious Personal Training Advisory Board for The Cooper Institute in Dallas. She also serves as fitness adviser for Synergy Worldwide based in Utah.

Her programs won her a spot in the Dallas Business Journal's 2013 40 Under 40, which recognizes top business leaders in their fields. She was also nominated for the 2013 Chicago Innovation Awards.

"It means a great deal because it's recognition by other business leaders," Girdano said about the DBJ's recognition. "It's also people saying this program returns your money."

Amid busy days running her company, Girdano still thinks about the days she spent biking across the country and educating people about LGBT issues. She said she's thought of doing another ride in the future and would use it to bring attention to transgender issues.

"There are still areas like the great state of Texas that are still lagging," she said. "Maybe it takes someone riding through West Texas to change it."

"Let's get it on the calendar and start fundraising," she added. "If someone is ready to do it with me, I'm ready to get it on the calendar, because I know it changed lives."

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Abbott to sue to block LGBT protections

Texas AG responds to passage of nondiscrimination ordinance in San Antonio, but it's unclear if laws in Dallas, Fort Worth will be included

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

If the city of Dallas has to defend its local nondiscrimination ordinance against a lawsuit brought by Attorney General Greg Abbott, Councilman Philip Kingston said he's only one voice in 15, but thinks there's strong support for it among council members.

"I would hope he wouldn't waste public funds on such a quixotic pursuit," Kingston said, "but if he does, bring it on."

Kingston, an attorney, said a nondiscrimination ordinance doesn't conflict with the First Amendment as Abbott claims and the First Amendment doesn't give you a right to discriminate based on religious freedom.

After San Antonio passed a nondiscrimination

ordinance that extended protection based on veteran's status, sexual orientation and gender identity, Abbott told radio station 1200 WOAI-AM he would file a suit to stop it from going into effect.

A spokesman for Abbott's office declined further comment. When Abbott spoke to San Antonio's WOAI, he said a suit could come as early as this week.

"There is a provision in here, that seems to silence anyone who may have a disagreement with that ordinance," Abbott told the station. "I believe that violates the First Amendment protections of freedom of speech and freedom of religion, and violates the Texas Constitution."

Abbott wasn't clear if he would include Dallas and Fort Worth, which both have similar ordinances in place, in a potential lawsuit.

Fort Worth city spokesman Bill Begley said officials haven't been contacted about any possible inclusion in a lawsuit and couldn't comment what action his city would take.

But Begley stood behind Fort Worth's nondiscrimination ordinance.

"We've done what we've done because it's in the best interests of our residents," he said.



Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott

Sarah Warbelow, the Human Rights Campaign's state legislative director, said she knows of just one other instance of an attorney general interfering in a local nondiscrimination ordinance. That was in Arlington, Va.

"Virginia has strong laws about state control across the board," she said, adding that the state

law used to block the local nondiscrimination ordinance has been used to limit the power of local government on a variety of issues.

Warbelow also said Abbott may be confusing state laws banning same-sex marriage with nondiscrimination ordinances. Three states — Colorado, Wisconsin and Nevada — have both bans on same-sex marriage and statewide nondiscrimination laws protecting people based on sexual orientation.

She said courts have consistently found that state laws protecting people based on sexual orientation do not violate protections of religious freedom.

"He's of the belief that personal religious beliefs can trump state and local nondiscrimination law," she said. "Thus far, no court has held that to be true."

Warbelow said that was tested in the 1940s, '50s and '60s — when people with businesses claimed civil rights laws infringed on their religious beliefs opposing interracial and interfaith marriages.

More recently, an attack on local nondiscrimination ordinances came from a state Legislature.

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dinance in 2011, the Tennessee Legislature countered by passing a bill outlawing local LGBT protections.

Since then, the state law has been in court and three additional jurisdictions have passed nondiscrimination ordinances — Knoxville and Memphis in 2012 and Knox County, which includes Knoxville, in 2013.

Warbelow said at least half a dozen states have introduced similar attempts to ban local nondiscrimination ordinances, but none has been successful.

Marisa Richmond, secretary of the National Center for Transgender Equality and a lobbyist for the Tennessee Transgender Political Coalition, called the Tennessee bill “a violation of the First Amendment right to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

Unlike Virginia’s laws dating to the 1860s that limit local power, she called the Tennessee law retrospective, because it passed a month after the Nashville ordinance.

“It impairs the right of all local governments, as well as the people in those communities, to draw up contracts based on taxpayer money,” she said.

The LGBT community lost in the first round in Davidson County Chancery Court. The judge insisted the plaintiffs demonstrate injury.

“Fortunately, the Tennessee Court of Appeals overruled her on that point and ordered her to consider our case,” she said.

Attorneys have filed amended motions and the case awaits another hearing.

For now, Abbott’s threat to file a suit against San Antonio and possibly other cities with nondiscrimination ordinances remains just that — a threat.

Lambda Legal Supervising Senior Staff Attorney Ken Upton said he isn’t sure what basis Abbott would have for a suit.

He said one section of the ordinance relating to bias speech by a public official acting in an official capacity may be a free speech issue. Abbott referred to the Supremacy Clause giving state law precedence over local law, but no state law limits protection of civil rights in housing, employment and public accommodation.

“This attorney general thinks that marriage amendment is his trump card to do anything he wants to the gay community,” Upton said.

When other states have tried to limit progressive localities, they’ve failed. Upton cited *Romer v. Evans*, a Colorado case that threw out a state constitutional amendment preventing protected status for gays and lesbians because it did not pass the rational basis test.

“I suspect he’ll file something,” Upton said. “It’s part of his running for governor.”

Equality Texas Executive Director Chuck Smith also called Abbott’s threat “pure campaign rhetoric and pandering.”


He noted that Diego Bernal, author of the San Antonio ordinance, is a civil rights attorney and had confidence that should there be a challenge to the law, it will stand up in court. Arguing for the right to discriminate would be difficult in any court, Smith said. ■

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Robert Garner (right) of Dallas and Fernando Arias (left) of Mexico City will get married in Mexico City on October 16th, 2013 in a private ceremony. The marriage will be celebrated with invited guests at Bellini Restaurant at The World Trade Center in Mexico City on October 19th, 2013. Robert and Fernando met in 2011 and fell instantly in love. After the wedding Robert and Fernando will reside in Dallas. Robert is a Learning Specialist with Sunglass Hut and Fernando is an Accounts Analyst with GE.

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Signs your child is being bullied:

- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed personal items
- Frequent body aches or fake illness
- Changed eating habits
- Trouble sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in school, or not wanting to go to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home or talking about harming themselves

Signs your child may be bullying:

- Gets into physical or verbal fights
- Has friends who bully others
- Increasingly aggressiveness
- Gets sent to the principal’s office or to detention frequently
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- Blames others for their problems
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- Heightened competitiveness and worry about their reputation or popularity



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Susan E. Lopez-Craig, left, and John McCall Jr.

Gay candidates running for constable, justice of the peace in Dallas Co.

DISD officer Susan Craig to take on Beth Villarreal for Precinct 5 seat, while attorney John McCall aims to follow in his father's footsteps

ANNA WAUGH | News Editor
waugh@dallasvoice.com

The 2014 election season is upon us, and that means LGBT candidates are launching bids for Dallas County offices.

Susan E. Lopez-Craig, a longtime police officer, is hoping to oust Democratic incumbent Precinct 5 Constable Beth Villarreal. So far, three candidates have lined up to challenge Villarreal in the primary.

Villarreal, a former volunteer police officer from the small Ellis County town of Italy, won the LGBT vote in 2010. The precinct includes the city's most heavily LGBT neighborhoods in Oak Cliff and Oak Lawn. But Lopez-Craig said the office has failed to engage the community under Villarreal's leadership.

"When you're a public servant, you have to reach out to people and see what they want and that's what I'm going to do for the community,"

she said. "I want to reopen the door to the community. They were shut pretty tight the last six months to a year."

Precinct 5, once represented by openly gay Constable Mike Dupree, has seen its share of controversy.

Dupree resigned as part of a settlement agreement with Dallas County and the Texas Attorney General's office to avoid a trial to remove him from office on allegations of official misconduct and incompetence. Villarreal replaced Jaime Cortes, who faced a wide-ranging investigation and forced removal from office by jury trial. He resigned after losing to Villarreal in the Democratic Primary.

Lopez-Craig, 56, got her start in law enforcement late in life, deciding to attend the police academy at the age of 40.

She'd previously worked security for the women's pro tennis tour.

"I've always wanted to be a police officer and just delayed it," she said.

She went to work for the police department in Lavon, a small town near Wylie in Collin County.

"Not a lot of places wanted to hire a 40-year-old rookie," she said.

After a few years, she took a job as a deputy constable with the county under a grant. When



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the grant wasn't renewed a year later, she went to work for Dallas Area Rapid Transit for almost eight years.

DART fired her in 2007 after fellow officers claimed she faked an injury to her right eye. DART referred her case to the Dallas County District Attorney's Office, which resulted in Lopez-Craig being indicted on three charges, including falsifying a document and tampering with evidence. She was tried in 2009 on the tampering charge and acquitted.

Lopez-Craig wouldn't discuss her termination, but said her time at DART was difficult.

"I had a hard time over there," she said.

She said she was the agency's first openly gay officer when she came on in 2000 and later helped other officers be comfortable being out and open on the job.

After leaving DART, she said she went back to the county working as a truancy officer. She now works for Dallas Independent School District as a campus security officer.

While she likes working for DISD, and has organized a school supplies drive for the past decade, she said she wants to make more of an impact in office.

"I love working with kids. I like being a mentor to them," she said. "It's time for Precinct 5 to get back to work. The Dallas community deserves better."

Lopez-Craig said she plans to seek an endorsement from the Washington, D.C.-based Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, a political action committee that supports out candidates.

While Lopez-Craig seeks the Precinct 5 constable seat, two LGBT candidates have lined up to run for justice of the peace for Place 1, Precinct 5, which also covers Oak Cliff and Oak Lawn.

Gay Dallas attorney John McCall Jr. has been practicing law for 10 years and said he thinks his experience is right for the job. He also said he wants to follow in the footsteps of his father, who was a county judge.

"I've always wanted to follow in my father's footsteps, and you pick an election you think you're qualified and can win," McCall said.

It's an open seat with no incumbent, so McCall said it's an "open game for all the candidates," with several already lined up. The court handles evictions, which McCall said he does every month.


"I'm probably the most experienced out of the candidates so far for this position," he said. "I feel I have the best chance of taking over this position."

Sara Martinez, an out lesbian public defender, is also running for the position. She couldn't immediately be reached for comment.

Omar Narvaez, president of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas, said this is the first time openly gay candidates have run for justice of the peace.

"This would be the first that I know of or have heard of that a candidate for justice of the peace would be running openly gay," he said.

Openly gay Dallas County officials include Sheriff Lupe Valdez, District Clerk Gary Fitzsimmons, who is not running for re-election next year, and Judge Tonya Parker. ■



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Randy Pauer, left, and Jean Paul Baert

Long-distance binational couple marks 10 years

Randy Pauer of Dallas and Jean Paul Baert, who met in Barcelona, may accelerate wedding plans in wake of high court's DOMA ruling

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Randy Pauer was in the Antoni Gaudi-designed La Pedrera Museum in Barcelona when he spotted Jean Paul Baert.

"I introduced myself," he said.

They spoke for just 10 minutes because Pauer's cruise was leaving, but took pictures and Pauer handed Baert a business card.

A month later Baert wrote a letter to Pauer that began, "You might not remember me ..."

Pauer wrote back asking for Baert's phone number. When he got it, they spoke for hours.

This month marks 10 years since the couple met in Barcelona.

Since then, the couple has gotten together four times a year for two to three weeks at a time.

Pauer lives in Dallas. Baert lives in Oudenaarde, a Flemish town in Belgium about 40 miles from Brussels.

Since the Supreme Court ruling declaring parts of the Defense of Marriage Act unconstitutional, the couple is re-evaluating their relationship and deciding when they should marry.

Pauer is retired from SAS Airlines. After retiring, he started a travel agency specializing in cruises and has sailed 55 himself.

Baert is a manager for a postal bank in Belgium and has six years until retirement. By the time he retires, he said he expects they'll be married and will keep their residences in both countries.

But if Pauer was planning to avoid Texas summers at their house in Belgium, Baert has other ideas.

"He's 5-foot-4, 117 pounds and cold all the time," Pauer said. "It's so damn cold in Belgium. He loves the heat here."

Baert said the key to a long-distance relationship is honesty.

"We trust each other," he said. "We're honest with each other and tell each other everything that happens in our lives."

Pauer said they speak on the phone every day but still get lonely.

Belgium recognized same-sex marriage in 2003, a year before Canada legalized it nationwide. Despite that, the couple hasn't married yet.

Pauer explained that even though they see each

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other for weeks at a time, they've really only been together on vacation.

"We kind of want to live together first for a few months," Pauer said. "We've never done that."

But with the Supreme Court ruling and new benefits associated with it, Baert was considering pushing up the timetable. With marriage, the non-resident half of a binational couple may apply for a green card. That would facilitate their travel together.

During each trip, the couple has traveled. Pauer said he's seen about every European capital. The only capital Pauer doesn't love visiting in Europe is Brussels, less than 50 miles from Baert's home.

"It's the only place I've ever been robbed," Pauer said.

Baert probably has seen more sites in Dallas than most natives. His visits to the U.S. have included side trips to cities across the country from New York to San Francisco and cruises to Alaska and Hawaii.

Pauer said he loves Baert's large family that is very close. Baert's brothers and sisters are his best friends.

"Most of his family members speak English well," he said.

And Baert took classes to improve his English after the couple met. When he wrote that first letter to Pauer, he said he used a dictionary.

That contrasts with Pauer's family. He called his only brother "a born-again Christian" but said

he has a large circle of friends.

Adjusting to some of the cultural differences has been part of the fun in their relationship.

"They'd never do dinner and a movie in the same night," Pauer said. "And for your birthday, you take everyone else out."

He said Belgians are more conservative. Not socially — same-sex marriage was not controversial and socialized medicine is a way of life. But personally.

"They respect personal information," Pauer said.

He said he gets an elbow in the ribs when he's asked a question considered too personal. If someone said they were sick, he said, you'd never ask what's wrong.

For their 10th anniversary, the couple is traveling to Ireland and touring the countryside.

On his next trip to the U.S., Baert said they'd probably talk to an attorney to decide if there was an advantage to marrying sooner, if where they married mattered and how it would affect any of their benefits.

Pauer said many people romanticize their long-distance relationship.

"The commute sucks," he said.

He said they grow closer every time they get together. Little things that bother him when he's alone don't seem to matter when they're together.

"When you love someone, you make due," he said. ■

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viewpoints

Crossing a rainbow bridge

After I discussed LGBT issues with my parents as my father lay on his deathbed, my rainbow family of choice helped see me through

I planned to write a column this Pride weekend reflecting on the progress we've made as members of the North Texas LGBTQ community since September 2012. But, as sometimes happens, life gets in the way.

On Sept. 1, my father died after a short stay in hospice. He was 86 years, eight months and just over six days old when an infection, blood clot or who-knows-what killed him. Dad met my mother in the Eisenhower era, when automobiles had fins and being "LGBTQ out and proud" was extremely risky. Remember, this generation thought Liberace was straight.

I came out to my parents at our family's last major funeral, in May 1996. My grandmother — my mom's mother — passed on, and Mom and I were driving back from finalizing the burial arrangements. Mom was going on and on about the things my grandmother would never see me do — among them "marrying the girl of my dreams." Something inside me snapped then, and I told my mother "that's never going to happen, because I'm gay." Her re-

sponse? "Well, I knew that." Mom told Dad I was gay that evening.

Unless you are writing the next great Southern Gothic novel or play, don't come out to your family as part of funeral preparations. Please pick another time.

You might think that somebody like me, who is so out and visible, would have model PFLAG parents. Well, no. Most of my time at the Resource Center, it's been "don't ask, don't tell" when it comes to the work I do, who I'm dating and the like. Occasionally, there'd be questions when I'd pop up in the newspaper or on TV. In

March 2012, dad was in the hospital for an angiogram. Days earlier, I was interviewed about a local pro sports team owner who'd made an ill-advised gay joke for which the team owner apologized. Dad's words to me: "I saw you on TV the other day. You were taking about Mr. (sports owner). I think he's a jackass."

Two days before Dad entered hospice, he and I sat in his ICU room. Dad asked what my schedule was that week. I told him I was going the next day to a DART meeting where

I'd arranged speakers in support of plus-one health benefits. He mentioned seeing a news story in April when a protest interrupted the meeting. I added I was volunteering at a fundraising event on Thursday as part of a club I joined. Dad looked at me, and said: "You do

good work. I expect you to keep your schedule this week." I took that as an order from him, so I did.

Friday, in hospice, Dad was in and out of consciousness. Mom and I sat with him, chatting. Then out of the blue, she said: "Your father and I have a question for you. We saw the news stories about that Supreme Court case in June, and there were a whole bunch of rainbow flags. What do they mean?" So I explained, and that led to a discussion about employment nondiscrimination, healthcare coverage, hospital visitation, bullying and a variety of other LGBTQ issues.

And, when Dad died two days later, it was my fabulous, diverse LGBTQ rainbow family-of-choice that held me up. They reached out and checked in again and again to make sure my birth family and I were OK, and attended both Dad's rosary and funeral. In fact, four of Dad's six funeral pallbearers are members of the Dallas Bears. None were struck by lightning inside St. Patrick's Cathedral.

I'm fortunate to have a strong family (my siblings and their spouses have long been allies) and supportive friends. Not everybody has that network.

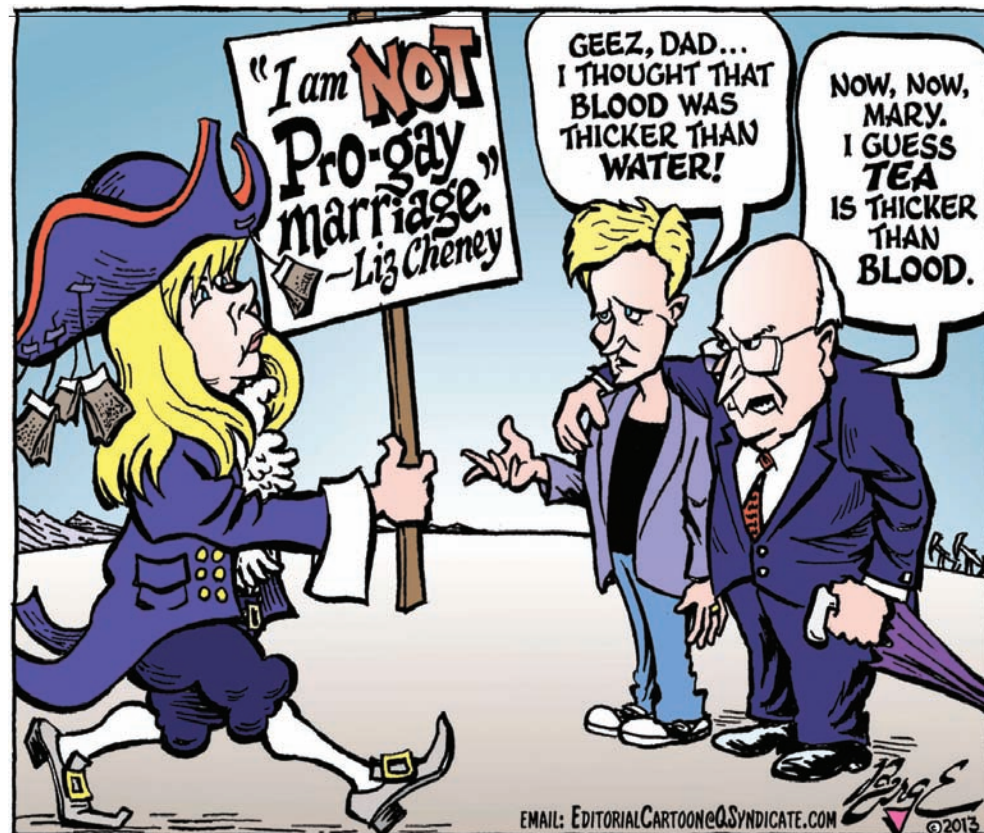
For example, 40 percent of youth living on the streets identify as LGBTQ, disowned and discarded by their families. There are untold others who've lost support — and in some cases careers and homes — when they finally identify as who they are or who they love. Some of them may be reading this column.

So, this weekend, I'm looking to the future. I want Mom to meet as many members of my rainbow family-of-choice as she can. I hope they will love her as much as I love and respect them. And maybe, someday soon, Mom will see me marry the man of my dreams here in Texas. Happy Dallas Pride.

Rafael McDonnell is communications and advocacy manager, Resource Center. He can be reached at RMcDonnell@rcdallas.org.



Rafael McDonnell
Contributing Columnist



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Time for Dallas to take back Pride

As the Alan Ross Freedom Parade approaches, I have to wonder why we do it. As most folks know, I am a big supporter of the idea of a Pride parade. I think these events help solidify our communities and put a face on us for the “muggles.” Because of that, there has always been pressure on participants to “tone down” the “gayness” for the general public. That has been true since the first parades here in Dallas.

Folks who adhere to this assimilationist philosophy have always been appalled by the drag queens, dancers and leathermen who appeared in the parades, primarily because the press tended to focus on the most visual aspects of the event. You can't get more visual than drag queens and leathermen, and of course the buff twink dancers who adorn the floats for the multitude of bars and clubs that sponsor the parades.

Personally, I feel these participants express our unique style while affirming our sex-positive attitudes. That is a big part of gay culture, and it has always been a driving force in our lives. Our sexuality is one of the biggest things that sets us apart. Fast forward to today.

The current manifestation of the Pride parade has decided to be “family friendly,” which means less skin, less of anything that might hint of sexuality. What the hell?

Take away our sexuality and we are just straight people who hold hands with the same sex. I don't advocate public sex or anything like that, but to have to “clean up” because there might be straight families watching is wrong. We are different.



Hardy Haberman
Flagging Left

We do indeed have a culture forged in oppression and refined in the few public events when we can be open and joyous. Now, the assimilationists insist we tone down and throw away all our joyous sexiness. They insist we cloak our skin in the mundane trappings of the heteronormative world. Why? To do that turns the Pride parade into a We-Are-Ashamed parade, and I refuse to be part of that.

Look back at the origins of the event. What happened at Stonewall was not a bunch of folks wanting to fit in; it was a bunch of radical queens and twinks and gay men and dykes who were sick and tired of being oppressed and denied the right to be who they were.

It is a travesty that the spirit of Stonewall is now completely lost in the corporate sponsorships and marketing opportunities the parade and “festival” now offer. It used to be a march and rally!

Now, I am not advocating anything more than



POLICY BRIEFS | Participants don underwear in the 2012 Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade. This year, organizers are encouraging them to wear shorts instead. Those who don't comply with the new dress code won't be allowed on the parade route and could receive criminal citations. (Chuck Marcelo/Dallas Voice)

allowing our community its moment in the sun, or rain, without having to hide. We have hidden for far too long. If we had kept hiding, we would still have no rights whatsoever. If the LGBT folks at the Stonewall Inn had hidden instead of resisting and rebelling, we would have no parade at all, and probably fewer rights.

I say this while living in a state where I am still a second-class citizen, and though Lawrence v. Texas overturned the “sodomy” law, I still can't marry my partner of 18 years or share many of the more than 1,000 rights the straight population has. Perhaps we need to be more visible than ever in times like these! We should be dancing and strutting and celebrating our differences, not hiding in plain sight. We need to let people know we are here.

I heard it said once that if all LGBTQ people were purple, we would have had equal rights long ago. We would no longer be an invisible minority and as such we would be harder to ignore.

So it is in that spirit I firmly believe we should be visible and proud and FABULOUS. We should be wearing our leather, our feathers, our rhinestones and our skin, as far as is legal on the street. And no, I don't have a body I display on a float. People would be horrified at the stretch marks and varicose veins. Still, I really resent having to tell the youthful and proud men and women who want to strut their stuff to cover up and tone it down.

That is why a small determined group of activists is going to take gay Pride back. Next June 28 is the 45th anniversary of Stonewall, and if the planets align and plans go well, there will be a cel-

ebratory walk-march-dance in Dallas to commemorate it.

There will be no corporate sponsors, no viewing stands, no floats, no marching bands — just us queers and queens and Leathermen and leatherdykes and drag kings out in all our visible and proud regalia.

So, this weekend, have fun at the family-friendly parade of people who look pretty much like everyone else and pay the \$5 to get into the outdoor bar with a kids' area and enjoy watching them play while you get drunk.

If that isn't an image of the heteronormative world, I don't know what is!

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



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About those 'new rules' for Dallas Pride

Some members of our community have expressed concerns regarding what has been perceived as new rules for participants in the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade.

As one of the police operations commanders responsible for coordinating and supervising all of the police officers who will be working the parade, I am in a position to help eliminate any misunderstandings and fears that some may have within our community.

First, there are no new laws or rules for this year's pride festivities. All of the laws and rules that govern the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade, Festival in Lee Park and other events held in our community have been in place for many years.

My announcement at the parade entry meeting a few weeks ago was simply a reminder of what the expectations have been for years, along with the potential consequences for violations of those rules. As our events continue to grow, we work to take proactive measures to prevent problems so enforcement actions are not required.

While permits are issued from the city of Dallas so that the streets can be closed for our celebrations and special events, those permits do not allow us to violate the laws of the state of Texas. That said,

here are some of the laws that we would like Pride participants and spectators to be mindful of and abide by so that we can continue to have LGBT special events with as few enforcement actions as possible:

- Public Intoxication — Anybody who is in a public place while intoxicated to the degree that they may endanger themselves or another person can be arrested and charged with a Class C misdemeanor.

- Furnishing Alcohol to a Minor — With few exceptions, any adult who purchases for or gives an alcoholic beverage to somebody under 21 can be arrested and charged with a Class A misdemeanor.

- Disorderly Conduct (Exposure) — Anybody who intentionally or knowingly exposes their anus or genitals in a public place can be arrested and charged with a Class C misdemeanor.

- Indecent Exposure — Anybody who exposes their anus or any part of their genitals in a public place with the intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person can be arrested and charged

with a Class B misdemeanor. This offense may be enhanced to a third-degree Felony if a child younger than 17 is present.

- Public Lewdness — Anybody who engages in sexual acts or sexual contact in a public place can be arrested and charged with a Class A misdemeanor. Sexual contact includes any touching of the anus, breast, or any part of the genitals of another person with the intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person. This offense may be enhanced to a third-degree felony if a child younger than 17 is present.

The LGBT community — our community — has come a long way since the Stonewall Rebellion and other keystone events in our march toward full equality. I say our community because this is my community as well. The people I met in my first trips to Cedar Springs helped give me the strength to come out to my family. I was on Cedar Springs when Sgt. Lynne Albright (ret.) recruited me to the law enforcement profession in 2001. Since then, I have developed a great sense of Pride in serving

our community as an openly gay police commander for events including the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade, Halloween Street Party, Razzle Dazzle Dallas, Easter in the Park and LifeWalk.

This weekend will be the 11th year I have worked the parade in uniform and the seventh year that I have served as one of the police operations commanders. To me, this weekend's festivities are about having pride in how far we have come as a community and Pride in the many battles won by and for our lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender brothers and sisters. Pride allows us to show those who are bullied and tormented that there is hope and it does get better. Pride also allows us to renew and reenergize our spirits for the battles that we have ahead of us in seeking full equality for every member of the LGBT community.

I will be there from 7 a.m. until 10 p.m. so that I can have Pride and help ensure that we can all have Pride. I also want to see all of us go home safely — because we have a lot of work to do and continue come Monday morning to continue to push our community forward. See you there! ■

Jeremy Liebbe is a detective sergeant for DISD and police operations commander for Dallas Pride.



Jeremy Liebbe
Special Contributor

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Coming out as trans at my 30th high school reunion

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Sophia Featherwind will attend her 30th high school class reunion in Azle on Sept. 21. She will share her experiences in an upcoming edition of Dallas Voice.*

I'm coming home — or rather, I am returning home — for my 30th high school class reunion in the sleepy town of Azle, Texas. I'm not even planning to stay more than three days this time, long enough to visit with my ex, my youngest daughter and my mother, before making my appearance at the reunion at the local VFW and flying back to Salt Lake City.

Most of my friends and I agreed three decades ago that this rural town without even a movie theater to its name (unless you count the X-rated drive-in that shut down before I was old enough to attend) was a place it was better to be from — as in leaving in lieu of claiming.

I really don't know what to expect from the denizens of this town, classmates who I left behind in more ways than one. The last reunion I attended was a band reunion, and I felt so utterly outcast and alone that I had to leave before people could see me cry. My 20-year reunion was no picnic, either. While I was friends with the cheerleaders in high school, I really couldn't identify with slide

shows depicting their first years with the jocks after high school.

My friends, the outcasts, were never depicted in any of the footage; but then again we left when we could. Of the class of 252, only a couple of people I knew were there.

One of them was so incredibly inspired by my faith in high school that he became a Baptist missionary. I didn't dare tell him that my religion had let me down, that it was one of the forces that trapped me into living as a man, when I craved daily for just a taste of what it was to be a woman.

Again, I felt outcast, the outsider, as I always had, since I moved to that town when I was 12 years old, and my mind and body started getting into a heated debate. I vowed that there was nothing there for me, only a sense of non-belonging, and I decided I would never return.

Are they going to make me wear my senior yearbook photo with my name emblazoned on it? I looked 12 in that photo, and I have changed a lot since then. I laugh.

I am probably the most changed person of the

class of '83, having completely changed my gender. How's that for a category to win?

At least I retained my hair, and kept the fat from taking over my belly and thighs. Long locks of strawberry-blond hair down to my breasts, and almost three years of hundreds of hours of belly-dancing to stay in shape.

At 5' 11", I will not be able to hide. Will they approach me to ask me questions, or will I have the cold shoulder typically reserved for outsiders? How welcoming is my homecoming going to be?

Already, friends I have reconnected with through Facebook without explanation have started to ask, "Did I know you as insert-male-name-here?" And I usually reply with yes, you did.

I only know of a couple of people who have come out of the closet besides me, and they came out as gay some years ago, when they could safely get away, including my friend John. I am worried that I will have lost some of my church friends for doing the unthinkable, changing what God gave me.

And how could I feel such anxiety? I came out

to the entire Salt Lake City belly dance community on stage to a piece of poetry that I wrote.

I sacrificed being stealth on the altar of education, and instead of losing friends, they cried, and demanded that I return to the stage again and again to tell my story poetically. Maybe I can leave them crying instead of judgmental. I simply want to reconnect with my friends, to see them again, to let them know me as the person I was meant to be.

Revealing my past is hard. It colors conversations in ways that a normal woman doesn't have to deal with, and I am automatically pre-labeled and pre-judged. I suddenly am asked which pronoun I prefer and become the local transgender expert to turn to for all issues.

Coming out is hard, and I find myself doing it over and over again. But coming out can also be an art, finding ways to break stereotypes so the next generation never has to be prejudged by them.

I am always praying and hoping that I will get a chance for someone to love me as the woman I am, before they find out about the man I was. I won't have that chance with the Azle High School Class of '83.



Sophia Featherwind
Special contributor

■ TRANS, Next Page

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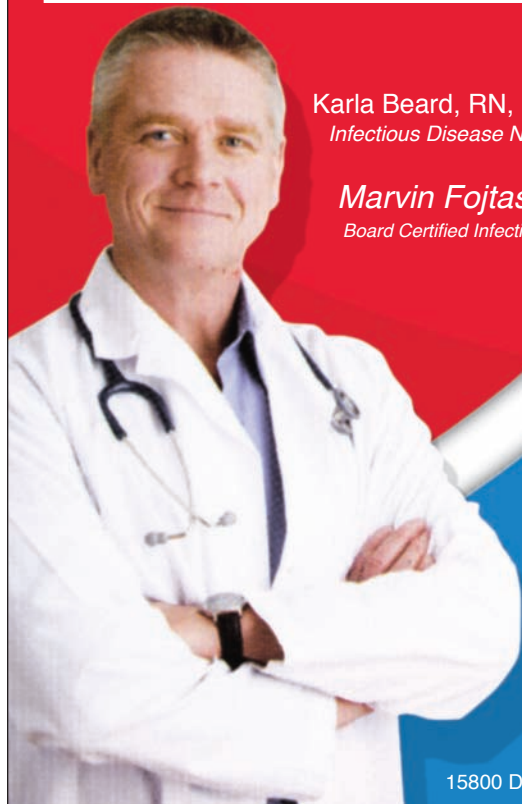


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viewpoints

Waiting for a great lesbian film

Now that the excitement of the DOMA case has mellowed, my thoughts have turned to the second most important LGBT pride moment of my life: the release of *Desert Hearts* at my local movie theater in 1985.

I'd never seen so many lesbians standing in one line as there were that night, buying tickets because they'd all heard that a real lesbian movie was here at last. What I mean by a "real lesbian movie" is: There were no vampires, no suicides, no one running back to men, and no psychopaths in the movie. Up until then, that's pretty much what you got if you wanted to see a movie with a bit of lesbian in it.

A simple, stylized and otherwise unremarkable film, *Desert Hearts* hit it out of the park with every lesbian I knew because the romantic leads were likeable and they stayed together in the end. Years later, one of the actresses, Helen Shaver, remarked that she will never have to fear becoming homeless, as there are thousands of grateful lesbians who would happily take her in.

In fairness, two years earlier the gentle and cerebral lesbian-themed film, *Lianna*, beat *Desert Hearts* to the punch by two years, but that film suffered from one key problem: Director John Sayles, a straight man, bent over backwards to be sensitive to lesbians, right down to the gauze over the lens during the sex scenes. At least it was a click up on the passion meter from 1980's *Personal Best*, which presented lesbian intimacy as nothing more than a naked tickle game (and especially notable for Mariel Hemingway's whining), so I applaud Sayles for the effort.

By contrast, *Desert Hearts* was made by a lesbian, and captured a certain lesbian sensibility, humor and even some sweaty sex. What a revelation. Thus began the golden age of lesbian cinema.

I'm sorry. I meant to say, thus began a random trickle of cringe-worthy lesbian indie films, and the occasionally redeeming art-house flick. It seemed that ever after, most so-called "lesbian films" functioned as a kind of home-made therapy device, typically telling coming out stories with such heavy-handed earnestness that all irony got smothered with a lavender pillow, leaving

only two-dimensional fantasy versions of lesbian lives. I mean, how many esteemed closet-case professors can there be out there just waiting for a sexy, brilliant free-spirit to pull them out of their ivory towers?

For many years I dutifully saw each new lesbian flick, hoping for something fresh and challenging, and then nearly always forgot the film moments after tossing my popcorn tub into the trash. Don't even get me started on *Clare of the Moon*.

Today I watched a 2013 Outfest film called, *Who's Afraid of Vagina Wolf* [sic]. I can't say it was bad, because it had cool lines like this: "I don't like improvisation. It's like leaving an open window into your soul and all the little squirrels can crawl

in and raid your panties." At least there's some room for edginess in lesbian cinema now. That's an improvement. But I was still too aware of a self-conscious "Hey kids, let's make a movie!" quality throughout, which was unfortunate, as the film is about a bunch of people doing just that.

I want a lot more after all this time, which may just be too bad for me. In another unwittingly apt line from *Vagina Wolf*, a film producer quips, "Gays and lesbians have the same s%#tty taste as everybody else."

Movies rarely equal art. Back in '85, I was a newly out baby dyke and desperate to see my most ridiculous lesbian romance fantasies projected on a big movie. I must have seen *Desert Hearts* five times the week it came out, but frankly it wasn't a great film.

I didn't care, because how could I resist an escapist romp with a sexy ingénue who enters the film driving backwards in a convertible, full-speed, to say hello to the brilliant female professor that's just come to town?

Carry on, all you makers of "lesbian films." There's always going to be an appreciative lesbian audience, but can you aim high every now and then? ■

Abby is a civil rights attorney-turned-author who has been in the LGBT rights trenches for 25+ years. She can be reached through her website: queerquestion-sstraighttalk.com.



Abby Dees
Contributing Columnist

■ TRANS, From Previous Page

They've never seen me as a woman, never known I craved it the whole time I was among them for those six years. The only people who know are my Facebook friends, one of whom, John, made sure I got an invite.

I don't know how I will be treated when I walk into the VFW. I am hoping with intense curiosity and congratulations on finally becoming myself. I don't know if I have the skin to handle ridicule, and if it did happen, I'm hoping my friends would be there to support me, as I would do for them.

So when it's all over and done with and I leave for my hotel room, will I leave with tears of rejection or will I leave with tears of acceptance and belonging? Needless to say, there will be tears, and they will be mine. ■

Sofia Featherwind, author of Freeing Hummingbirds: How I Learned to Embrace Myself, is a veteran, software engineer, aspiring belly dancer and performing poet. She is also an advocate for LGBT rights and trans-awareness, as well as the founder of an online support network for those who have or are transitioning between genders. She can be reached via email at sofia@sofiafeatherwind.com.



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SPECIAL EDITION



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Mayor Mike Rawlings, shown atop the Dallas Tavern Guild's float in 2011, will miss the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade this year for the first time since taking office in 2011. Only eight of 15 council members have RSVP'd for the parade, which is the lowest number in several years. (John Wright/Dallas Voice)

At 30, Pride sees new kind of fight

Nudity warning from organizers angers some activists, threatens to overshadow anniversary of Dallas' Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade

JOHN WRIGHT | Senior Editor
wright@dallasvoice.com

Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings will be absent for the first time in three years and the lawn of the iconic Melrose Hotel will be closed to spectators as the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade marks its 30th anniversary on Sunday.

But all that was overshadowed this week by a warning issued to parade participants that nudity and lewd behavior will no longer be tolerated during the event.

Michael Doughman, executive director of the Dallas Tavern Guild, which puts on the parade, called the controversy "much ado about nothing" and said the reminder came from law enforcement, not his organization. But a co-commander

over security for the Pride parade and festival did little to quell the dispute when he warned that those who violate indecency statutes in front of children can be charged with felonies.

Daniel Cates, an independent activist formerly affiliated with GetEQUAL TX, brought the issue to many people's attention when he posted a scathing critique on Facebook of the "new rules," which he alleged were fueled by an "increasing number of attending heterosexuals and corporate sponsorship[s]."

"The 'queer' is effectively being erased from our Pride celebration in favor of the most polished, heteronormative representation of our community as possible," Cates wrote. "It should be noted that the rioters at the Stonewall Inn fought to break OUT of the damn closet! Our movement was built of sex positivity and our desire to BE WHO WE ARE! I urge you ALL to openly DEFY the Tavern Guild!"

Dallas Pride
Parade, 2 p.m. Sunday, Cedar Springs and Wycliff to Lee Park, free.
Festival, noon to 8 p.m. Sunday, Lee Park, \$5.
DallasPrideParade.com

Doughman said the guidelines are not new — pointing to longstanding state laws and city ordinances governing nudity and public lewdness. He said the warning was first issued in August at a meeting with representatives from all parade entries. As an example of behavior that has crossed the line in past years, Doughman said a dancer on a parade float had an erection and his underwear was wet so spectators could see through it.

"It was a reminder at the meeting by the police department, that they've looked the other way for years and years and years, but public lewdness and nudity in public is not going to continue to be tolerated," Doughman said. "It's just a matter of discretion. You certainly can still express yourself, but unfortunately if your way of expressing yourself is to be naked or to be aroused in public, then it's inappropriate, and I think most of the community agrees with that."

Doughman said parade entries featuring

dancers have been told they should wear swimwear instead of underwear this year. Also gone from parade entries this year will be women with bare breasts and only "pasties" or tape covering their nipples, according to Jeremy Liebbe, co-commander of security for the event.

Liebbe, a gay detective sergeant for the Dallas Independent School District, will oversee 95 officers from DISD and the Dallas Police Department during Sunday's parade and festival. He said any entries violating indecency standards will be warned in the lineup on Wycliff Avenue prior to the parade. If they fail to comply before reaching the route, they will be removed from the parade and individuals may be charged with class-B misdemeanor indecent exposure. But Liebbe added: "If there's an erection and a child is present that could see it, it is a felony, and we don't want to see that happen."

"My goal at all of these events is to have zero enforcement action taken," Liebbe said. "But there are some people over the years who've tried to push that line to see just how far we could go."

Liebe said none of the officers will be assigned to patrol the crowd for indecency violations. He compared the warning about nudity and lewdness to the ban on glass containers at Pride or a decision a few years ago to fence in Lee Park during the festival due to alcohol-related problems.

"We've seen a trend," Liebe said. "We've had some issues in the past that have been brought to our attention, and our goal is to take a preventative measure. These are rules and laws that have already been in place. This is just the first year we have done an overt preventative reminder on this particular issue."

Kathy Jack, manager of BJ's NXS, said dancers on the club's float will wear board shorts instead of underwear this year, after the warning was repeated during a meeting of Tavern Guild members last week. The Tavern Guild is an association of gay bars, including several that feature male entertainers.

Jack said she considered pulling out of the parade in protest of the new guidelines, but decided against it because of the young people who work for her.

"I think the parade is getting a little bit too corporate, and it's not about the community anymore," Jack said. "I talked to one of my employees, and he was telling me that last year was his very first gay Pride parade, and he couldn't wait for this year. We're doing it for them,

but that's the only reason why we're doing it. I can't justify them not having their day just because I don't agree with the way the parade's being handled."

Lonzie Hershner, proprietor of the Tin Room, another bar that features dancers, said he doesn't have a problem with the changes. Hershner said in response to the warning, he directed his employees not to wear "cock rings," which are commonly used by dancers to slow blood flow away from the penis to keep it erect. Hershner said he was also considering purchasing matching pink neon spandex bicycle shorts for his dancers to wear during the parade.

"I put my two daughters on my float every year, so of course I'm not going to let them be over the limit for my own children," Hershner said.

Doughman said nudity and lewdness aren't the only violations that will see increased enforcement this year. He said police will also be cracking down on people who climb over the barricades and enter the street during the parade.

"People who cross the barricades will be removed from the parade route and detained," he said. "It puts a huge insurance liability at risk when somebody does that. Only one person has to be hit to ruin the entire thing for everybody."

Doughman also noted that the Melrose Hotel — a popular viewing spot — has decided to close its lawn to spectators due to heavy damage in the



Police respond to a disturbance in front of the Melrose Hotel during the parade last year. To avoid damage to the lawn, Melrose officials are closing the property to spectators this year. (John Wright/Dallas Voice)

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Cathedral puppets bring Pride to life

Five-person teams will animate 12-foot, rainbow-colored marionettes designed by church member and nationally known puppeteer Dan Peeler

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Seven puppets each 12 feet tall will dance down Cedar Springs Road accompanied by more than 300 members of Cathedral of Hope as the church's entry in the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade.

"The puppets are being clothed and getting personalities right now," said COH staff member Travis-Lee Moore.

Each will be in a different rainbow color plus one in fuchsia that will march in a sea of people wearing that color.

The puppets are made of foam and are actually rod marionettes that take five people to animate — one on each hand and foot and another to operate the body.

"Some people feel strongly they should have a choreographed number," Moore said — something to perform as they proceed down the route for the judges.

But others building the puppets are afraid they'll have trouble just holding them up, especially if it's windy.

Moore credits COH's colorful balloon entry last year with getting so many people interested in participating this year. He called it a dramatic aerial view in a sea of color. He credits the Rev. Tod Scoggins with that creative endeavor. This year's creativity is thanks to Dan Peeler.

Peeler learned puppetry from his mother, who was a puppeteer. Growing up in the 1950s, he said all children's shows revolved around puppets — Howdy Doody, Kukla, Fran and Ollie.

He joined Puppeteers of America.

"I got involved as a teen and met them all — Bill Baird, Jim Henson," he said. "They were extremely generous in sharing."

Peeler was one of the original animators on Sesame Street and today does projects for the State Fair and Six Flags.

One of his best known and enduring projects was redesigning Chuck E. Cheese and five other characters for the company in 1991.

He's also been a children's minister at Cathedral of Hope for 17 years. Moore said when he realized what talent was in the church, he couldn't let it go untapped.

He's designed other figures for the church's parade entries, including butterflies that fluttered down Cedar Springs Road and fish that floated around a lighthouse and a mermaid.

To begin this year's project, Peeler designed a 4-foot-tall prototype. He projected the figure to create the pattern for the 12-foot puppets that will appear in the parade.

The weekend before the parade, more than 25 people were assembling the puppets in the church. Each foam piece was painted a base color. The pieces of the arms and legs were strung together and attached to the body.

Peeler showed the group how to insert rods and broom handles to animate the figures.

They put one of the puppets together before assembling the others to test it out. Peeler said it was heavy, but not too heavy to make it down the street.

As they carried it around the building, Peeler warned them not to make sudden moves.

"There will be wind resistance," he said.

And he showed them how to wave the puppet's hands to the crowd.

"Wave Big Tex style," he said.

By that he meant back and forth, very slowly.

A week before the parade, none of the giant puppets had been dressed or given their personalities.

Peeler said he wasn't getting involved in that. He was letting each group assembling a puppet decide how theirs would be dressed to create their own characters.

Moore said it was important for the church to have a creative presence in the parade that people will remember. He said it's one of the best ways to reach out to the community.

He said he's always surprised by how many people he meets in Dallas who haven't heard of Cathedral of Hope.

"We're kinda fun to hang out with, so come on down," he said against a backdrop of puppet builders frantically trying to finish assembling their giant marionettes.

But more seriously, he added, "You don't have to give up on God, because God hasn't given up on you."

After the parade, the church will have a booth at Lee Park.



Puppeteer and Cathedral of Hope member Dan Peeler is shown holding a puppet's left leg as church members assemble them Sept. 7. Peeler, who redesigned Chuck E. Cheese and five other characters for the company in 1991, has been a children's minister at COH for 17 years. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

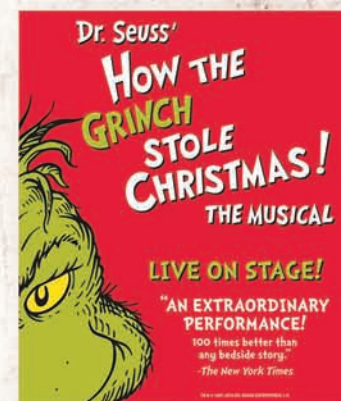
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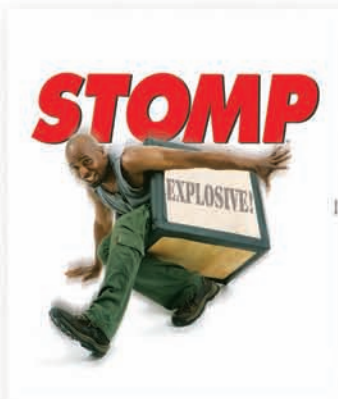
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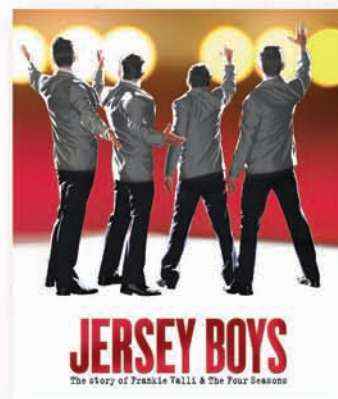
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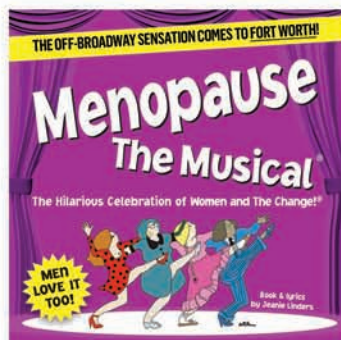
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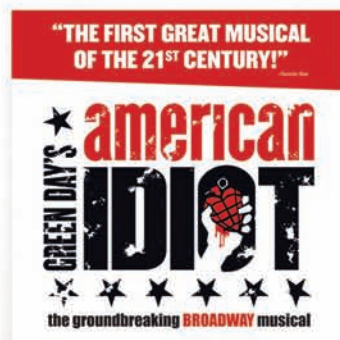
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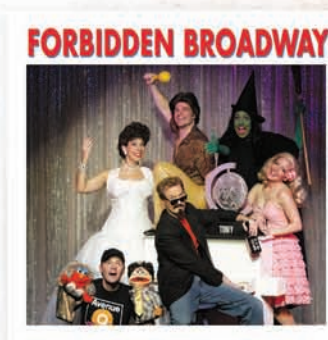
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Family firsts at Festival in Lee Park



A young participant high-fives spectators on Cedar Springs during the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade in 2012. This year, LGBT families will have their own Family Pride Zone in Lee Park. (Chuck Marcelo/Dallas Voice)

Inaugural Family Pride Zone for LGBT parents, children will include Cub Scout troop selling popcorn, which may be unprecedented

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

A Cub Scout troop selling popcorn will be part of a new Family Pride Zone section of the Festival in Lee Park on Sunday.

Cub Scout mom Kim Bowles, who's organizing the popcorn fundraiser, which will also include a life-size Candyland game, said in addition to raising money and having fun, she wants to expose

Scouting to a wider audience and teach children in her troop a lesson about diversity.

"There are so many families out there different from the stereotype of the white picket fence," she said.

But Bowles said she and others from her Fort Worth-area Cub Scout troop won't go in without some trepidation. Some parents made it clear they wouldn't be participating, she said, and she's not sure what the reaction from higher-ups will be.

"We're waiting for the other shoe to drop," she said.

Earlier this year, the Irving-based Boy Scouts of America lifted its ban on gay Scouts but continues to prohibit gay and lesbian adult leaders. Since then some anti-gay churches have pulled their support for Scout troops, including one in the Fort

Worth suburb where Bowles' troop is from.

The Cub Scout troop will be one of many booths and attractions in the Family Pride Zone, a separate area of Lee Park that will be cordoned off for the first time for LGBT families and their children.

"We hope to change the face of the LGBT community, to show more diversity and to show that we have families, too," said Tempest Redding, who organized the Family Pride Zone along with her fellow HRC Family Project co-chair, Dallas Voice Publisher Leo Cusimano.

Cusimano said the event is important for LGBT families because parents benefit when they network and it's helpful for their kids to see other families like theirs.

Michael Doughman, executive director of the Dallas Tavern Guild, which organizes Pride, said he's unsure whether

other cities have created similar family zones during Pride, but he said compared to other major metropolitan areas, North Texas has a high percentage of same-sex couples raising children.

"The response since we put this on the table has been really tremendous," he said. "I'm expecting a significant turnout, and I think this is going to become a very strong and viable part of Pride."

Family Pride Zone attractions will include face painters, bounce houses, caricature artists, sack races and cake walks.

Vendors will present information for families but also for those planning families.

Circles of Care is one of the largest private, nonprofit organizations that provides adoption services and foster care in Texas. Jessica Killion will be on hand to explain how the process works.

"There are foster children every day that need homes," she said. "We're looking for people who desire to better the lives of children who come into care."

She said the passion needs to be there because getting licensed is an extended process.

"And these children are fragile," she said. "They need attention and support. All are educationally delayed in some way or another."

She called fostering a special gift you can give and especially welcomed members of the LGBT community to help a child that needs you.

"It's the most special gift you can give," she said.

She invited anyone who's thought about fostering or adopting to stop by to discuss it.

Marcia Stuhler is a photographer who specializes in photographing LGBT families. Helping her will be her daughter who started a gay-straight alliance at her Keller high school.

"I'll be wandering, taking pictures and family photos," she said, while her daughter and friends from her GSA staff the booth.

Families are welcome to stop by to get family portraits and fun shots taken.

"I'm determined to change the world one photo at a time," she joked.

The Family Pride Zone will have two entrances — from Lee Parkway where the \$5 admission will be charged and in-

side the park across the bridge next to Arlington Hall. People already in the park will not have to pay an additional \$5 to cross into the family area.

No coolers and no alcohol will be allowed into the Family Pride Zone and appropriate attire will be required for adults.

The Family Pride Zone will be open noon-8 p.m.

online exclusive

For a map of booths at the Festival in Lee Park, visit DallasVoice.com.

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Dallas Pride



Walter Cunningham placed fifth in 2008, the first year he entered the Voice of Pride competition. He didn't place again until this year, when he won it all. (Patrick Hoffman/Dallas Voice)

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5th time a charm for Voice of Pride winner

Walter Cunningham on his singing idols, the most memorable moments from the 2013 competition — and what he plans to do with the prize money

When his name was announced late on Aug. 11, Walter Cunningham had finally achieved a dream he'd had for five years: Winning the Voice of Pride competition, sponsored by the Dallas Tavern Guild.

Cunningham's journey was a strange one. The first year he competed, 2008, he actually came in fifth. Since then, he's been out of the medal range — one of the many who just gets to "enjoy the experience." But oh, how much more enjoyable it is to finally come in first.

Of course, his title comes with one big consequence: As a winner (the 10th solo victor in the contest's history), Cunningham is now ineligible to compete in future VOPs. How will he deal with no longer having a summer to rehearse, sing and hope to win? ... We imagine he'll adjust.

We grabbed Cunningham the morning after his victory to find out what it meant to him, how he got there and what he plans to do.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Congratulations! So, what's your occupation when you're not winning Voice of Pride? Host/cashier at Sushi Zushi and local actor.

Where else do you perform? Local theaters, and every Thursday at Woody's!

We've seen you in several shows over the year, memorably Dallas Theater Center's Cabaret and earlier this year Songs for a New World with Uptown Players. So when did you start singing? I've been singing ever since I can remember.

When did you start singing in public? Talent shows in elementary school and at church.

You've entered VOP before Yes; my first year was 2008. I placed fifth.

At what club did you qualify for VOP? The Round-Up Saloon.

What songs did you sing at the finale? My song choices were "Feeling Good" by Michael Bublé and "Flying Home" from *Songs for a New World*.

How did you celebrate after? Lots of hugging, smiling ... and shots!

Tell us your singing idols: Stevie Wonder, John Legend and Beyoncé.

What is your favorite kind of music to listen to? It's all over the board! I love all music, espe-

Name and age: Walter Cunningham, 28.

■ VOICE, Page S11



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Dallas Pride



Antionett Thomas, left, and Amanda Robinson are girlfriends and co-founders of Real Live Connection, which is staging a Teen Pride event Saturday.

She's got the Teen Pride Connection

Amanda Robinson and Antionett Thomas' Real Live Connection aims to prevent LGBT youth from making the same mistakes they did

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

Amanda Robinson is the first to admit that her past isn't one without blemishes.

"I sold drugs from a young age," she says matter-of-factly. "I was convicted of two felonies." People told Robinson that her background was her destiny. Not only was she a felon, she was gay and black and a woman, perceived by some as "strikes." She'd never have a career; her future was not bright.

She might have believed the naysayers. But she didn't.

"I wasn't a bad kid, I just went in the wrong direction," she explains. "I had an entrepreneurial spirit, I was just not applying it in the right way." She needed, she now puts it, "to tweak my recipe."

Robinson turned her life around. She's now a manager at Station 4, where on a nightly basis she resolves issues for customers — some of whom have issues of their own.

"I'm out mingling with the customers, so I deal with these problems. I see on a nightly basis where it's possible to make a difference in people's lives."

To make a difference, Robinson and her girlfriend, Antionett Thomas, established the non-profit Real Live Connection more than a year ago as an outreach to at-risk teens. "There's nothing else like it here," Thomas says.

They both feel they know what it's like to be different and where a guiding hand can make a difference.

"I was an exotic dancer for two years and a lot of people think there's no going back from that," Thomas says. "But that's not true. It's about the direction."

Since establishing Real Live Connection, Robinson and Thomas have moved around the city, meeting with teens and tweens, giving motivational speeches and mentoring those who aren't headed in the right path. Sometimes the bad choices they make have nothing to do with being

gay. But often they do. And either way, RLC's goal is to give them the skills to set out on the right path.

"We wanted to create an organization that could educate, develop and connect," Thomas explains of their three-pronged approach. "We educate on financial issues, on life skills, how to deal with coming out."

It can be especially complicated for youth, who rely on their support systems financially and emotionally.

"We teach them how to deal with the loss of friends once you come out — and it does happen," Robinson says.

The next prong is to cultivate the talents youth cannot always pursue. For example, they may be interested in fashion design but don't know anyone who does it or what it entails. RLC will set students up with mentors who give them feedback.

"We hold classes once a month to introduce them [to a mentor]. Then after, we have a social event," Thomas says.

The social event is part of the "connect" in Real Live Connection. It's about building a wider community of friends — not just classmates in your school, but other LGBT youth with similar issues ... and perhaps similar dreams.

"We were those kids who wished there was something for us when we came out in high school," Robinson says. "I grew up in a small town and identifying as LGBT was hard — I didn't have the resources."

In the past, these services might have been offered as after-school programs or by rec centers. But budgetary issues make those all but a mem-

ory for many kids. "They have no social network except for Facebook," Thomas notes.

The biggest event they've attempted so far is the Teen Pride gathering, set for the Caven parking lot in the gayborhood on Sept. 14. It's intentionally planned to coincide with Dallas Pride to give teenagers a way of participating in Pride that is focused on their age group. (The event — which will include a DJ, food, refreshments, speakers and performances, is free for teens and \$5 for adults.)

Gay youth are an emphasis for Robinson and Thomas not just because they are gay, but because statistically those are some of the most at risk.

"The average age to come out now is 13," says Thomas, who was 14 when she came out — and the only out gay kid in her entire school. "I was more ridiculed by the staff in the

school than by my peers. [Kids that age] already feel like an outcast and when someone is supposed [to be straight and isn't], it adds to problems."

"[Gay teens] make up 20 percent of the juvenile justice system," Robinson says. "Studies show three out of five gay kids feel uncomfortable in school. The suicide rate [among LGBT youth] is crazy — 43 percent of the ones dying are transgender. When we realized that, we started teaching life skills to make [teens] more productive adults quicker. The things you hold onto from your past are hindering you moving forward in your future."

"Being different does not create limitations," Thomas adds. "Just because that's where my past is doesn't mean it's my future."

Teen Pride 2013 Noon-4 p.m. Sept. 14. 4001 Cedar Springs Road, behind Zini's on Throckmorton in the parking lot. Admission is \$5 or free with student ID (K-12 or younger). TinyURL.com/TeenPride.

■ **VOICE**, From Page S8

cially anything by Beyoncé!

OK, you're one of those Beyoncé gays. What's your favorite to sing? I love the music of Motown and funk. Soul music is also a favorite.

How would you describe your own singing style? Loud — just kidding. That's a tough question — it changes a lot depending on what I'm singing.

What was most helpful in preparing for the competition? Trusting my instincts when it came to song selection. My first year, I was disconnected to my songs and it showed.

It's a singing competition but you're also judged on performance, energy and look. Who designed your outfit? Me, myself and I ... with the help of Matt Miller.

What is your most memorable image from the competition? Our faces when the opening number began — priceless!

What advice would you give someone who wants to participate in VOP down the road? Go for it! Tomorrow is not promised. And trust your instincts.

What does this title mean to you as a member of the community? That I finally have a platform

as a singer here in Dallas — which is fierce!

What will you do with the \$3,500 in prize money? I've been walking everywhere for four years so I'm getting a car!

Where will you go with the airline tickets — and who will you take? (P.S., I'm available and a good traveling companion): Good ol' Orlando! One of my best friends, Jason, will be joining me!

I figured you wouldn't pick me ... So, be honest — why do you think you won? Let me start by saying that singing alone is so intimate and personal that it's nerve-racking to do it in front of hundreds of people! I feel that as an entertainer, your job is not only to sound good but to be honest with your portrayal of the piece you are performing. I feel that I accomplished that at finals.

Describe something about the experience, whether the early rounds or what went through your mind the moment when you heard your name called: We all know each other here in the Dallas singing community, so getting to know them on a personal level was the highlight of my journey. This was my fifth time doing Voice of Pride, so seeing some of the same faces makes me extremely happy that no one has given up!

What will you sing at the festival in September? To be announced!

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Dallas Pride



A performer entertains during the Ms. Dallas Southern Pride Pageant last year. While Dallas Southern Pride is a circuit party, DFW Pride Movement stages an educational summit. (Patrick Hoffman/Dallas Voice)

DFW Pride Movement hosts 5th annual event

Nonprofit arm of Black Pride marks anniversary since breaking away from Dallas Southern Pride, which holds festivities on same weekend

ANNA WAUGH | News Editor
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DFW Pride Movement, the nonprofit organization that began hosting its own Black Pride events five years ago, will mark its anniversary this fall with special guests and first-ever events.

Derrick Spillman, executive director of DFW Pride Movement, said new events at this year's "The Movement" Dallas Black Pride Community Summit will include a black LGBT authors event with readings and discussions and a black LGBT film series. The film series will be hosted by *Noah's Arc* star Rodney Chester and will feature the creators of the YouTube web shows *Free Fall*, *Momma'z Boi*, *Street Behavior*, *No Shade*, among others.

Singer and reality TV star of *R&B Divas* Monifah Carter will headline the organization's major

concert on Oct. 4 to kick-off the special anniversary celebration. And Texas native and drag performer Sophia McIntosh will co-host the Margaritas & Music Day Party event.

Spillman said this is Carter's first Dallas visit and McIntosh's first appearance at Black Pride in more than a decade.

"It's a star-studded event and we have way more than we've ever had," Spillman said about the event lineup. "It's our fifth year. This is a milestone and we wanted to celebrate it."

Dallas Black Pride's other branch is Dallas Southern Pride, which started in the late '90s. But

DFW Pride Movement founder Venton Jones broke away from the DSP board five years ago to create a separate Pride celebration geared more toward community and education instead of partying.

"We're the cultural side of Pride," Spillman explained, adding that events include a job fair and art shows. "Our message is similar [to DSP's message]. Their focus is totally different."

Kirk Myers, business adviser to Dallas Southern Pride, said his leadership has helped redefine DSP as a circuit party. This year's theme is "Candy Land 2013" and events will include a

Dallas Black Pride weekend

Dallas Black Pride takes place Oct. 3-7. For more information about events and venues, visit DfwPrideMovement.org, DallasSouthernPride.com and DallasHerPride.com.

pool party, the Lipstick Ball and Ms. Dallas Southern Pride Pageant.

The group will also host the second annual Southern Regional Ball/House and Pageant (B/HAP) Communities' Leadership and Health Disparities Conference during the weekend. Abounding Prosperity, of which Myers is founder and CEO, is organizing the conference with the theme "Building Bridges and Forming Alliances!" with the goal of reducing health disparities among sexual minorities across the South.

Myers said his nonprofit Abounding Prosperity focuses on education and outreach the rest of the year, so he wanted DSP to offer a weekend of events that would bring the community together in order to have an audience to offer educational events.

"We do the social work 365 days a year," he said. "Quite frankly, people are not booking tickets to come to a roundtable discussion. We had to grow the event before adding these events."

Myers said there's been some confusion about the two entities that put on Dallas Black Pride, but the important thing is that the two groups offer choices for attendees.

"It's better to have two entities," he said. "We're in capitalist America so I think that choice is good."

And while the larger LGBT community has embraced Dallas Black Pride events, Myers said the traditional Dallas Pride celebration is becoming more inclusive. This year Abounding Prosperity will have a float in the Dallas Pride parade. Two weeks later, the Dallas Black Pride festivities begin.

"It's more about unity this year with mainstream and fridge groups working together," he said.

Dallas Her Pride, a group launched last year by Teedee Davis and Angela Amos, started in response to there being little offered to women during Black Pride. Both Davis and Amos have been planning events geared toward women for Pride for several years, but Davis said the team wanted to add more throughout the whole weekend last year.

"The women have always felt left out," Davis



Angela Amos, left, and Teedee Davis, founders of Dallas Her Pride, plan a full weekend of events geared toward women this year.

said. "The women's events are more inclusive than a big boy circuit party."

This year's Her Dallas Pride events include dance parties, a burlesque troupe, relationship workshop, music night at Sue Ellen's and a partnership with DSP for its pool party.

Davis said last year DHP brought in 2,500 women. While she likes having the women-focused events, she said she wishes the two entities that plan Black Pride would join forces.

"I will always support the guys' initiatives," Davis said. "I would love to see [Myers] and DFW Pride Movement work together cohesively for the overall unification of the group."

But Myers said the two groups, while separate, have existed in harmony over the years. And he said the main goal is to have Dallas Black Pride become the Southern Pride destination, putting Dallas on the map for its events, despite which group's venues attract people.

"At the end of the day, my future goal with DSP is to make Dallas a destination city," Myers said. "It benefits all of us if it drives the economic engine in Dallas when they come, no matter where they go."

said. "This has nothing to do with the controversy. This is just scheduling."

Doughman said this week that only eight of 15 council members had RSVP'd to ride on the Tavern Guild's float in the parade.

That number is lower than in recent years, but Patti Fink, president of the Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance, said she wasn't alarmed.

Fink noted that several council members were newly elected in June, and the community hasn't had a chance to build relationships with them. She also said she doesn't put a lot of stock in RSVPs.

"We have to wait until Pride to see who's on the float, because that's really going to be where the proof is," she said.

Doughman said council members who RSVP'd were Scott Griggs, Adam Medrano, Rick Callahan, Monica Alonzo, Carolyn Davis, Tennell Atkins, Sheffie Kadane and Philip Kingston.

■ **PRIDE**, From Page S3

rain last year.

Meanwhile, as debate raged over the nudity issue, Rawlings' office confirmed that he will be absent from the parade for the first time in the three years he's been in office.

Adam McGough, a spokesman for the mayor, said Rawlings will be in New York City this weekend at a conference of the Center for Exhibition Industry Research. Rawlings will also be visiting West Point, N.Y., as part of an initiative to bring a football game to Dallas.

McGough said Rawlings absence has nothing to do with the controversy over a marriage equality resolution at City Council in June — which led some in the LGBT community to call for the mayor and certain other council members to be uninvited from the Pride parade.

"He is disappointed to miss it," McGough

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Dallas Pride

Pride on 'Agenda'



Doug Magditch, who launched the weekly 'Gay Agenda' in November, said he's been most impressed by the local LGBT community's history.

CW33 reporter and 'Gay Agenda' creator Doug Magditch profiles 30 local LGBT leaders from past and present to mark parade anniversary

RICH LOPEZ | Contributing Writer
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In November, the LGBT community witnessed something surprising.

Having out TV reporters was hardly novel for North Texas, but a segment devoted entirely to gay goings-on? That was a revelation, and it came thanks to CW33 news reporter Doug Magditch.

But Magditch's interest in LGBT affairs goes beyond his weekly 'Gay Agenda' segment. He also has a blog, HisBigD.com, where he plans to mark the 30th anniversary of Dallas Pride by profiling 30 LGBT leaders past and present.

"I wanted to recognize those members of the community who have or who are doing so much," said Magditch, a St. Louis native who moved to North Texas a few years ago. "I've been most impressed by the history here. There were people fighting for gay rights back in the '50s and '60s and back then, if they were out, they were fired and looked down upon. I just can't believe there is such a history and I love that there's been a part of this community that never wants to leave it behind."

Magditch began as the Fort Worth reporter

for CW33, but as the station's newscast shifted to the current Newscap format, the idea was to present news in a different fashion than the straightforward, traditional one used by larger networks.

You could say CW33 is Dallas' news alternative, and with such an approach, it opened the way for Magditch to successfully pitch the weekly segment 'Gay Agenda' — which offers tidbits of queer news on both local and national fronts. And while it may not sound like much, producers have given it a lot of time — air time, that is.

"There are lots of interesting people and stories in the community that don't make it onto other networks. I want 'Agenda' to be representative of the community," he says. "Everybody seems to be very excited our station is open to do it. I don't think what I'm doing is groundbreaking. It's neat though that our station is doing something no one else is doing. And I'm very fortunate to have the opportunity, especially two minutes worth — which is a lot of news time."

After moving to Dallas last year to focus on his coverage, Magditch has had to learn encyclopedic amounts in a short time here. His approach has included interviewing Dallas Voice staff members on a weekly basis. For most episodes, he shoots for three pieces of news that range from serious topics like marriage equality to lighter bits featuring viral videos.

But as Magditch has covered the community's present, he's found himself moved by its



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past, and that's what led to his upcoming profile of 30 LGBT leaders. As he wrapped up the interviews for the project last week, Magditch said he compiled his list based on everything from past parade grand marshals to simple word of mouth. And with a list spanning young and old, male and female and all of the letters in LGBT, his Pride project should fuel anticipation for viewers.

"I included people who are an example of leadership and not because they are trying to be," Magditch said. "Who is making a difference here? And that includes such people like Robert Camina, Cd Kirven, Bruce Wood and Sheriff Lupe Valdez," Magditch said. "Some have been around for so long and have made such a difference in the community and everybody has said something that I didn't know. It's been such an inspiration and I didn't expect that. So I want to make sure that I do this right."

"I certainly don't want anyone to think these are the only 30 making a difference," he added.

"These are my opinion of people I discovered and met that I have been impressed by. Dallas has a vibrant community and I'm so impressed with how strong and cohesive our community is. We're really so lucky to live in a community like this, and that's what I really learned."

Watch *The Gay Agenda* on CW33 or at NightcapTV.com/gay-agenda. Magditch's blog is at HisBigD.com.

PRIDE BRIEFS

LULAC Rainbow Council hosts 2nd Social Justice Summit at UTD

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Rainbow Council of Dallas will sponsor its second annual LGBTQ Social Justice Summit on Saturday, Sept. 14, at The University of Texas at Dallas Clark Center in Richardson.

"The LGBTQ Social Justice Summit is a great way for local and out-of-town LGBTQ persons and allies to participate in activism as part of gay Pride weekend," said John Trevino, LULAC 4871 past president and summit co-chair.

The LGBTQ Summit will include sessions on LGBTQ immigration issues, LGBTQ Latino history, health and wellness, the impact of the Defense of Marriage Act decision and information on advocating for equality. Several local and nationally recognized speakers have agreed to present at the summit, including representatives from Lambda Legal, Texas A&M University School of Law, Human Rights Initiative, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, among others.

The inaugural summit was held in 2012 and featured a keynote luncheon address by U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Texas Sarah Saldana. Nearly 50 activists and college students

attended the summit at UT Dallas.

"My hope is that the LGBTQ summit will become a Dallas Pride celebration tradition," said Jesse Tafalla Jr., LULAC 4871 Rainbow Council president. "The Summit is open to anyone interested in making a difference in our community, not just LULAC members, but any person interested in fighting for full equality."

The summit is sponsored by LULAC, UT Dallas office of Diversity and Community Engagement, Univision Radio, Lambda Legal, Human Rights Campaign, Freedom To Marry, The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, CocoAndre, El Padrino Restaurant, Havana Lounge and local supporting LULAC Councils. The summit is free and includes a continental breakfast and lunch. For more, visit LGBTQsummit.com.

Gray Pride marks gay Pride with variety show in Rose Room

Resource Center Dallas' Gray Pride program will host its second annual "Gray Pride for Gay Pride" in The Rose Room at S4 from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 13.

This year's event will be a Gray Pride variety show produced and directed by Sean Baugh, associate director of worship at Cathedral of Hope and associate director of Turtle Creek Chorale.

The show will feature local stars Patty Breckenridge, Amy Stevenson, Jason Huff, Chris Wadley

and Michael A. Smith, as well as other musicians and entertainers from TCC and COH's music ministry. They will provide an eclectic mix of music standards and Broadway tunes, accompanied by a lounge band.

Jerry Calumn, local comedian and entertainer, will serve as master of ceremonies. Food will be provided, and a cash bar will be available. There is no cover charge, but donations to support the Gray Pride program will be accepted. For more information or to volunteer, contact Shelley Hamilton at shamilton@rcdallas.org or 214-540-4418.

Tavern Guild honors American with outstanding partner award

The Dallas Tavern Guild will honor American Airlines and its diversity markets group headed by George Carrancho with the 2013 Outstanding Corporate Partner Award at a VIP Reception and Awards Party on Friday, Sept. 13.

The relationship between the Dallas Tavern Guild and American Airlines includes trade show promotions, destination marketing, LGBT press trips and Dallas Pride. American has long been the benchmark for LGBT travel in both the business and leisure market and in its commitment to serve and support diversity and equality through customer service and employee inclusion.

American will be the first corporation to receive the award for the second time.



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Sacred & 'Profanity'

Trans playwright Sylvan Oswald looks inside himself for his world premiere play 'Profanity'

MARK LOWRY | Special Contributor
marklowry@theaterjones.com



OSWALD IN DALLAS | Sylvan Oswald on the set of Undermain Theatre's premiere of his new play, set in a 1950s real estate office. (Arnold Wayne Jones/ Dallas Voice)

Sylvan Oswald never set out to write plays telling *his* story — even as teachers, mentors and conventional wisdom repeated that mantra of writing “your” story. Whenever he heard that, he wanted to reply, “Can I write a play about *these* people?” By that, he meant not making it about him, but about the characters occupying his head for years — some of them, admittedly, inspired by his own family.

But art has a funny way of surprising folks — even its creators.

“There’s this way that my plays know more than I do,” observes Oswald, whose play *Profanity*, about 1950s real estate agents selling property that doesn’t exist, receives its world premiere at Undermain Theatre. “They knew more about me before I could articulate it.”

Born a female in Philadelphia to a Reconstructionist Jewish father (the second of four half-siblings), Oswald’s process of articulating his journey as a transgender playwright — that’s a fairly recent self-billing — has emerged organically, discovering more about his identity as a writer and a non-cisgendered person (i.e., not identifying with the gender he was born to biologically) as he went along. As with any artist — any human — both of those explorations are ongoing.

As a kid, Oswald was not into sports or other children’s games; instead, he wrote “little skits” and drew them out with crayons. In junior high school, a local playwrighting organization offered several workshops, and Oswald discovered that there was a type of writing that didn’t involve long sentences and paragraphs. By the time he’d reached high school, he was directing plays for his own theater group, had written a paper on Sam Shepard and discovered

the book that would change his thinking about theater-making: *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* by Brazilian writer and theorist Augusto Boal, also known for his *Theatre of the Oppressed*. On reading that, Oswald describes his reaction by making the sound, accompanied by hand gestures, of a bomb exploding.

As a theater major in college, a writing spree spurred by a serious case of unrequited love during a study-abroad trip led to an introduction, from a mentor, to the work of writers like Mac Wellman and Suzan-Lori Parks. That’s when Oswald realized he wasn’t alone in the way he put thoughts and words together — and his desire to shun traditional dramatic structures. He also discovered something about the power of writing, and how it mirrored personal questions.

“I realized that I could write about stuff that wasn’t being talked about,” says the baby-faced Oswald, who dresses in the button-down casualness of a prep school senior on spring break. “I started writing roles about girls that play boys, and I was working some stuff out. ... I had been writing these females playing men and calling them ‘pants roles,’” he says. “One of my mentors said, ‘What are you doing with these pants roles — you’re not revealing them, so why are they there?’”

He pauses.

“I was not ready to answer that question,” he says. “I was discovering that in myself.”

When he realized that these roles were basically transgender characters, Oswald wrote his inaugural play with specific trans characters, *Pony*. That’s the premier play in his *first* trilogy (which

also includes *Vendetta Chrome* and *Painful Adventures*). *Profanity* is the final work of his *second* trilogy, dealing with “cosmic mysteries” (it’s preceded by *Sun Ra*, about the famed jazz musician, and *Nightlands*, inspired by his maternal grandmother).

Gender identity has always been a theme in his work, even as he has tried on different labels about his sexual orientation. “[The word] ‘lesbian’ always felt like second-wave feminism for me, and that wasn’t helped by the problem of not feeling very female,” he says. “It was not until the word ‘queer’ started to crest [that I realized] it was *that*.”

Profanity is interesting in that it’s his first play with all cisgendered characters. Inspired by uncles on his father’s side — who sold homes in Philadelphia’s Logan area, where houses were built on unstable soil, leading to a literal housing collapse — the Undermain production features Bruce DuBose, Michael Federico and Alex Organ. With its real estate theme, it invites comparison to David Mamet’s *Glengarry Glen Ross*; but where that play uses testosterone as competitive fuel, *Profanity* explores a bigger issue of *defining* masculinity.

“My experience is like a sidebar to this play,” Oswald says. “Sometimes I’m writing *my* story and these are real questions I have, too.”

No doubt, those questions will continue to be explored in his work, which includes an upcoming web series — his own version of a “transition video,” which he filmed and describes as a “low-fi, mock-doc, semi-improvised web series about two trans guys making a web series.”

Art and life, imitating each other, regardless of pronoun. ■

PROFANITY

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L+S stage

Catching stars

'Peter and the Starcatcher' author Rick Elice on partnering with a partner



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

Before Rick Elice came to write *Peter and the Starcatcher* — the hugely successful “play with music” that serves as a kind of prequel to the Peter Pan story, which opens Tuesday at the Winspear — he didn’t know much about the source material.

“Of course, I knew there was a man with a hook for a hand, and a boy who never grew up, and I probably saw the musical version with Sandy Duncan or Cathy Rigby at some point,” he says from his home in New York. Other than that, he hadn’t thought about the show much; he more closely associated Peter Pan with peanut butter than high theatrical achievement.

It was luck, then, that of the two men originally approached in 2007 to adapt the Dave Barry/Ridley Pearson children’s novel to the stage, one (Alex Timbers) was Elice’s close friend, and the other (Roger Rees) was his husband. (They married in 2011.) Timbers and Rees were interested in the project, but neither had the time to commit to more than a one-time-only workshop version.

“As a friend of the court, they asked me to write [the dialogue],” Elice says. “They needed someone who would say yes and do it without contracts or lawyers or, god forbid, money. So suddenly I was writing a play,” which Timbers and Rees would direct.

It wasn’t like Elice was a novice at playwrit-

ing. He received a Tony Award nomination as co-author (with Marshall Brickman) of *Jersey Boys*, and wrote the book to *The Addams Family* musical. A play would be a piece of cake.

Only it wasn’t. The book on which it is based, *Peter and the Starcatchers*, is a 500-page tome targeted to a young audience; Timbers and Rees both wanted something more adult, with saucy language and mature themes. How was Elice going to pare down the novel? And what was the appeal of the Peter Pan story anyway?

The latter question was actually easier to answer.

PETER & THE STARCATCHER

Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. Sept. 17–29. ATPAC.org.

“I think the fascination with this character, who captured the imagination [of audiences] 110 years ago, is, there’s something about the idea of this eternal man-child that’s really recogniz-

able to us as men. It’s why therapists have a Peter Pan complex that only applies to males. There’s something in our DNA about not wanting to get older, and how fantastic it would be to not have anyone tell you what to do,” he says. But that’s also a false goal.

“If I hadn’t gotten past the age of 13, I wouldn’t have done all of the stuff that made me feel happy and have a life — I never would have fallen in love or had sex or fought for anything I really cared about and won, or fought and lost, or have a sense for my moral place in the world. If all of that had been kept from me, we certainly wouldn’t be having this conversation.”

DREAM TEAM | Tony-winning actor and former ‘Cheers’ star Roger Rees, left, and his partner Rick Elice, right, developed their ‘Peter Pan’ retelling with Alex Timbers, center. (Photos by Joan Marcus)



PAN-O-RAMA | For his adaptation of the Peter Pan prequel 'Peter and the Starcatcher,' Elice merged the bawdy humor of a Victorian music hall farce with humorist Dave Barry's post-modernist sensibilities.

The desire to explore those feeling fueled what was a casual writing assignment into a personal passion.

The problem remained, though: How could he create this backstory to Peter Pan in a format that could be told theatrically in two hours? That's where the genius of Rees and Timbers came in.

"I needed some really strong organizing principles," he says. "Roger and Alex [proposed thinking of it as] a smaller-scale version of what a Disneyfied version presented by a small troupe. When they did the first lab, working entirely from the novel, they used what they had available — a rope, a bucket, some sticks, some acting interns and their imaginations."

They also gave him the act structure: The first half is set on the cramped, claustrophobic quarters of ships at sea; the second half on an island with bright skies and open spaces. More than that, "the actors would play every thing — the natives, the children, adults, doors, masts, storms, jungles ... and they would all narrate the action. So each of the actors would have a privileged relationship with the audience, not just one narrator," Elice explains. The idea, in essence, was to merge the post-modern irreverence of the novel with James Barrie's original Victorian style.

"James Barrie used high-comedy and low, bawdy humor, broad physical gags and sounds and metatheatrical anachronisms to reel in the audience, then he would sneak up and deliver sentiment deftly. I wanted to merge those very disparate styles, to see if I could create some connective tissue," he explains.

It's a hodgepodge that worked. The Broadway production was a critical and popular hit, winning five Tony Awards out of nine nominations, including two for Elice himself. (Ironically, Elice lost the Tony for best play to *Clybourne Park*, which opens at the Dallas Theater Center next month.) Still, he admits his adaptation is pretty liberal with both sources.

"In my version of their story — which Ridley and Dave were very graceful to allow me to invent, as long as I make it fun — I dropped the S from the novel's title to make it not about this boy and Starcatchers, but about this boy and this one girl," he explains. "I wanted to explore what it was like to be disenfranchised and not have a seat at the table. In my play, he's an orphan who doesn't even remember what his name might have been, living in a Dickensian situation — a kid afraid of his own shadow who's never been out in the daylight."

The female character — who's *not* Wendy — is his mirror image: "The kind of strong, smart, super-articulate girl like Scout Finch or Jo March, a too-smart girl with no friends who meets another outsider." (The outsider theme resonated with Elice. "He could be Peter Pan or a gay kid or a fat kid or anything we ostracize people for," he explains.)

Putting together a play is challenging enough when you're *not* married to one of the directors; when you are, things get complicated.

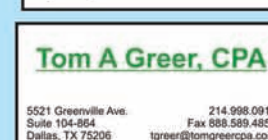
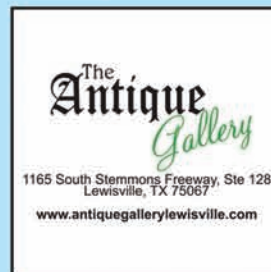
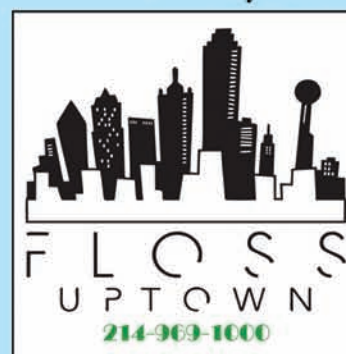
"Roger and I had written a play together before, and he has directed some productions of it, and it's *hard*. You want to be able to come home and say [to your partner], 'That motherfucker!' but you can't because it's the same person," he laughs. Still, the process was easier than it could have been because of the passions on all sides.

"So much of this [play] was Roger and Alex's baby. For me, it was like a master class in directorial sensibilities and theater tradition and theatrical writing technique. Between the two of them, there's probably nothing they don't know — they're so smart and talented. *Peter and the Starcatcher* started very casually for me, but it became a real passion project because of our relationship."

Still, there are more goals to achieve. Elice is currently reteaming with Brickman, his *Jersey Boys* collaborator, on a new musical. "Is it called *Connecticut Girls*?" I ask. He laughs.

"I wish it were that easy." ■

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Old Lang syne

Todd Burnsed hoped joining Jessica Lang Dance would lessen his touring, but the troupe is too hot to slow down

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

They say in business “it’s not what you know, it’s who you know.” Well, it doesn’t hurt in the dance world, either.

Todd Burnsed was a freshman at Juilliard when he first saw a senior named Jessica Lang choreograph her first dance. Even then, he knew she was someone to watch.

“I remember being jealous of the dancers in [her number], even though she was just a senior,” he says now, many years later. “You could see something was going to happen.”

But, as happens with school-mates, they lost touch and went their separate ways. Then last summer, they reconnected “when I heard she was looking for a new male dancer to join her company,” Burnsed says.

Burnsed had been traveling with the avant garde troupe MOMIX for several years, but was interested in exploring something new. And the ground-floor of a new dance troupe seemed like the perfect match.

“MOMIX toured constantly,” he laments. A

new company would provide a little breathing room, he surmised.

Ohhhh, if only. Even though it’s just two years old, Jessica Lang Dance is making major waves in dance circles.

“A lot of things are happening really fast,” Burnsed says. “I get this call, ‘Pack your bags, cuz we’re about to see the world.’”

Starting in July, the company went to Jacob’s Pillow before arriving in Dallas courtesy of TITAS on Sept. 14. “There’s a lot of excitement in the company and about the company,” Burnsed says.

But there’s more to the new position than just a new tour schedule. Burnsed is getting to explore different aspects of his craft.

“MOMIX has a lot more props and sheer brute strength as well as keeping things dance-oriented and artistic,” he says. “Jessica’s work is very visual — not like MOMIX, not a sculpture — but an atmosphere.”

The company will be bringing some of that creativity to Dallas.

JESSICA LANG DANCE

Winspear Opera House, 2403
Flora St. Sept. 14 at 8 p.m.
\$12–\$80. ATPAC.org.

“We will be performing *i.n.k.* in Dallas, which is a collaboration with a visual artist including video projections with liquid. And the Crow Collection will be doing a show around the same time” tied into their performance, he says. And it helps to know the boss.

“It’s a very collaborative atmosphere, very much a group effort, but it all comes out of her mind and body,” he says. “Jessica allows us to shade it and color it.”

This will be a company premiere in North Texas, but not Burnsed’s local debut: He was here with the Dallas Summer Musicals several years ago, dancing in Twyla Tharp’s adaptation of Billy Joel songs, *Movin’ Out*. “I did that tour for 2-1/2 years,” he says. “I auditioned six times.”

Burnsed and his partner of seven years both wish there was *less* touring to his schedule. But they are willing to make an exception.



LESS MIX | Burnsed left MOMIX to pair up with his old Juilliard classmate, Jessica Lang.

“I’ve never been to Paris, but hopefully we’re going for three weeks next year,” he says.

Because when it comes to visiting Paris, there’s always time for another tour. ■

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A flair for fashion



J. DENTON BRICKER
Contributing Writer
dentonbricker@gmail.com

Swiss menswear designer Edo Popken first came to Dallas several years ago. A contribution to the DIFFA Collection and new retail store later, and it's now his U.S. home

Purple pants, a fuchsia and plaid shirt, pink socks and green cufflinks. A supervillain costume for the new Spider-Man? No, just an every day outfit for Swiss designer Edo Popken. This is a man who embraces a life full of bright and diverse color — wearing it to near perfection.

A fourth generation fashion entrepreneur, Popken's passion for clothing came from not only his family's extensive history but also his own adolescent experiences.

"I designed my first piece when I was 13 on a trip with my parents," he says. "A tailor in the lobby produced it from my drawing after I went out into the streets of Hong Kong to find the fabric I

wanted."

Though Popken does respect and draw inspiration from the work of his forefathers, especially his great-grandfather, he also employs his own tastes and creativity.

"I brought upscale menswear back to the Popken family and added style and fashion to the bespoke approach; a combination very hard to find. The family sees what they started is flourishing in a modern and innovative way, while respecting the artisan workmanship and values they provided," Popken says.

If you don't recognize the luxury designer's style from his flagship store in Zurich, then you might from his continued involvement with DIFFA. It was that support that eventually led him to Dallas, where he opened his first U.S. retail store this summer. Edo Popken also happens to be the first retail store to open in the Design District.

"I hope people recognize that the Design District is the right place for us, that they see it's innovative to visit, and that the district will benefit from us being there. We are not from Dallas but

admire it," Popken says.

The store feels like walking into an industrial, multi-leveled chic loft with tall metallic shelves and sleek racks displaying vibrant products. The oversized logo on a mobile wall allows for expansion or constriction of the space based on store events.

"I will personally be in Dallas frequently and when there we will invite friends, supporters and customers to fine exclusive fashion parties, similar to what we do in our Zurich ProFashion Lounge. I might DJ for an hour, mix some Edo'ritas or bring some of my own champagne from France," Popken says. Though the store is currently open for business, the official grand opening is this weekend — at the height of Dallas gay Pride.

All of his products are produced in Europe, eco-friendly and made through ethically correct craftsmanship. The limited edition dress shirts are truly exclusive, as there are only 111 in each line and every shirt is numbered according to production and presents

■ FLAIR, Next Page

DESIGN DISTRICT PIONEER | Edo Popken's retail store, the first of its kind in the Design District, is his Dallas home. The grand opening weekend celebration is currently underway.

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L+S fashion

■ **FLAIR**, From Previous Page

meticulous colors. Popken also specifically designs silk ties to pair with his dress shirts for the perfect complement of color. His bold dress pants offer divinely hued details meant to accentuate the waist in addition to the front and back pockets, hitting all the right places.

Of all his offerings, the club blazer is the store's featured product — and a favorite of Popken. The sharp jacket is actually based on the same navy two-buttoned, fine wool model sold at his great-grandfather's men's store in 1880 that Popken has ripped apart and rebuilt from scratch.

"It's a must have in every wardrobe, it goes with practically everything from fine dining to clubbing," he says. "It can be mixed or matched and dressy or casual. With its modern cut and stylish details, it is simply the most versatile piece out there."

The cool coat brings versatility to a whole new level through the offered customizable aspects. Almost everything can be selected to the client's taste, including the material, collar, lining, piping, elbow patches, threading and more, down to the buttons. Not into logos? Go without one for a cleaner look. There is a true and rare opportunity to not only play with the unique and modern stylizations of a classic profile but also shape it into a one-of-a-kind item.

"The silhouette is my design; on that base you can play," Popken says. "If I feel like what you choose doesn't look good, we'll be honest and tell you because we want you to simply look stunning every time you wear any of my designs or outfits. We would sell more if we weren't that honest, but that would be untruthful to our motto, 'we want the customer to come back, not the merchandise.'" Some of the minor base details are tweaked every other season to further ensure its rarity.

Color also bleeds into Popken's accessories; they augment his core products, which further transform clients into gorgeous mosaics.

"If you buy an outfit from us, we want you to get the total look. You can find prism pink socks



from my color palette, as well as a saffron yellow leather belt and vintage orange leather message bags. It's about the lifestyle and uniqueness of my concept that makes it complete," Popken says.

These vibrant accessories are strong enough to stand on their own and even help to make a name for clients through their use of accessories. For example, you could be the guy at the airport with the divine, orange bag. Future expansion plans for accessories include leather loafers and moccasins after Popken struggled to find the right shape and color.

"The first prototypes are in the works as I write this, made in my neighborhood of course," he says.

Where else can you get a hot pink, loden blazer with lime green accents? ■

PRIDEFUL MOMENTS: Celeste Martinez

Growing up in a Hispanic, Catholic household the way I did, being gay was considered taboo on so many levels. There were times when I was made to feel "less-than" and that to be gay was a sin. Yet I knew who I was from a very early age — that I was different and it wasn't a choice — so I was constantly questioning how could it be "bad" and surely there had to be others who felt the same way I did.



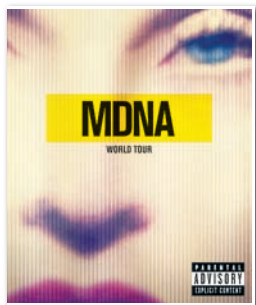
That question was answered one afternoon in, I think, 1980. I came home from school and the news was on. They were talking about the gay Pride parade. I was *mesmerized!* I had *never* seen so many gay people in one place. They were happy and clearly weren't ashamed of who they were — quite the opposite. I'm sure my mouth was probably hanging open. That moment is burned in my mind forever. It made an impact on my life, because that's when I knew I was not alone, that I could be proud and for that I am forever grateful. (Martinez is pictured riding in the Dallas Pride parade many years after she saw her first parade.)

Uh, oh, it's Madge-ic



Madonna's MDNA tour hits DVD and Blu-ray, but is it as good as being there?

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



Does everyone else remember seeing Madonna last year at the American Airlines Center for her MDNA Tour?

Yeah, me neither.

I was one of the unlucky suckers who had tickets for *Saturday* night's two-show

stint — the one she canceled. Half of us were gravely disappointed. It was armagaydon.

I convinced myself I wasn't missing much. Despite a few good tracks, *MDNA* was hardly classic Madge — a few good tracks, sure, but the album felt rushed in post with a hodgepodge of styles. Not seeing the tour of *that* CD wasn't a tragedy.

Oh, how could I have ever doubted her?

MDNA World Tour, the concert DVD and Blu-ray edition of that show, has all of the Material Girl's majesty and fetishistic eroticism, merged with lots of disturbing, violent imagery and a huge catalogue of songs. How could we have expected less?

From the opening backstage images of her heroin-chic-thin muscle-twinks (I know!) in Spandex to the militaristic bandoliers and freaky headgear to the elaborate set pieces and blood-spattering projections during "Bang Bang,"

Madonna reminds us why we've followed her machinations for nearly 30 years.

Yeah, 30: Madge is 55 now, and in her cat-suit while doing gymnastic stage antics, she's as provocative and exciting as ever. And as if to prove it, well more than half of the two-dozen numbers she performs during this two-hour extravaganza are her raciest hits: "Papa Don't Preach" (tame today, but a hot-button song in the '80s), "Express Yourself" (which she cleverly mashes up with Gaga's clearly derivative "Born This Way"), "Justify My Love" and "Like a Virgin." (With so many oldies, clearly she recognizes that *MDNA* wasn't her best work.)

Perhaps the most unexpected twist is that she sings most of the songs into a hand mike — isn't she the popularizer of the headset? Has she betrayed her roots?

Of course not. But it's her constant self-reinvention that has kept us intrigued over the years ... that, and her embrace of hot

male backup dancers with homoerotic gyrations.

The video's director, Danny Tull, trained as a film editor, and he seems preoccupied with fast cutting, flashy effects instead of lingering close-ups or allowing the action to play out in front of our eyes. A little luxuriating in the queen herself would make more sense.

Yes, Madonna's voice sounds especially Auto-tuned here, but her live audience of gay boys and pudgy girls don't seem to mind. You won't either.



EXPRESSING HERSELF | Madonna has long been a master of the provocative video, as the Blu-ray of her 'MDNA World Tour' concert proves.

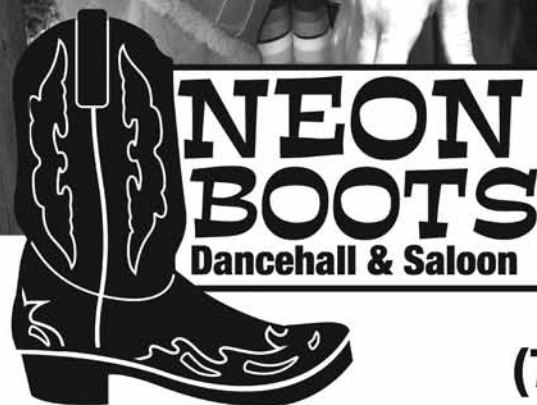
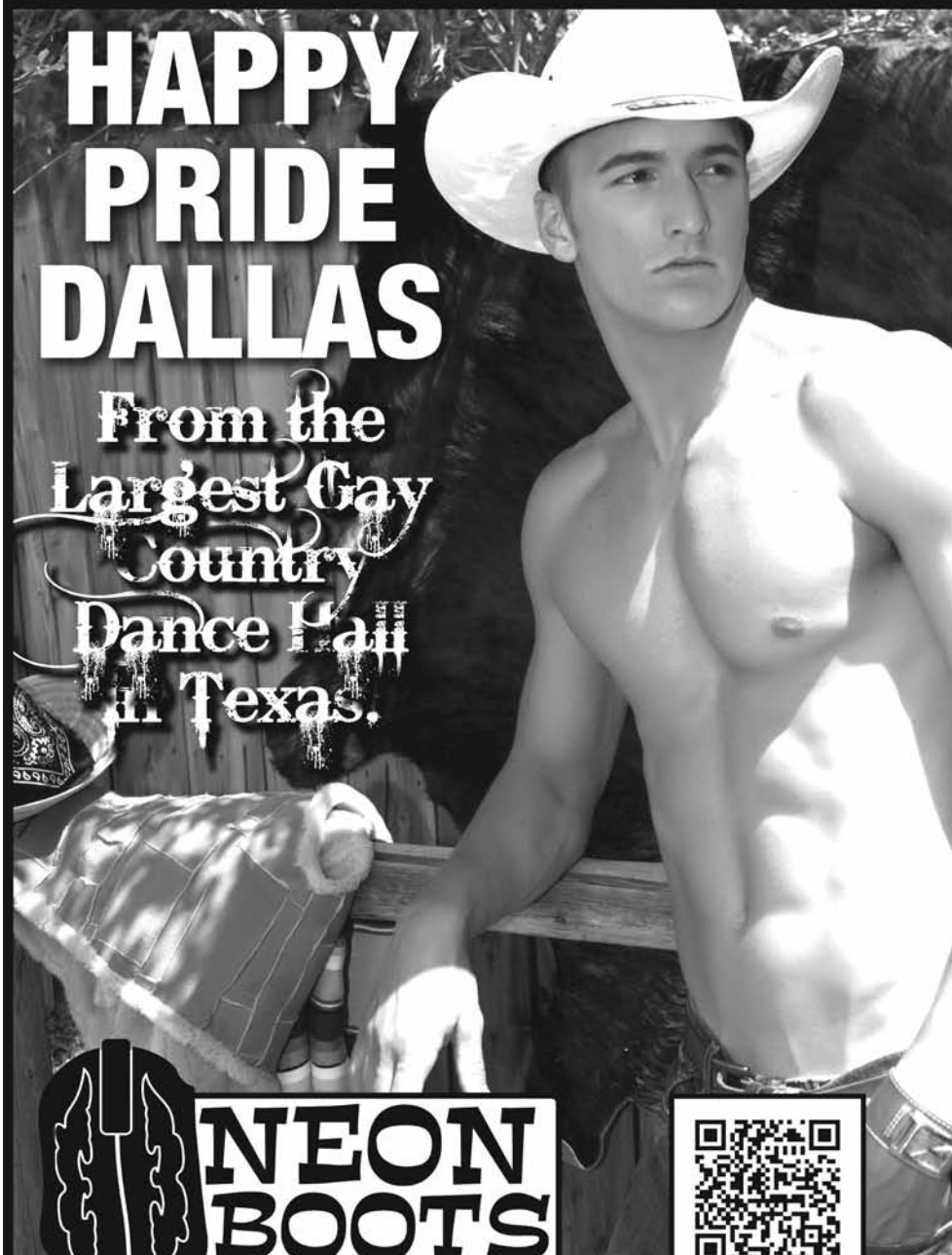
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Islands of adventure

A trio of isles in the Pacific Northwest make charming vacation spots for the outdoorsy or those simply seeking peaceful, rustic life (and great food)

ANDREW COLLINS | Contributing Writer
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It's amazing how easily you can feel completely removed from crowds, urbanity and the busy pace of modern life, even when you're within 50 miles of several major cities.

Case in point: The San Juan Islands, a blissfully tranquil and picturesque archipelago in northern Puget Sound that's just 65 miles north of Seattle, 40 miles south of Vancouver and 10 miles east of British Columbia's capital city, Victoria. These lovely isles with a friendly vibe, a strong following with LGBT visitors and easy access — by ferry or plane — from all of these nearby cities make for a restorative summer (or

even autumn) getaway.

Although there are more than 170 islands in the archipelago, only four have regular ferry service. On three of these — Lopez Island, Orcas Island and San Juan Island — you'll find hotels and B&Bs, vacation rentals (a good option for longer stays), restaurants and other visitor services, including outfitters and tour operators offering whale-watching excursions, kayak and bike rentals (and guided rides), fishing tackle and gear rentals and other items related to outdoorsy endeavors.

Lopez Island

Lopez is the smallest of the main islands, with a sparse population and few formal attractions. This pastoral island is less hilly and has far less

A WHALE OF AN ISLE | The terminal on butterfly-shaped Orcas Island, as seen from the approaching ferry, exudes Pacific Northwest charm. (Photo courtesy Andrew Collins)

car traffic than its sister islands, which has made it a magnet for biking enthusiasts (you can rent bikes at several shops). If you're seeking a peaceful getaway and don't have much want of social interaction, Lopez Island is your ideal choice.

There are just a few accommodations on Lopez Island, including Lopez Farm Cottages (LopezFarmCottages.com) and Edenwild Inn (EdenWildInn.com). Most of the island's restaurants are in the village of Lopez, a compact community on the west side of the island — about a 5-mile drive from the ferry terminal.

Don't miss the Bay Café (Bay-Cafe.com) to enjoy lunch or dinner while overlooking the water from its large deck; the contemporary American fare here is first-rate. Another excellent option is Vita's Wildly Delicious (VitasWildlyDelicious.com), which has a few outdoor tables on a lovely tree-shaded patio. This little gourmet food-and-wine shop is also useful for picking up picnic supplies and prepared salads. Caffè La Bohème bakery serves tasty cookies and sweets, Vortex Juice Bar & Café (VortexJuiceBarAndCafe.com) is well-regarded for its affordable and healthy vegetarian cuisine and the Just Heavenly Fudge Factory store carries locally beloved Lopez Island Creamery ice cream, which comes in such delicious flavors as wild blackberry and toffee coffee crunch.

San Juan Island

The most populated of the islands, and the seat

of county government, is San Juan Island, which boasts the region's largest town (Friday Harbor), a lively center of shops, restaurants, bars and inns, and the site of a terrific farmers market on Saturday mornings.

Within walking distance of the ferry terminal, this is a great neighborhood for taking a stroll. Stop by The Bean Café (TheBeanCafe.com) for a cup of espresso, or Pelindaba Lavender store, which sells all kinds of lotions, soaps and edibles featuring lavender grown on the store's farm a few miles away. San Juan Islands Museum of Art, which shows rotating exhibits, recently announced plans to move into a new, larger space.

Beyond Friday Harbor, the island has a few notable attractions, the most interesting of which is San Juan Island National Historic Park, which chronicles the strange (and now amusingly recalled) Pig War of 1859, during which the United States and British governments battled — some say bickered — over possession of San Juan Island. The American government ultimately prevailed, and the maritime border between the United States and Canada now cuts down Haro Strait, the body of water between San Juan Island and Vancouver Island.

The national park has two sections, the larger American Camp and the northwesterly English camp, and each offers both historical exhibits and numerous opportunities for hiking, bird watching and wildlife viewing. Overlooking Haro Strait, another highly popular destination on the

island is Lime Kiln Point State Park, which has a short trail leading along the shore to an ancient, oft-photographed lighthouse. Visitors here are treated to great views across Haro Strait toward Victoria, B.C., as well as regular sightings during the summer months of orca, humpback, blue, gray and other breeds of whales.

San Juan Island has a variety of inviting accommodations. One of the region's most popular venues for destination weddings, Roche Harbor Resort (RocheHarbor.com) has quickly become a favorite of LGBT couples exchanging vows, now that Washington state has legalized same-sex marriage. It's a scenic place to stay for any occasion, with a huge marina filled with pleasure boats, a few restaurants overlooking the water and a nice mix of overnight options, from standard rooms in a historic hotel to spacious, multi-bedroom village homes.

Other properties on the island that are away from Friday Harbor and offer comfy places to rest your head in quiet, pretty surroundings include the stately Wildwood Manor (WildwoodManor.com) and the artfully designed, eco-minded Juniper Lane Guest House (JuniperLaneGuestHouse.com). In town, within walking distance of restaurants and shops, the economical Earthbox Inn & Spa (EarthBoxInn.com) is a good bet, as are the historic Tucker House Inn (TuckerHouse.com) and the sleek, contemporary Island Inn at 123 West (123West.com). An advantage to staying in Friday Harbor is that you can walk to your hotel from the ferry terminal, which is handy if you don't bring your car over.

Notable restaurants include romantic and rustic Duck Soup (DuckSoupInn.com), a 15-minute drive from town, which is known for its house-smoked oysters and miso-ginger roast duck; and Coho (CohoRestaurant.com) which boasts Northwest-inspired Mediterranean fare in Friday Harbor. The Market Chef serves very good sandwiches and soups, and Cask & Schooner (CaskAndSchooner.com) is a fun gastropub for brunch, dinner or knocking back a few beers with locals.

Orcas Island

Regular visitors to the archipelago all seem to have their favorites, with Orcas Island — physically the largest of the bunch and second-largest in population — garnering quite a few votes for No. 1 destination.

What's nice about this 57-square-mile isle, shaped a bit like a butterfly, is the tremendous variety: you'll find the highest point in the San Juans, Mt. Constitution (elevation 2,398 feet, and with an observation tower at the top, which is reached by a scenic car ride), several gorgeous beaches and harbors, a couple of endearingly quiet rural villages (Deer Harbor and Westsound), a quaint cluster of shops and eateries by the ferry terminal and a bustling main village, Eastsound, near the center of the island. Visitors seeking total relaxation and quiet can find it here, but there are enough lively bars and restaurants to keep more socially inclined visitors happy.

One of the favorite dining options, for lunch and breakfast especially, is quirky Café Olga, which occupies a historic building that once

housed a strawberry-packing plant and has become renowned for its savory scallop-halibut (nicknamed "scallibut") cakes and fresh-made, sweet blackberry pies. Be sure to check out the attached gallery, which carries works by some talented locals.

Also on this quiet southeastern side of the island you'll find Doe Bay Resort (DoeBay.com), a very gay-popular lodging with several types of accommodations. The cuisine served at Doe Bay's café is worth the trip alone, even if you're not staying overnight.

Most other noteworthy restaurants are in Eastsound, with Allium (AlliumOnOrcas.com) a particular highlight. Talented chef Lisa Nakamura serves farm-to-table fare in a lovely space overlooking the water. Downstairs, Madrona Bar & Grill (MadronaBarAndGrill.com) is a more casual option for beer and fresh seafood.

Mijitas is a good bet for hearty Mexican style food, and relative newcomers like Hogstone (Hogstone.com) — for wood-fired pizza — and the Barnacle — for tapas and craft cocktails — have quickly become top picks among local foodies.

Among accommodations, the Inn on Orcas Island (TheInnOnOrcasIsland.com) is a lovely gay-owned property near the quaint village of Deer Harbor, on the west side of the island. Right near Eastsound (and the island's little airport), Kangaroo House (KangarooHouse.com) has five charming rooms and a lovely Arts and Crafts design.

West Beach Resort (WestBeachResort.com) is a stunningly situated compound of cabins and tent/RV sites with reasonable rates and a friendly staff. And Inn at Ship Bay (InnAtShipBay.com) is one of the most romantic lodging options on the island, its 11 rooms fitted with gas stoves and plenty of cushy amenities — note the terrific restaurants here, too.

Getting to the San Juan Islands takes a little planning, since there's either a ferry crossing or flight involved. The islands are big and spread out enough geographically that it can be handy having a car, or at least bikes, to explore fully. The most frequent ferry service is out of Anacortes, Wash., about a 90-minute drive north of Seattle and a two-hour drive south of Vancouver; expect to pay about \$75 for round-trip ferry service to the farthest (San Juan) island for a car and two passengers. The fare is much less if you leave the car in Anacortes (there's inexpensive long-term parking there).

Once a day, there's also a passenger-only ferry from Victoria's Inner Harbour to Friday Harbor on San Juan Island, and car-ferry service from Sidney, B.C. (a 30-minute drive north of Victoria) to Friday Harbor.

Kenmore Air has flight-plane and conventional small-jet service to Lopez, Orcas and San Juan from Seattle's Lake Union — you'll save a lot of time making the one-hour flight, but fares are rather steep, and once you arrive on island, you may end up spending a good bit more on rental cars. If time is tight and you can afford it, flying makes sense, but for most visitors, traveling by ferry is an efficient, scenic and cost-effective way to get to these lovely isles. ■

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Built Ford tough

Now 50, gay adult film star-cum-recording artist Colton Ford is finally hitting his stride

RICH LOPEZ | Contributing Writer
getrichindallas@gmail.com

Many men in the gay community are probably familiar with the name Colton Ford, but probably not initially as a philosophizing musician. Ford is OK with that — as long as you don't make the mistake of boxing him in.

On a career trajectory that started as a struggling musician to marquee adult film star, Ford has boomeranged back to music, hitting his stride this year with an impressive new album (*see review*) amidst some difficult personal drama.

Ford speaks almost with a newfound wisdom about his life and how *The Way I Am* represents the growth of his craft. What's more, he backs it up with songs that are high quality in production and a clear voice both literally and figuratively. Perhaps this is the dawn of Ford's coming (OK, pun intended).

"I'm at a particular place in my life at age 50 and yes, I'm at that stage that fights the little voice knocking how old I am, but the fact is I'm here and I'm doing it," he says.

"It" would be continuing to make music, which has been his life-long goal. After pursuing the dream for 30 years in small music groups and just-missed opportunities, Ford didn't falter. Even as a recognizable celebrity in his own right as an adult-film star, music was dream No. 1.

"Often times, shit gets fucked up and there you are at square one and it's hard to power through peaks and valleys, but I had to," he says. "I found that I still had a vision and yes, it's different than it was back in my twenties, but it's still significant."

Simply reading the track list on *The Way I Am* you can ascertain that something's on his mind. There is a statement being made here with titles like his first single "Let Me Live Again," "Change (You're Gonna Have To)" and the title track.

"The goal was to capitalize on everything I've been doing, specifically over the last six years. We wanted a mainstream sound that tapped into my base inspiration of R&B, which is what I've

always loved. And we wanted to tell a story that had a beginning, middle and end," he says.

As triumphant as the album sounds, Ford is quick to give credit to his musical partners and his manager. He speaks of their contributions with reverence to putting his point of view down on tape. Most importantly, they brought out the best of Ford. In previous releases, there has been something hesitant in Ford's singing. His voice is there, but was his soul?

"My manager, Bo Coleman, knows the music business and just has that ear to know how to craft pop music. I think that enabled me to step it up as well as the people who came in to collaborate on this," he says. "The whole process was an organic one was truly satisfying as an artist. Even with all of us working with different perspectives, that cohesion fell into place like a puzzle. The album is also a testament to my musical partners here. I couldn't sleep tonight because I felt something unique and special was happening."

Although he doesn't say, Ford's own life may have been filtering through this album. His mother passed earlier this year and he dramatically relocated from California to New York. And the astronomy buff was so focused on the studio that he even missed the recent "super moon." But if life is art, then he used that stress to deliver a solid album — and more over, has used his age to his advantage. Forget silver fox and daddy labels. Ford is embracing 50 with the wisdom he's earned and learned over time.

"I'm so grateful for my therapist who has kept me in my work, but in my 50th year, I'm reminded that I'm entitled to be an artist and still have something to say. We live in a world of ageism, but that can't defy anyone from creating. I feel empowered and for anyone who is 'older,' I hope this album proves you don't have to stop pursuing your dreams or passion at a certain age."

And even look good doing it. ■

REVIEW: 'The Way I Am'

Colton Ford isn't shy about crediting his collaborators on his new CD, *The Way I Am* — an album Ford was born to make. This collection shows us the essence of Ford's abilities. Despite his beefy muscles (and other endowments), the disc proves his most powerful body part is his voice.

The first single, "Let Me Live Again," is dynamite in its structure. With a pounding dance beat as a foundation, Ford lets loose with some major falsetto action while also giving him something to say. It's easy to release a dance song by singing over a club beat then remixing and Autotuning the hell out of it, and Ford probably could have gotten away with that on his name alone, but he doesn't resort to that. Instead, he gives a healthy dose of lyrics to "Live Again" that elevate the track beyond a mere dance floor tune to an energetic as well as sweet song.

This formula never falters. He seduces on "Look My Way," while the song crescendos into lush disco. His vocal runs ooze confidence and compounded with his natural sex appeal, the track is as much swoony as it is strong. Additionally, he convinces us that he's trying to get someone to well, look his way (as if they already weren't). That's impressive.

Initially the title track plays as "not bad," but then it makes you ask, "is that a squeezebox?" This unexpected layer washes over you with jaw-dropping effect. Ford and company straddle the line of reliable sensibilities for dance music to build on and their experimentation with narrative lyrics and sound samples are done with abandon, which is also noticeable on "The Music Always Gets You Back."

The dance sound could have been a crutch for Ford had he not applied a layer of humanity to his songs, but then he ventures out of his box with the final ballad "Alone." Ford serves up some major Babyface action here, with a sultry flow that's pretty close to baby-making music. But it says that Ford wants to deliver something more than the expected sexy club music he's more famous for. The song, as well as the entire album, says Colton Ford is a bona fide musician.

— R.L.

AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT | It took 50 years, but Colton Ford is finally living his dream — and he has the pipes to show it's not a fluke.

Boy trouble

Civil Wars' problems fuel excellent CD; the Boys are back, badly



Nitty-gritty details are few and far between concerning the highly publicized drama between *The Civil Wars* twosome Joy Williams and John Paul White, but at least we know the fallout was intense enough to trigger the cancellation of a national tour, talk of a possible breakup ... and this album: a Gothic-dark, speculative set of neo-folk songs strewn with wounded hearts, religious undertones and the looming sense that this won't end well. And if it doesn't, if the only good that comes of their personal turmoil is this, then at least they can be remembered for breakup songs so good Adele is probably pissed they're not on her next album. "The One that Got Away" aptly turns that cliché on its head; swelling with red-hot intensity at the chorus and then closing with a cacophony of telling guitar rips, it emotes post-split bitterness and regret. Williams takes lead on most of the tunes,

with White shadowing her vocals — they make harmonious heaven on said single — or stepping in to magnify the power of them. "Dust to Dust" is raw and gut-wrenching with just Williams alone, but that moodiness takes on a new, more sorrowful life when White tiptoes in; the same goes for "Eavesdrop," a beauty built on Coldplay-mounting guitars that eerily (and sadly) parallels the duo's personal lives: *Don't say that it's over / Oh no, say it ain't so*. Because after this triumph, that would truly be devastating.



Backstreet's back ... but is it really all right? It's not, unless you're still holding onto the nostalgia of them *as boys*. Then, they could get away with a certain degree of cheese and artistic growing pains. But nearly two decades later, the original quintet — Kevin Richardson re-

turns! — are still all *wink-wink* with the same shameless set of lovey-dovey pop and fifth-

grade-journal outpourings. The worst offenders are "One Phone Call," not even good enough to sound like a Lonely Island parody of the Backstreet Boys, and "Feels Like Home," which takes you around the world — name-dropping just about every major city — on the duller expedition of your life. The Max Martin-produced title track has charm (and its video celebrates marriage equality), but aside from the acoustic-y verses, this is the same bland boy-band template these guys have been

hawking their whole career. "Breathe," however, is a harmony pleaser, and "Trust Me" — a Jason Mraz move that could benefit future outings — delights with its summery Starbucks vibe. Even "Soldier," despite being innocuously cookie-cutter, decently works those stacked percussions into an ear-wormy hook. Hey, it's the Backstreet Boys — no one's expecting miracles. —Chris Azzopardi



PRIDEFUL MOMENTS: Susan Carson
When first asked to write about my most "prideful moment," I wasn't sure what to say — or if I had anything relevant to say. But that changed recently. Last month, I was attending my uncle's memorial service. All of my close family members know I have been in a relationship with Kimberly more than 10 years and they welcome her like a family member. At the memorial were also my great aunt, her daughter and grand-daughter. I have not seen any of them in years. They asked me if I had a church in Dallas I went to. I said, "White Rock Lake is my church — I consider nature my church and pray there." They have always been very religious and at one time one was a member of a religious group that preaches hatred toward gays. So I decided it was time to be open and honest. I spoke very openly and honestly and with great Pride about how I have been with Kimberly and how we had three animals we considered our children: Martin, Blondie and Frenchy. It felt so refreshing ... and they didn't even blink an eye!

Check out our line-up.

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L+S music

Eli manning up

Out, sexy Eli Lieb on his YouTube fame — and inevitable comparisons to Steve Grand

YouTube's been good to Eli Lieb. The Iowa-born, boyishly handsome musician, who's amassed a faithful following with his own distinctive twist on radio songs, recently dropped his new intoxicating pop single "Young Love." It's sweet and liberating, and it features two lovers who just happen to be men (who happen to be cute, and who also happen to kiss). The video premiered just days after "All-American Boy," in which out "country" hunk Steve Grand falls for a straight boy, became a viral hit. The two, however, couldn't be more different.

And in this chat with Lieb, he opens up about why. The Web sensation also talks about learning guitar from Ani DiFranco, not seeing himself as a heartthrob and how happiness was the key to his success.

—Chris Azzopardi

Dallas Voice: How did you learn to sing? Eli Lieb:

Singing was always something that came naturally to me. I started when I was 12, and that's when I was in my first musical theater show and when I first discovered singing.

At 16 you picked up a guitar for the first time. What was the first song you learned to play? I don't remember the first song, but I know it was an Ani DiFranco song. At that age I was totally into her and I learned guitar by listening to her songs. I don't know how to read music. I never could learn. I don't know any chord names, but if I can hear something, I can learn how to play it.

And this was before YouTube. In the olden days!

Why did you decide to move back home to Iowa after living in New York for so many years? My decision didn't have anything to do with my career. I reached this point where I'd been in New York for 11 years and I just wasn't super happy there; every time I went home to Iowa, I was just beyond happy. I told myself that if I went [to Iowa] I wouldn't be able to have a career. I let go of the fear and went back and became so happy. Ironically, though I don't think it's ironic, that's the time my career took off — because I was operating from this happier place. And with the

Internet, I was lucky to do what I was doing from anywhere. All I needed was a studio and video camera.

Where would you be without YouTube? I have no idea! I've been making music since I was 16 and YouTube didn't really become a huge platform until the last few years. I would've found another way of doing it, but thank god for YouTube and the Internet because it's so much more accessible. Now YouTube is a massive machine and everybody is trying to make it their stage.

Would you consider reality TV shows like *American Idol*? I'm never closed off to anything. If it's something that feels right, I'll go for it. If it's something that doesn't feel right, no matter what it is, I won't do it.

I don't get how you haven't been signed to a major record label yet. How has that not happened? [Laughs] I can't answer that.

What's going on with the sophomore album? A lot of stuff in my life right now is changing for the positive career-wise. I recently moved to L.A. and I'm doing a lot. There's a lot of change happening. I'm never gonna stop making music, that's for sure. But I can't be like, "My next album is coming out in a couple of months," you know? But I'm making music every day, let's just say that.

LIEB OF FAITH | The Iowa native discovered he didn't have to be in New York City to make it as a gay musician — he just needed a guitar, a camcorder and the Internet.



It sounds like things are in the works that you can't talk about right now. [Laughs] Yeah.

Why more of an acoustic approach to the upcoming album? I'm writing a lot on guitar. It doesn't mean the songs will end up on guitar, but my first album was experimenting with sound and learning to use all the programs. Now I'm more into the swing of things and my writing has changed a lot in terms of the music that I release. Now it's pop music, which I love. I love a straight-up pop song. And that's definitely my sensibility. It's just the evolution of me as an artist.

After hearing "Young Love," I have the sense you're inspired by '80s music and Taylor Swift. Yeah, it's funny the way that I write music: Whatever comes out is purely just what comes out. And it's not overly saturated with influence, because I'm just making music all day long. I just don't sit down and listen to stuff that's going on, so a lot of times I think there's a lot of energy in the air and ideas keep passing through. If it sounds like something, it's a coincidence, I guess. Everything is in the eye of the beholder.

Was it a coincidence, too, that "Young Love" was released just days after Steve Grand's "All-American Boy," or was that released in reaction to his video? I released this a week after his got released, and there's no way I could've made that in a week. But people are accusing me of trying to ride his coat-tails. I've been planning this video for a long time, and it just so happened that his was released a week before mine was about to come out. So it's the most bizarre coincidence.

The even-more-bizarre coincidence is that some of the shots in the videos are similar. That's what blew my mind more. The reality is, it seems like a shocking thing when people release a video that has same-sex partners in it, but if you were to take away the fire-work scene or the car scene, it's just the same as Ri-

hanna and Adele putting out videos and both having love stories. But because it's two guys, it seems like it's trying to be the same thing.

And not just two men ... two gay men. Does that change things? What I've noticed with the comparisons to Steve and I: When I set out to make this video, I specifically did not want it to have a "gay theme." I just wanted to be authentic to who I am, and who I am is this very comfortable human being in my own skin. My sexuality is just one part of who I am; it's not something I focus on and I definitely don't want to make it a big deal. So, when I was going to shoot this video, I knew it had to have a love interest, because it's a love song and it just was not an option to me to *not* have a guy. I also wanted to shoot it in a way that was no different than any other video, where you just feel the love rather than being hit over the head with an agenda or a point of view. Not saying that was Steve at all, but I find a lot of gay stuff [has] a gay theme, which isn't bad; I just didn't want to do that. And Steve's story is a different story than mine.

We have different points of view and we're at different places in our lives, and different people respond to different things. Some people, who are very free in their love and who they are, might relate to mine more because they see it as a celebration — about not having to hide who you are. But then there's other people who might be struggling more and aren't at that place in their life and they still feel that struggle and seeing [Grand's version], they can relate to that more. They're just telling two different stories.

Obviously there's something in the air if he and I both release a video this close to each other with ... I almost don't want to say similar content; it's just our people speaking out for who they are and showing who they are in the world, regardless of where they are in their life. I'm very happy to be able to show my story and the lack of fear and acceptance with who I am. I didn't have an agenda with the video, and I feel very fulfilled that I can help people feel better about themselves and shed fear and be who they are. And as an openly gay man, I definitely want to represent the community in a positive way. There's a sense of pride with it. I just want everybody in the world to just be who they are without fear, and that transcends way beyond sexuality.

Are you at all bothered by comparisons between not just you and Steve Grand but with other gay artists? That's something you get used to and understand. I actually have been really happy about the response to the video. Most people are saying it's not grouped into this "gay" category. It's just a video about people in love.

Has being out affected your career in either direction? For the better. I think being independent and calling my own shots has helped as well. When you're being your authentic self and you are free with who you are, you will gravitate an audience.

A big part of the gay community admires your looks as much as your music. Have you thought about yourself as a heartthrob? How do you deal with that flattery and attention? Oh man, I don't even know how to answer that. We all are human beings and we all have our insecurities, and people see you in a different way than you see yourself. But I don't think of myself as a heartthrob. I don't really know how to answer that question. It's a really difficult one.

Because you have to talk about your looks? And it's arrogant. There's a very common misconception about me. People think I'm standoffish, but I'm not; I'm just shy. I am a super grounded, down-to-earth person, and I think the more that I put stuff out that is my authentic self, that comes across more. Nobody sees themselves as other people see them. I don't know anybody who does. And if they do, a lot of times they're a person you don't want to be around!



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L+S dining

The Parisian way

Mercat Bistro mimics true French dining — but not really in a good sense



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

The music playing when you walk into Mercat Bistro sounds like the opening credits to a Woody Allen movie — jaunty, jazzy, slightly old-fashioned. Glance around and the décor reflects that: Tiny café tables (*too* tiny — it can feel like a 6-year-old's tea party) are set with linen “dish towel” *serviettes* and mismatched tea plates. Herbs in dwarf terra cotta pots serve as *de facto* centerpieces. Written on the mirrors are the day's bill of fare. If you've been to Balthazar or Pastis in New York City, or even Dallas' Café Toulouse until it lost a lot of its charm, you'll recognize the ambiance. And anyone who has been to Paris will recognize the service: Inattentive.

The French get a bad rap, but not an unjustified one. That carries over at Mercat, in Uptown next to Saint Ann. On one visit, I sat 20 minutes until my dining company arrived ... and no one came to check on me until she was seated: Not to refill my water or ask if I wanted a bowl of almonds — nothing. I was invisible.

Not good, but just getting started. The entrees performed a major disappearing act: After our order was taken, our tea glasses were routinely refilled, though no one seemed to notice we sat without any food. For an *hour*.

After complaining, our orders (which apparently had never been submitted to the kitchen) were finally put in. The manager offered an apology and said we would be “taken care of.” When our bill arrived, that meant we weren't charged for the *entrees*; we still had to pay for everything else. (A full comp was in order if you ask me, but I won't quibble over policy.)

It's a shame — and may not reflect the overall service ethos, although on another visit our drink sat in eyeshot on the bar while we stared at it, parched — because the food is just as familiar as the décor (and, sadly, the service). From the

menu down to its fonts, Mercat echoes the tradition of the Parisian bistro or sidewalk café. At lunch: salads, quiches, sandwiches; at dinner: *cote de boeuf* for two and trout. There's even a breakfast. It's simply not at all memorable.

Roasted tomato and Brie tart (\$6) on puffy phyllo scored an early point. Tomatoes draped in strands of brie burred atop flaky pastry, fresh and vegetal and oh-so French. A dish of oily whole Marcona roasted almonds (\$4) provide some addictive additional sustenance awaiting our AWOL entrees.

They were, again, par for the style. The quiche Lorraine (\$13) elevated the dish — literally. Airy and tall as a layer cake, is eggy deliciousness wafted on every ambrosial bite. The crust, while thick, was not heavy, and the large bits of lardon added a crunchy, salty tang. (Perhaps too much. The quiche was way too salty, especially cumulatively.) A bibb salad that accompanied the quiche, while fine, didn't enhance the meal.

The farro/kale salad (\$9) with heirloom tomatoes and cucumber took on its most refreshing aroma from mint and a tangy vinaigrette. Our waiter, though, didn't seem to know what farro *was*; on a separate visit, an order of chicken *pailard* was met with blank stares, as if we made it up on the spot rather than reading from the menu. Just as well: the *poulet* clucked “average.” A hugely portioned croque madame (\$14), complete with shirred egg on top, was much better.

Mint didn't improve upon the pavlova, an egg white meringue that's both crisp and creamy, and crowned with wedges of grapefruit. A disappointing finale that was par for the course at a place they still has to *parfait* its *finesse*. Those are also French — the kind we hope for. ■

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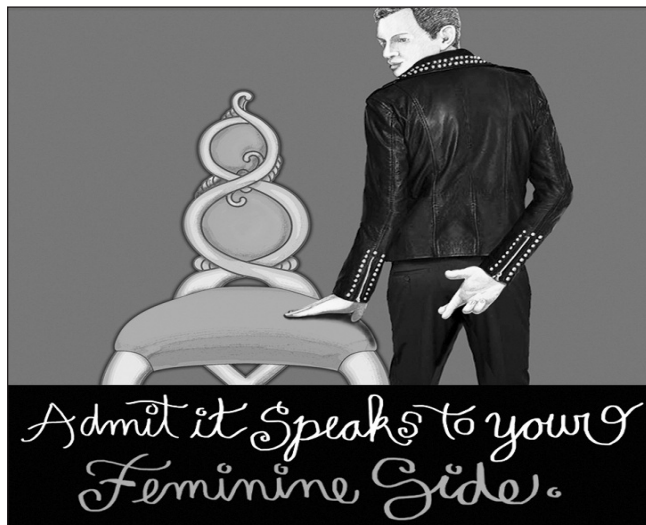
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L+S dining

Taqueria 2.0

Classic hole-in-the-wall tacos get a makeover (in looks alone) at El Tizoncito



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

The first time I introduced a friend to El Tizoncito, he wasted no time in chastising the staff. But not for the reason you might think.

"Your prices are too low," he declared, anger rising in his voice. "I insist you raise them. This doesn't seem fair."

He was both right and wrong. El Tizoncito may look like a formulaic, corporatized interpretation of a taco chain ... but it only looks that way. Yes, there are several in the Dallas area (including one along Lemmon), making it, technically, a "chain." Yes, it has slick counters and a fancy logo and accepts American Express. But the heart of this place isn't a boardroom, but a bar-

rio. The owner, Leo Spencer, is a proponent of the store-front, Spanish-speaking variety. There are plenty of taquerias in town run by Mexican immigrants that charge a buck or two per delicious taco. And at every one, I think the same as my fellow gringo said that day: They could charge much more.

Only they don't, and they won't. Because the taco is a thing in Mexican life, and the price is as much cultural as economic. Mexicans have known this for decades; it's the Anglos who never bothered to venture south of the Trinity who have remained forever in the dark.

And that's where El Tizoncito comes in. Spencer's dedication to respecting that aspect of taco culture has borne one of the nicest taquerias in Dallas. Like my friend said, they could charge

STRAIGHTFORWARD, BUT NOT SIMPLE | The taste of the tacos at El Tizoncito are lush and authentic without any corporatizing; the fixin's burst with freshness and flavor. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)



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more — a three-taco plate runs from a low of \$4.50 (a buck and a half each) to a max of \$8, and that's really more an all-the-fixin's platter — but that's not Their Way. And bless them for that: They are bringing the secrets of street food to the mainstream.

"We want to *not* be a hole-in-the-wall," Spencer told me ... they just want to taste like one: as everyone knows, hole-in-the-walls often make superb food — the trouble is finding the good ones unless you are in-the-know. El T makes that easy.

El Tizoncito — the newest, closest one to the gayborhood, on Lemmon, is just around the corner from the Hidden Door (it's a perfect post-beer-bust protein fix) — is a clean, welcoming taqueria with flat-screen TVs and a fully-stocked bar. It's surrounded by windows, giving it an airy, vibrant aura. The color palette is of fiery pastels (inspired, no doubt, but the restaurant's namesake, the "tizoncito," or charcoal briquette). It *does* look a bit corporate. But the food is authenticity incarnate.

The menu is straightforward, but it would be incorrect to call it simple. Yes, tacos are the specialty, but there are also Mexican standbys like flautas (crisp as a new dollar bill, thick and loosely wrapped with potatoes inside), quesadillas (fried firmly with a side of guac), soups and tortas (grilled sandwiches), as well as alambres (shish kebobs).

And, of course, botanas. Every diner sits down to a complimentary bowl of black beans (a warm and flavorful introduction). But you



should start off with some of the unique appetizers. My favorite, the choriqueso, is a cross between cheese dip and a tostado: a rich blend of queso and chorizo slathered over lightly grilled tortillas. You don't dunk a tortilla chip, you cut it up with a knife and fork, wallowing in the spiced sausage and the gooey cheese.

And you can dress it up as you like. Another standard item on the table is a tray of condiments: salsas (neither is especially spicy, though the tomatillo with Serrano packs more heat even than the red sauce to my buds), chopped onions, cilantro and lime wedges, each fresher than the last. They're also ideal for adding to the tacos.

And the tacos are to die for. Once again, simplicity understates the care. Served traditionally, on small corn tortilla doubled-up, they are filled sole with your protein of choice: grilled diced chicken, chopped beef, or the al pastor — pork marinated in cumin and other spiced, slow-roasted with in-house adobo, and accompanied by pineapple on the side. That's it. The rest is up to you: Mix and match salsas, add onions to taste, douse in citrus or just tackle them plain. There's no going wrong; the basics are solid. The pastor is my favorite here, distinguished by the crisp edges and fiery red color. But there's no going wrong.

The tacos arrive, you'll note, on a paper-lined plastic basket. You're not paying for bone china, and you don't get it. You get, instead, great Mexican street food served by an attentive staff. It's an entirely fair swap. ■

OVERALL RATING ★★★★★

El Tizoncito, 5150 Lemmon Ave., suite 111. Open daily for lunch and dinner. 214-521-0201. ElTizoncitoUS.com.

Clean and inviting, this sunny setting doesn't prepare you for the authenticity of the tacos here — and prices to match a neighborhood taqueria.



Food: ★★★★★

Atmosphere: ★★★★★

Service: ★★★★★

Price: Inexpensive

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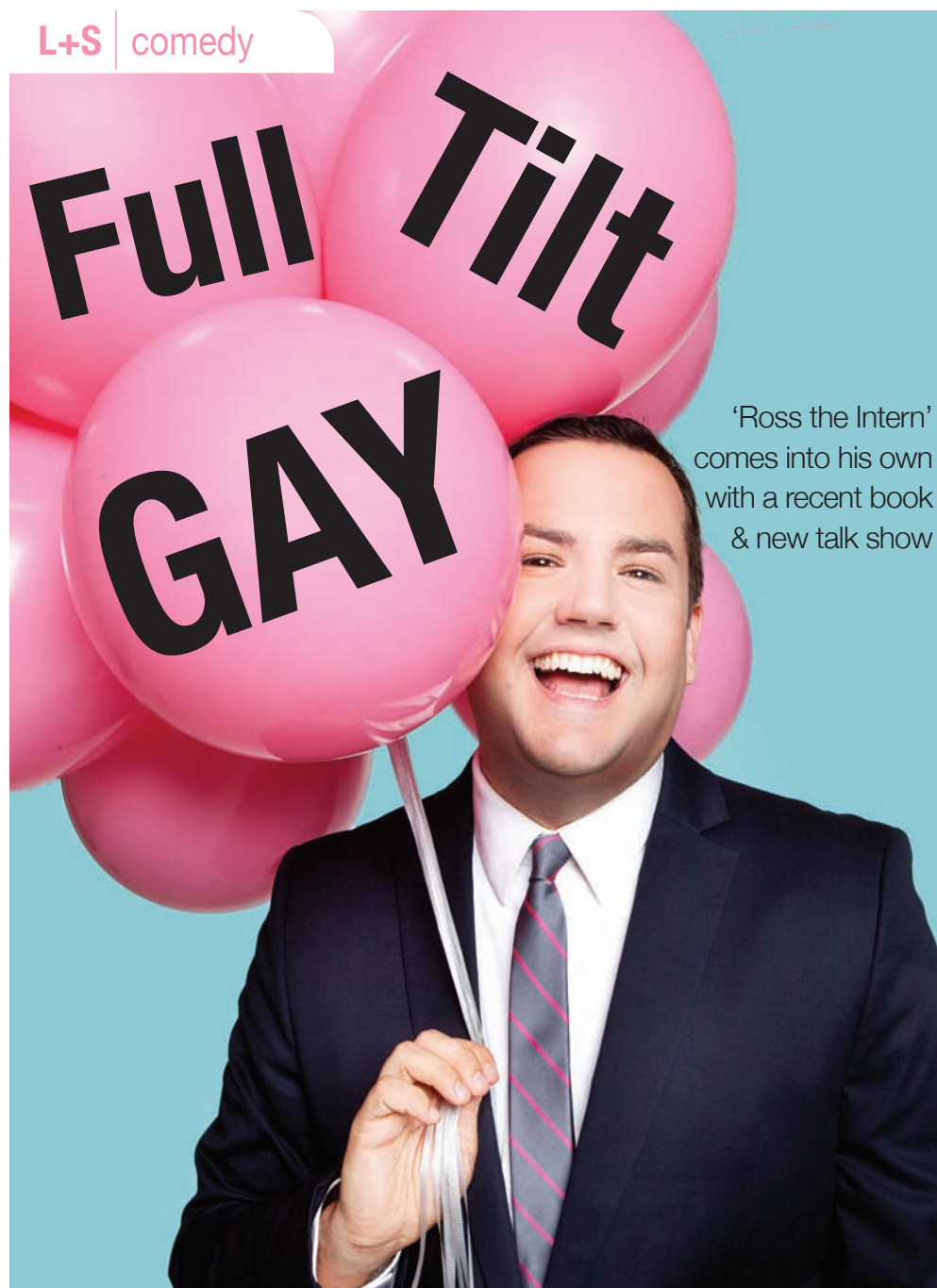


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Ross Mathews is talking from his own office in Hollywood and he can't even believe it. "It's the dream," he says, bubbling over with joy. "I'm getting to do exactly what I've always wanted to do."

That dream began back in 2001 when the pop-culture fanatic landed a behind-the-scenes job on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* as the host's buoyant intern. It wasn't long before Mathews was on camera, and not long after that when Chelsea Handler took him under her wing and he became the comedian's resident gay. Now, she's letting him fly solo: Last week, Mathews launched his very own show, *Hello Ross*, with Handler co-producing, on E!

In our recent chat, Mathews talks about his new over-the-top-gay show, why he learned to embrace his high-pitched voice and the trick to keeping it together when meeting Madonna.

—Chris Azzopardi

Dallas Voice: Your story is of a farm town kid who didn't fit in and who was bullied but is now the star of his own show. Do you hope to inspire gay kids going through what you went through?

Ross Mathews: When I was growing up, I remember thinking, "What is my life gonna be like?" I didn't know what it meant to be a successful, happy, grown-up gay person because I didn't see that. I didn't see that in my small town. I didn't see that represented on television. Even when I started on television in 2001, it was really at the beginning, before *Queer Eye* and *Will & Grace*, before Ellen was out, before Rosie was out; it really wasn't represented anywhere. I started appearing on national television as people like Rosie and Neil Patrick Harris came out and shows like

those became relevant, and I was part of something.

From this point forward, whenever kids are realizing they're gay, they know what it means to be a happy, successful, openly and unapologetically grown-up gay person, and what that looks like and what life can be for them. And I hope people can see me on *Chelsea Lately* and see me on my show and say, "Hey, look, he's got a partner and a family and a dog and friends, and he never apologized for who he is and neither will I."

Are you the modern-day Ellen or Rosie? OK, now that freaks me out! I have a lot more to achieve to reach anything like that, but I will gladly fulfill that role for whomever needs it. I feel like I have a big ol'

wagon; everybody hop on it and let's do this together.

Who's the tougher boss: Jay Leno or Chelsea Handler? Well, I would never categorize either one of them as tough on me. They've both given me incredible platforms, which is very rare for comics to do. I take it very seriously when they do that, because they don't do it lightly, and I know if they give me that opportunity, I gotta show up and be on point. That's how you get the next opportunity. That's how this town works. You get a shot, you deliver and you get another one.

And now your own office. I know, isn't that nuts? And Chelsea is upstairs. There've been two pivots in my career: one was meeting Jay Leno and the other was meeting Chelsea Handler, and both of them have been so instrumental and crucial and supportive and inspiring and have served as the most amazing mentors anybody in this town could ever have. I don't know what I ever did to deserve them, but I will spend the rest of my life thanking them.

Don't forget Mark-Paul Gosselaar, who you interviewed recently when you guest hosted *Chelsea Lately*. When I guest hosted and I said, "Please welcome Mark-Paul Gosselaar," and he walked around the corner, it was like I needed a time machine to go back to myself at 12 years old in my bedroom and be like, "Oh my God, guess what he just said?" It was the most surreal thing in the world. I had fantasized about him as a young kid watching *Saved by the Bell*, and he said he heard [me on Howard Stern] and told his wife, "Ross Mathews masturbated to me!" It really was like my head was going to explode.

Tell us about the "interactive" element of your show. It's a big party. This show is what I wish existed when I was a little kid, when I could reach out and be a part of pop culture. The audience is joining the conversation, and I'll literally be in the audience with a microphone asking people's opinions. When I have a guest, the people in the audience can ask the guest questions. We're Skype-ing people in from all over the country so they can ask questions as well.

There's never been a show like this on TV then? No, there hasn't. I looked at all these shows that sort of talk about pop culture and the majority of them, if not all, were kind of saying, "Isn't she a dumb bitch?" "Isn't that stupid?" "He's so lame." There wasn't a show that was doing what I'm doing, which is saying, "I love this stuff, you guys love it, let's talk it out."

How gay and fabulous is your set? Oh my God, it's pretty great. It's a little Palm Spring chic-y, but very comfortable. We're trying to mix the two things. And it's all a little elevated because I am super-gay, so it has to be; people would be disappointed if it wasn't.

How did you decide on calling it *Hello Ross*? There

was a lot of debate from a lot of people about the name, but there was never a debate on my end. To me, it was always *Hello Ross*. That's my Twitter, that's my website, that's the spirit of the show.

What have you learned from Chelsea to apply to your show? That there's a power in saying "I am what I am." Never second-guessing that thing that only you own and only you know, which is your point of view and your perception of things and your truth. I know that sounds really hippy-dippy, but if you look at her, how many times do you think she's probably heard, "You can't say that"? And I've heard, "You can't be that gay, you can't be that high-pitched, you'll never host a show with that voice." But what I've learned from her is to use what makes you different to stand out. I could've come to this town and taken hosting classes and done this and that and tried to lower my voice, but I would've looked like every other rock on the beach. The ones that work are those weird-looking rocks. Those are the ones you notice.

When did you start to really love and embrace your voice? There was a point in my teenhood when I realized that the voice wasn't changing. I was this gay cartoon of a person and it was a crossroad for me: I could either hate myself or I could love myself, and it's just not in my nature to hate, so I said, "Fine, I accept myself fully. Go 100 percent. Be you. Do you."

You mention your Madonna encounter in your book. What's the trick to keeping it together when meeting her? Clench your legs. Don't, like, lose it. And if you're a huge fan, perhaps bring a diaper, because I have to tell you, that was surreal. All I was thinking was, "Don't say something that makes her kick you out."

I've shot pieces at zoos with animal keepers where they hand you a snake and you think, "This is exotic, this could bite me and this could kill me at any second." It felt the same way when I met Madonna.

There's talk of a follow-up book. Where might you take the second one? The first book was about this person who loves pop culture and got plopped in the middle of it and tried to paddle and survive. I wanted to sort of establish who I was growing up, how I got plopped in pop culture and why that was such a big deal. The next book is about what happens now. You achieved this dream; what's it like? I have a partner, we're starting a family, I'm trying to see the world and travel. Every day I live this crazy life and I think to myself, "You've gotta write this down." I mean, the fact that I'm sitting where I'm sitting and I walk by celebrities every day on this lot and amazing things happen, and I go to these celebrity houses and I just can't believe it. I am this superfan, but I get to be on the inside. I think that's a story people want to hear.



PRIDEFUL MOMENTS: Neil Gaither

The person who has most inspired me, who most instills pride in my chosen trans and LGBQ families, is Sylvia Rivera. I ran across Lucky Michael's book *Shelter* while visiting the Transgender Center in Houston a few years ago. It beautifully documents the work at Sylvia's Place, a shelter that continues efforts Sylvia began to provide shelter for homeless LGBTQ folks, mainly youth. It was through that book that I started to understand how significant Sylvia has been in the trans movement. Sylvia fought for others, especially folks that the mainstream LGBT community often leaves behind — those who've had to leave school, who are orphaned or have been rejected by their families, who are unemployed, who are homeless, and who, in spite of these difficulties, maintain the integrity of their identity. When I think of what Sylvia, along with her partner Marsha P. Johnson, accomplished in spite of great personal hardship in her own life, I am enormously proud and honored to be part of a wonderful trans heritage that helps define who I am today.

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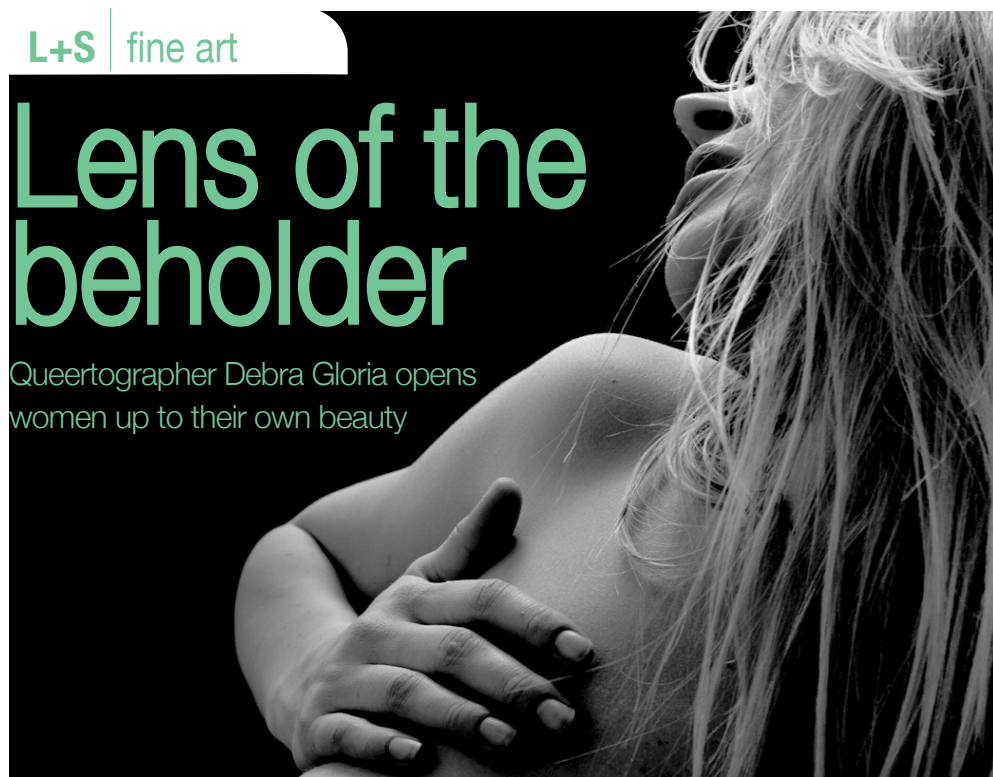
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Lens of the beholder

Queertographer Debra Gloria opens women up to their own beauty



BODY BEAUTIFUL | Women celebrate their bodies in all shapes through Debra Gloria's lens.

When photographer Debra Gloria opens her lens to create female nude images, she often brings the women she shoots to tears at the sight of their own beauty.

Gloria's project, titled *Sensuality*, is a collection of black and white nudes that captures the

essence of each woman cloaked in darkness where just enough light play reflects the natural beauty of the female form. That might be expected in the pages of *Vogue* or *Playboy*, but Gloria uses only non-professional models ... and her images are not your everyday black-and-

whites. At first glance, they call to mind Leibovitz or Mapplethorpe, but Gloria differentiates her work.

"With Annie's black-and-white photography, she always includes props," she explains. "I decided I was not going to use anything but the body and let the body express itself. And Mapplethorpe is very sexual — there is a difference between sensuality and sexuality. Sex is a verb. Sensuality is a woman."

Gloria's inspiration came from wanting to capture the quiet moments no one sees in the lives of women.

"Sensuality is what a woman is like inside of her body — not necessarily the exterior, but the interior of what lives inside her. We don't see that; we put a façade on every day and zip it up and that's how we greet our friends, our colleagues and sometimes even our partners. It is in that quietness that sensuality is not seen or known in everyday life. It is something we keep under lock and key," she says.

Gloria started taking pictures in 1990, working as a commercial and artistic photographer, but didn't start her *Sensuality* series until 2006. In 2007, she had her first show of these images. Women looked at the beauty on the wall, reflected on themselves and said they didn't feel attractive — they were depressed: maybe from a breakup, a misunderstanding in a relationship, maybe they gained weight or they didn't feel attractive. As the process continued, Gloria started feeling what they were going through and

started shooting women in a different light.

"I started showing what I saw in them — the beauty I saw in them," explains Gloria, who is lesbian. "[Women] are our worst critics — 'look at this roll, look at this hail damage' ... I hear laundry lists of what we criticize ourselves. But [my models] always ask me at the end of our shoot, in tears, 'Is that really me?'"

It was through this process that Gloria realized how the project was helping women boost their self-esteem. To begin a shoot, Gloria counsels each model to ask how they see themselves. A lot of people aren't ready for such a simple question.

"I have to develop a trust level with the model — they are about to feel me extract something about themselves they didn't know," she says. When they arrive for the shoot, Gloria invites them to bring familiar music as a relaxation trigger.


"I can see as they have transformed into someone being aware of themselves to someone who lets go — they become unaware of themselves and that is when the magic starts," she says.


"There is a level of respect that happens between me and the client while shooting that they have that comfort level with me."

The result is a tribute to the woman, a breathtaking layout of artistic photography and a revitalized sense of self-esteem for the model. Gloria focuses on the fine details and produces fine art.

She plans to publish *Sensuality* with a book launch in November.




— Sarah Denise Morgan





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Amateur hour

Campy humor of '60s deb 'Maxie Mainwaring, Lesbian Dilettante' lacks bite



Maxie Mainwaring, Lesbian Dilettante by Monica Nolan (Kensington Books 2013) \$15; 288 pp.

Job-bobbing isn't what Maxie wanted to do as a career, but there she is, feeling like an ill-employed rubber ball, ready to bounce to the next workplace. In the

new book *Maxie Mainwaring, Lesbian Dilettante* by Monica Nolan, Maxie just needs to try her hand at a bunch of different things.

Debutante Maxie Mainwaring *hated* when Mumsy made her go to those society-ladies luncheons. Those events were stuffy and begged for excitement, so Maxie obliged by making out with Elaine Ellman in the bathroom at the Bay City Women's Club. Big mistake: Mumsy was so scandalized that she made good on a perennial

threat and cut Maxie's allowance off. It was 1964 — what kind of a job could a deb do?

Quickly, Maxie decided that it was time to move in with her girlfriend, Pamela. Pam had been hinting about that for awhile, even though she often complained about Maxie's lack of stick-to-it-iveness and her wandering eye. Unfortunately, those subjects instantly came up, and the on-again-off-again girls were off for good.

On her way back home to the Magdalena Arms, Maxie stopped at Francine's Bar to nurse her wounds and meet her friends for a drink. Lovely Lois, delightful Dolly, Janet the lawyer, and practical Phyllis all promised to help Maxie find a job. Career Counselor Doris Watkins even wanted to do a job assessment study with her.

And so Maxie tried employment at a magazine, but learned that there was no pay. She had a brief stint as a recreational aide before getting fired for snooping. She worked for a magazine publisher who *loved* her snooping but hated her tardiness.

But Maxie was tardy for good reason: she'd met a beautiful butch, Lon, who seemed to be in-

involved in organized crime and Maxie was tailing her, intrigued. Then Maxie learned that her mother was also mixed up in the mob. Could that be why Francine's was raided by the police? Was Lon's life in danger? Was somebody following Maxie, too?

How do I describe thee, *Maxie Mainwaring*? Let me count the ways. It's rompish, first of all — humorous, but not hilarious; contrived, but not off-puttingly so. And it's silly — very definitely silly, but not in a bad way.

I actually liked this book for its frivolity. I'm normally not a big fan of an over-filled cast of characters, yet here it seemed to work. What started out as fun, though, didn't stay that way, as Nolan's weirdly excessive use of identifiers instead of monikers grows stale. Repeatedly referring to someone by job description or former job description rather than by name became tiresome and often quite confusing.

Still, this fluffy whodunit, this marshmallow mystery, is entertaining enough if you can ignore that abrasion. It's surely something that's perfectly made for summertime reading. And if that's what you

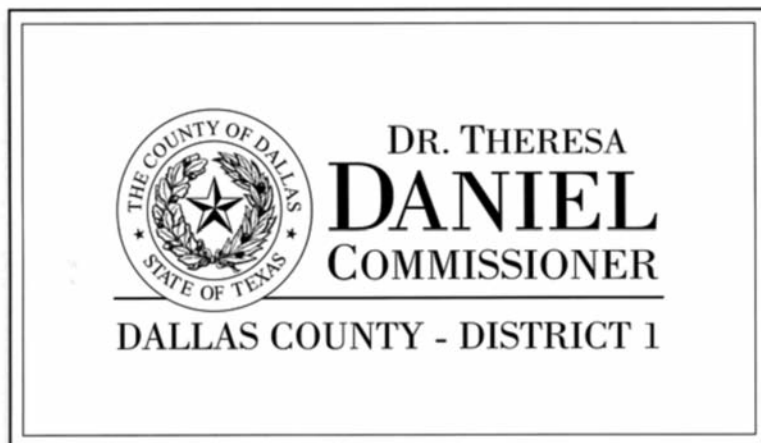


Author Monica Nolan

want, then *Maxie Mainwaring, Lesbian Dilettante* is what you should have. ■

— Terri Schlichenmeyer

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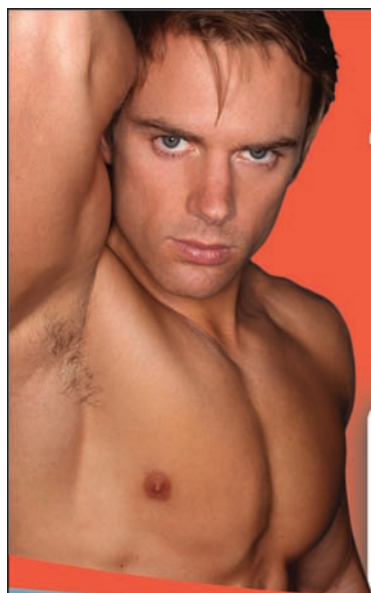
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L+S books

Hero worship? Memoir of Gifford's gay staffer light on insights, interest

They Call Me a Hero: A Memoir of My Youth by Daniel Hernandez with Susan Goldman Rubin (Simon & Schuster 2013). \$18; 224 pp.

These days, it takes more than a cool costume to be considered a hero. But in his recounting of his role in a prominent shooting, Daniel Hernandez says there was nothing heroic about his actions.

Many would disagree. The event on January 8, 2011, was supposed to be fun and informative. Congresswoman Gabrielle Gifford, who loved interacting with her constituents, had planned a meet-and-greet on that Saturday afternoon in Tucson. Hernandez, the gay 20-year-old intern in Gifford's office, was there to help register attendees and to do light crowd control.

Everything was going well ... until he heard explosions and one word: "Gun!"

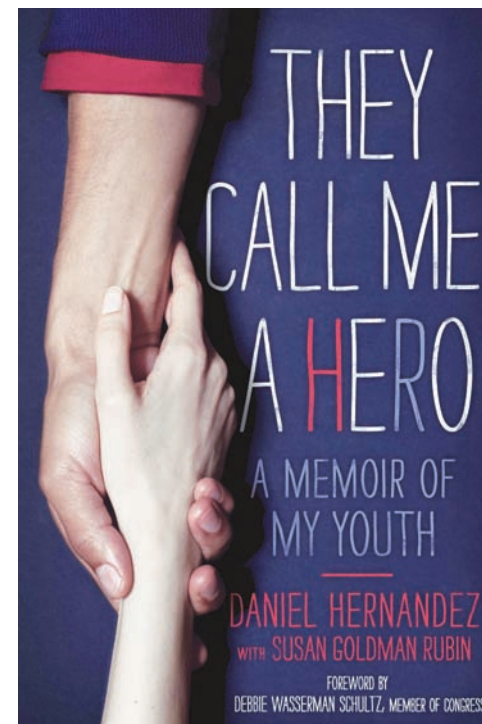
Almost automatically, Hernandez headed for the stage, with Gifford first on his mind. With barely a pause, he pressed his hand against her wound to slow the bleeding, an action that may have saved her life. He comforted her, and rode with her in the ambulance to the hospital.

Years before, as a child, Hernandez had wanted to be a doctor. He was a good student in school and was teased for his bookishness and for being gay. Undaunted, he stayed true to himself and sought classes and training for a future medical career.

He blames his obsession with politics on Hillary Clinton. He became fascinated by her run for the White House and volunteered to work for her campaign, a love that extended to his college years, the friends he sought and, later, to a desire to serve others in a political career that also allowed him to do motivational speaking.

On that winter day two years ago, though, Hernandez was just an intern. His future, he hoped, would be spent serving others through volunteering. But he was destined to become a hero first.

There are a lot of bumps in *They Call Me a Hero*, starting with its subtitle (*A Memoir of My*



Youth). Hernandez (with Susan Goldman Rubin) doesn't actually include a whole lot about Hernandez's youth; instead, the vast majority of this memoir is about that day in Tucson, the whirlwind of media attention afterward and Hernandez's subsequent political activities.

There's also an awful lot of back-patting.

To the good, however, this book may loudly urge teens to give of themselves to better their world. With an overwhelming record of achievements, Hernandez is a tornado of service to others and he makes volunteerism seem fun, almost like a community in itself. That may spur young readers to mobilize.

Indeed, the intended audience for this book is 12-to-18-year-olds but there's certainly no reason adults can't read it. If you can look beyond the awkwardness and boasting here, you may find a hunk of inspiration, too.

— Terri Schlichenmeyer



PRIDEFUL MOMENTS: RAFIQ SALLEH

Being able to become who you are is the best thing that can happen to anyone. That goes for me when I first moved to the United States from Asia in the late 1990s. The most inspiring moment that I could recall was when my partner, Cannon Flowers, and I participated in the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade in 2000. It's a feeling that I can still remember — how liberated I felt, being able to express who I am as a gay person compared to when I was growing up in Singapore. And for this, I will never take it for granted, for the gay pioneers had paved the way for us.

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Jaguar F-Type versus Mazda MX-5 Miata: Fashion, looks and style for all pocketbooks

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Hails from:

MX-5: Hiroshima, Japan. This time, the A-bomb was dropped on Italy and Britain.

F-Type: Castle Bromwich, England — the sassy Brit without a spot on *Absolutely Fabulous*.

Glee character favorite:

MX-5: Kurt. He's flashy and classy, with sweet pipes, but still a little princess.

F-Type: Sue. The wrath of her voice complements the punch in her fist, but deep down, we know she's a pussycat.

MPGs:

MX-5: 21/28-MPG city/hwy. Slow down on those Lime-A-Ritas, baby.

F-Type: 16-20/23-28 city/hwy. Just because he's expensive doesn't mean he's a pig.

Flipping its lid:

MX-5: 12s (folding hard top), or a quickie hand job with the canvas roof.

F-Type: 12s, and he can do it up to 30 MPH.

Weight:

MX-5: 2,447 pounds — staying trim to lure a him.

F-Type: Up to 3,671 pounds — apparently, already hitched.

Fully throttled:

MX-5: Takes 167 horsepower in stride, delivered by a 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine.

F-Type: Packing a full closet, owners choose between 340 or 380 horsepower supercharged 3.0-liter V6 engines or the full-scat 495 horsepower 5-liter supercharged V8 that sprints up to 186 mph.

Key body structure:

MX-5: Steel and love.

F-Type: Recycled aluminum cans, conveniently crushed by a bear's head.

Top audio:

MX-5: Bose, seven speakers. Does anything beat

LIFE+STYLE

auto

MASCULIN, FEMININ | The classic contours of a Jaguar F-Type, left, ooze sex, but Mazda's refashioned MX-5

vs. Butch



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Bose?

F-Type: Meridian, 12 speakers ... and 770 watts! Put that in your "perfectly focused surround sound field" and luxuriate in it.

Favorite vice:

MX-5: Optional folding hardtop makes the idea of year-round driving more than fantasy.

F-Type: Configurable Dynamics program allows drivers to personalize vehicle performance and includes displays for lap timer and G-meter (no, not that G-meter).

Best transmission:

MX-5: 6-speed manual is shifter of the gods.

F-Type: 8-speed 'Quickshift' automatic with steering wheels ready for paddling.

Exotic dream:

MX-5: Shop for pumps, then drive through Austin Hill Country.

F-Type: Tear up new Circuit of The Americas, then pant over a petite fillet.

Troubled celeb most likely to drive it:

MX-5: Amanda Bynes — that bitch flips more wigs than any convertible princess bottoms.

F-Type: Paula Deen — Jaguars go with Savannah like shrimp and grits, all the better for kicking sugar in the faces of all who try to put her down.

Brand clarity:

MX-5: Poor confused little dear still don't know if she's an MX-5 or Miata.

F-Type: It's a Jaguar. Look at those cats' eyes, gaping oval mouth and sprung rear haunches.

Base price:

MX-5: Under \$24,000 and a hell of a deal. If whores were this cheap, everybody would get one.

F-Type: You'll think you bought the Chicken Ranch when you lay \$69,000 for the base model, \$81,000 for an S or \$92,000 for the cluckin' V8 S edition.

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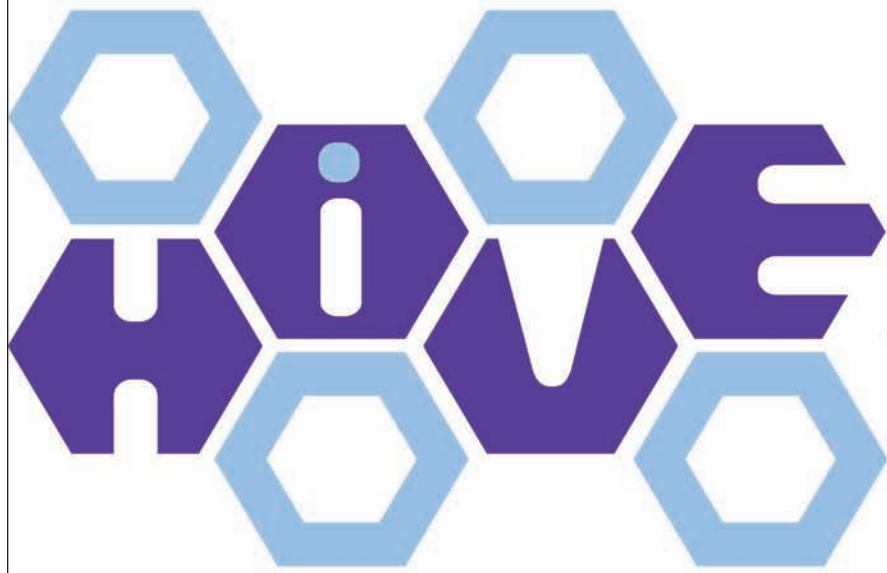
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Saturday 09.14
Sunday 09.15

Purple Party plans 2 days of gay dance parties

It's Pride Weekend, and that means not just one circuit party but two. The main event, Prism, features headliner DJ Alyson Calagna spinning into the early morning hours Saturday night at The Loft in the Cedars. Then, after the parade on Sunday, former Dallasite Corey Craig, pictured, and local luminary Brandon Moses double-team Spectrum, the Purple Party tea dance.

DEETS: Prism at The Loft, 1125 S. Lamar St. \$30-\$40. Sept. 14 at 10 p.m. Spectrum at LeVu, 2505 Pacific Ave. Sept. 15 at 6 p.m. \$15-\$20. PurpleFoundation.org.



Saturday 09.14

Gay Day at Six Flags queers up Arlington theme park

Let's face it: You live in North Texas, you go to Six Flags with your friends sometimes — and *voila!* You've made it a gay day. But that's not the same as Gay Day at Six Flags, a tradition for more than a decade (and sponsored by Dallas Voice). First, it's a way to get your Pride going before the parade on Sunday. Second, it's a way to share the fellowship of being out-and-proud with folks other than that close clique of yours. And best of all? Buy your tickets online in advance, and you save a ton of money (and get parking included!) Hey, being gay doesn't mean being frivolous.

DEETS: Six Flags Over Texas, 2201 Road to Six Flags, Arlington. Park opens at 10 a.m. \$35 tickets available at <http://alturl.com/8u7h2>.



LIFE+STYLE
best bets



Friday 09.13

Supreme gay icon Diana Ross at Winspear

Diana Ross is coming ... out ... to the Winspear Opera House. The quintessential diva — a gay icon for decades, from her days with the Supremes to her solo career to her performances in movies from *Lady Sings the Blues* to *Mahogany* to *The Wiz* — performs a concert in the Arts District benefiting the anti-poverty charity CitySquare. What better way to kick off Pride Weekend than with the first lady of Motown who gave us "I'm Coming Out." We are, too, Diana.

DEETS: Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 8 p.m. Tickets from \$75. ATTPAC.org.

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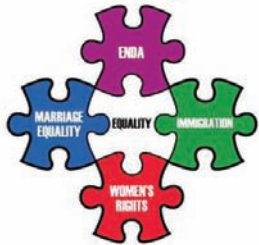
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calendar highlights

ARTSWEEK: NOW PLAYING

THEATER

Pride Performing Arts Festival. Collection of one-act plays relating to gay themes. Presented by Uptown Players. Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through Sept. 14. UptownPlayers.org.

Red Hot Patriot. Actress Georgia Clinton portrays Texas firebrand Molly Ivins in this one-woman show. Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Through Sept. 29. WaterTowerTheatre.org.

The Sound of Music. Cheryl Denson directs the Lyric Stage production based on the original Broadway orchestrations. *Reviewed this week.* Irving Arts Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd., Irving. Through Sept. 15. LyricStage.org.

Thank You, Jeeves! Stage West concludes its 2013 season with this classic farce, once again featuring Jim Couvart as the harried gentleman's gentleman. Stage West, 821 W. Vickery Blvd., Fort Worth. Through Sept. 29. StageWest.org.

Altar Boyz. A jaunty musical about a Christian rock band ... including one closeted gay singer. Presented by Theatre Arlington, 305 W. Main St., Arlington. Through Oct. 6. TheatreArlington.org.

A Raisin in the Sun. Dallas Theater Center presents the acclaimed classic by lesbian author Lorraine Hansberry about an African-American family striving for



PUT ... IT ... IN ... ME | The hilarious musical 'Altar Boyz,' about a Christian boy band on its last concert tour, opens Theatre Arlington's new season.

the American Dream. Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through Oct. 27 (in previews through Sept. 20). DallasTheaterCenter.org.

Profanity. Trans playwright Sylvan Oswald's period drama gets its world premiere. Undermain Theatre, 3200 Main St. Through Oct. 12. Undermain.org.

Exit, Pursued by a Bear. A comedy presented by Circle

Theatre. 230 W. Fourth St., Fort Worth. *Final weekend.* CircleTheatre.org.

CABARET

Diana Sheehan Sings the Lyrics of Lorenz Hart.

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-Bookreview.com



www.thescarletters.com

at 2 p.m. \$20-\$25. AmphibianStageProductions.org.

FINE ART

Objects of Desire III. The return of the exhibit of art work with lustful appeal. ilume Gallerie, 4123 Cedar Springs Road, suite 107. Through Oct. 5. Free. ilumeGallerie.com.

The Body Beautiful in Ancient Greece:

Masterworks from the British Museum. A collection of marbles and pottery and bronzework from Greek antiquity focusing on the human form, especially the male nude. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through Oct. 6. Special exhibition fee: \$16. DallasMuseumofArt.org.

Rusty Scruby: He Sells Seashells. A solo exhibit by the Dallas artist's experiments in photography. Cris Worley Fine Arts, 1415 Slocum St. Through Oct. 5. CrisWorley.com.

Going Postal. An art exhibit featuring diverse postal art in various media by four artists, including gay Irish multimedia artist Gary Farrelly. RE Gallery, 1717 Gould St. *Final weekend.* ReGalleryStudio.com.

Gold on Black: Japanese Lacquer from the Jacqueline Lavant Collection. The beauty of lacquered finishes is highlighted. Crow Collection of Asian Art, 2010 Flora St. Through *Final weekend.* Free. CrowCollection.org.

Biennial: Origins in Geometry. A juried competition of emerging visual artists. Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, 3109 Carlisle St. Through Oct. 6. GeometricMadiMuseum.org.



WANT VS. NEED | A 'robot lamp' is one of the desirable items in the Objects of Desire III exhibit at ilume Gallerie.

SouthwestRVSuperShow.com.

DINING

Grapefest. Grapevine's 27th annual wine tasting event (the largest in the Southwest) brings beers, wine, foods and more to the downtown historic city center. Through Sept. 15. Open daily at 10 a.m. (11 a.m. Sunday). \$8-\$23. GrapevineTexasUSA.com/grapefest.

CONCERTS

Diana Ross: A Night to Remember. The gay icon performs a fundraiser for CitySquare, an anti-poverty organization. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 8 p.m. \$75-up. ATTPAC.org.

SATURDAY 09.14

PRIDE

Gay Day at Six Flags. The annual Pride Day at the amusement park, sponsored by Dallas Voice, with a special discount admission of \$35 on the Web (including

■ CALENDAR Next Page

FRIDAY 09.13

COMMUNITY

Dick's Happy Hour, the new name for Dick's Night Out, celebrates its one-year anniversary at the W Hotel Ghostbar with DJ Casey Alva. W Dallas Victory Hotel, 2440 Victory Park Lane. 6-10 p.m. Free with RSVP at DicksHappyHour.com.

High Tech Happy Hour. The monthly mixer, sponsored by TI's gay group but open to everyone, comes to Lazaranda, 5000 Belt Line Road, suite 850, Addison. 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Kol Nidre Service. Congregation Beth El Binah, 2701 Reagan St. 7:30 p.m. BethElBinah.org.

AUTOMOTIVE

Southwest RV Supershow. The largest show of RVs in the Southwest returns, with more than 400 recreational vehicles on display, appealing to every budget. Dallas Market Hall, 2200 N. Stemmons Freeway. Through Sept. 15. Open daily at 10 a.m. \$12.

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calendar highlights



OPERA SALSA | Tenor David Portillo sings Latin arias to mark National Hispanic Heritage Month in a concert at the DMA on Sunday.

CALENDAR From Previous Page

parking). Six Flags, 2201 Road to Six Flags, Arlington. Park opens at 10 a.m. To purchase discount tickets, visit <http://alturl.com/8u7h2>.

Resource Center Dallas 30th Anniversary Community Open House. Sponsored by the Purple Foundation. Food trucks, live entertainment and more. 2701 Reagan St. 11 a.m.–2 p.m. Free.

Prism: Dallas Pride Main Event Circuit Party. DJs Alyson Calagna and Mike James spin at this Purple Party event. The Loft, 1135 S. Lamar St. 10 p.m.–4 a.m. \$30 online, \$40 at the door. PurpleFoundation.org.

COMMUNITY Dick's Get Wet Pride Pool Party, a special Pride event at the W Hotel Wet Deck, with DJs Casey Alva, Charlie Phresh and Stevie Ray. W Dallas Victory Hotel, 2440 Victory Park Lane. Noon–6 p.m. \$10 in advance, \$15 at door. DicksGetWet.com.

Yom Kippur Service. Congregation Beth El Binah, 2701 Reagan St. 10:00 a.m.–6 p.m. Followed by Break the Fast. BethElBinah.org.

FINE ART

Ray-Mel Cornelius: Inside and Out. An exhibition of painting and drawing reflecting the natural world. Norwood Flynn Gallery, 3318 Shorecrest Drive. Sept. 14–Oct. 5. Opening night artist's reception, 6–8 p.m. NorwoodFlynnGallery.com

SUNDAY 09.15

WORSHIP

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

PRIDE

Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade and Festival in the Park. Parade begins down Cedar Springs Road starting at 2 p.m. Festival in Lee Park opens at noon. \$5 admission.

Spectrum: Dallas Pride Tea Dance. DJs Corey Craig and Brandon Moses spin at this tea dance circuit party, sponsored by The Purple Foundation. LeVu, 2505 Pacific Ave. 6 p.m.–midnight. \$15 online, \$20 at the door. PurpleFoundation.org.





Making beautiful 'Music'

Any production (film or stage) of **The Sound of Music** should come with a Surgeon General's Warning: "Repeated viewing may cause diabetes." It's the quintessentially sappy family musical — and no less entertaining because of it. And the version now at Lyric Stage — like all recent Lyric productions — will seem slightly unfamiliar to those accustomed only to the film or edited stage versions: The songs are in a different order (some missing, some added) and the motivations of the characters different.

In fact, you might not even recognize Maria (Bri Sudia) in the opening number; she's a tomboyish, brassy postulant, not the perfected-diction governess Julie Andrews specialized in. It takes a song or two to get used to Maria's youth and sassiness, as if Fanny Brice was tackling Rodgers & Hammerstein. But director Cheryl Denson and musical director Jay Dias do here what they have done repeatedly with Lyric shows: Cast excellent singers who also have acting chops and set them out to impress us. They do. (The children are all especially terrific.)

The first act is a nearly butt-numbing hour-and-forty-five, but you barely notice until the end (in another deviation from the film, the act break occurs after "Climb Ev'ry Mountain," not before it; the movie got it right). The movie was also wise to drop "No Way to Stop It" (sung by Max and Frau Schrader), as well as replace "An Ordinary Couple" with the admittedly more saccharine "Something Good." But when the three-hour evening is over, you'll still be brushing back a tear or two and clearing your throat. *The Sound of Music* may be shameless in its button-pushing, but it does so deftly.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Irving Arts Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd. Through Sunday. LyricStage.org.

CONCERTS

Music & Masterpieces: David Portillo in Recital. In recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, the tenor performs a concert steeped in the musical heritage of South and Latin America. Presented by Dallas Opera and Dallas Museum of Art. Horchow Auditorium, 1717 Harwood St. 2 p.m. Free. DallasOpera.org.

THURSDAY 09.19

DINING

Addison Oktoberfest starts in September, with authentic Munich biergarten style food and drink. 4970 Addison Circle Drive. Sept. 19–22. Free–\$10. AddisonTexas.net.

MONDAY 09.16

COMMUNITY

Leadership Lambda Toastmasters meets to improve public speaking and leadership skills. First Unitarian Church of Dallas, 4012 St. Andrews. 6:30–8 p.m. LeadershipLambda.ToastmastersClub.org.

TUESDAY 09.17

THEATER

Peter and the Starcatcher. The Tony Award-winning hit, a riff on Peter Pan, comes to the Winspear from the Lexus Broadway Series. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. Sept. 17–29. ATPAC.org.

WEDNESDAY 09.18

COMMUNITY

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.

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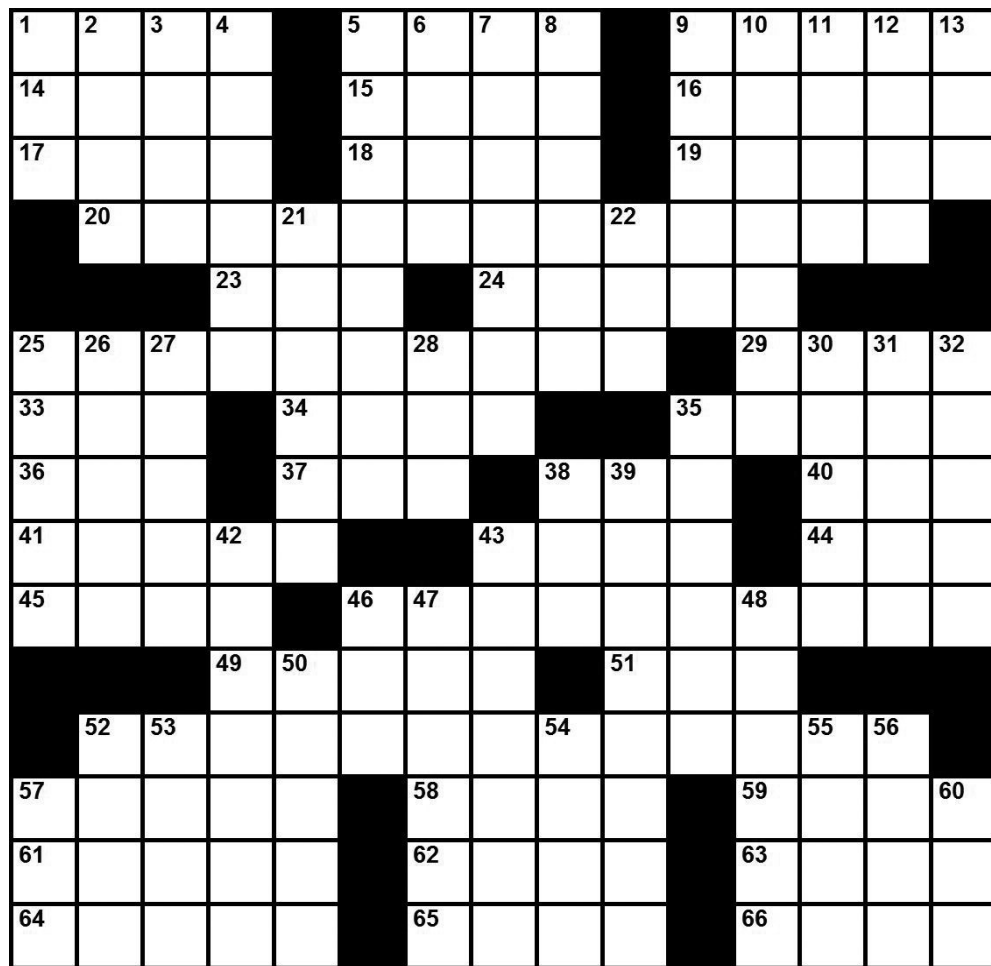
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“C’est Si Bong”

Solution on page 87

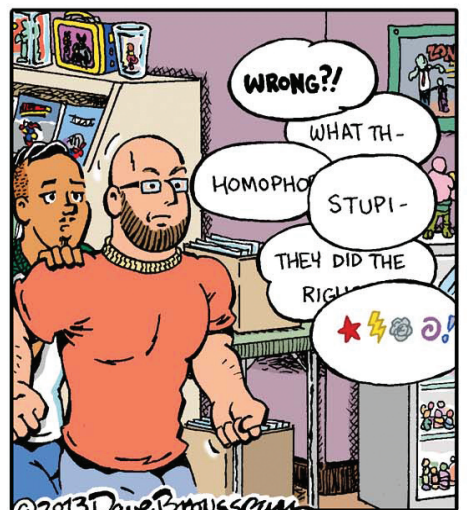
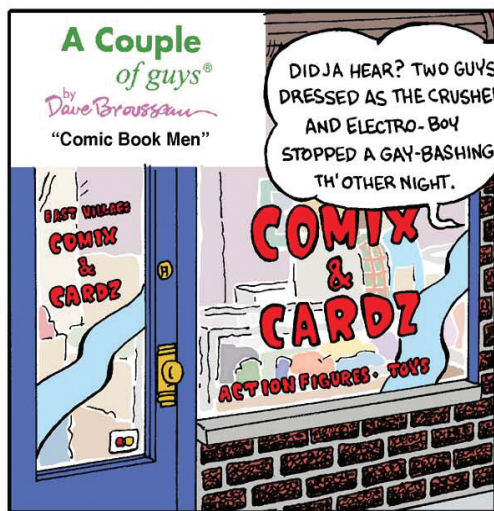
Across

- 1 Bit of salt, for Stephen Pyles
- 5 Hayes of *Will & Grace* reruns
- 9 Like an ACT UP protester
- 14 Wine region of Michelangelo’s land
- 15 Isle of exile in Brando’s *Desiree*
- 16 Word that may follow sperm or organ
- 17 Lindsay Lohan’s ___ *Girls*
- 18 Santa’s got a long one
- 19 Make up
- 20 Well-endowed barbarian?
- 23 Caligula’s arts
- 24 Composer Copland
- 25 Billie Jean’s successor?
- 29 “Nuts!”
- 33 Bonehead
- 34 Time for cowboys to shoot off
- 35 Tinkerbell, e.g.
- 36 Bi plus mono
- 37 R.E.M.’s former record label
- 38 Gay pickup spot
- 40 He knocked out many men
- 41 Joan of Arc keepsake
- 43 City where Dick Button won gold
- 44 Number of gay men under a centurian?
- 45 Place of the first fig-leaf codpiece

- 46 Mild oath of a metrosexual?
- 49 Cross-dressing *Twelfth Night* character
- 51 Earhart’s medium
- 52 Member that needs no lube?
- 57 Flies like a falcon
- 58 Fruit cover
- 59 “___ do anything better than you”
- 61 Rainbow maker
- 62 Suffix with prefer
- 63 Chip’s partner
- 64 Up ___ (with one’s ass in a sling)
- 65 Stag party?
- 66 It’ll spice up your meat

Down

- 1 Lesbian’s latex
- 2 Where to find Moby Dick
- 3 9 inches, e.g.
- 4 Prick one’s curiosity about
- 5 Has a bottom line of
- 6 *East of Eden* director Kazan
- 7 You can do it to avoid sexually transmitted disease
- 8 Lane of *The Producers*
- 9 *My Own Private* ___
- 10 The Capitol dome is its top
- 11 Soon, to Shakespeare
- 12 Half of a pair for grabbing
- 13 It may come before long
- 21 Queer, in a way
- 22 Work unit
- 25 Part of a cathedral name in gay Paree
- 26 Follower of lop or dog
- 27 Dossier about Uranus?
- 28 Cold-cocks
- 30 Gay rodeo accessory
- 31 *The Wizard of Oz* scorer Harold
- 32 Active in B and D
- 35 Like pansies, perhaps?
- 38 Biter of Marc Antony’s girlfriend
- 39 Poisonous bush
- 42 How Countee Cullen wrote
- 43 Like a rainbow of colors
- 46 First note sound, in *The Sound of Music*
- 47 Oscar Wilde’s partner Douglas
- 48 “Tin men” of sci-fi
- 50 “C’est Moi,” to Lancelot
- 52 Legal wrong
- 53 Film exposing Treat Williams
- 54 Fairy tale start
- 55 Trojans’ org.
- 56 Balls of brass
- 57 Cruising area
- 60 Where to find lesbianation.com





Kendall and Larry at Woody's Sports & Video Bar.

Happy Pride Weekend! ... The **Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade** steps off at 2 p.m. on Sept. 15 at Cedar Springs Road and Wycliff Avenue. The **Festival in Lee Park** goes on all afternoon and continues after the parade. Admission to the festival is \$5. ... **Eden Lounge** kicks off **Pride Weekend** with **Jessi Lynn** live for a rooftop party on Sept. 13. Then guest performers, prizes and more are part of a **Rainbow Hawaiian Luau** on Sept. 14. After the parade on Sept. 15, the **Pride After Party** celebrates Eden owner **Kristi's** birthday with special guests and surprises all evening. ... **DJ Tim Phlueger** from **Oz New Orleans** is spinning at **BJ's NXSI** on Sept. 14 and 15. ... Watch the Cowboys vs. the Chiefs at **Woody's Sports & Video Bar** on Sept. 15 at noon before the parade. Then bleacher seating is available to watch the parade. And at 4 p.m. the **Backlot Show Your Pride** party begins. ... **Mi Diva Loca** opens Pride Weekend at **Sue Ellen's** on Sept. 13 followed by **Jurni Rayne** on Sept. 14. Then **Anton Shaw and the Bang Ups** are in the house for the Sept. 15 Pride party. ... Sept. 13 is **Ink and Metal Night** at the **Dallas Eagle**. **National Leather Association** holds its monthly bar night on Sept. 14. After the Sunday parade, **DJ Blaine** spins for **Pride Edition Supafly Trash Disco**. ... **Randy's Club Cherries** has a **Pride Foam Party** on Sept. 14 with foam flowing floor to ceiling. ... The **Imperial Court de Fort Worth/Arlington** presents an **Imperial Birthday Celebration Show** on Sept. 15 at **Club Reflection**. All proceeds benefit **Cancer Care Services**. ... **Londee Ighlee** opens Pride Weekend at **Alexandre's** on Sept. 13. **Sheelah P and Infinity** perform on Sept. 14 and on Sept. 15, **Lil Chalupa** hosts karaoke. ... After the parade, it's **ManCandy Retro Dancing** at the **Round-Up Saloon** and karaoke in the parlor. ... Show your Pride!

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



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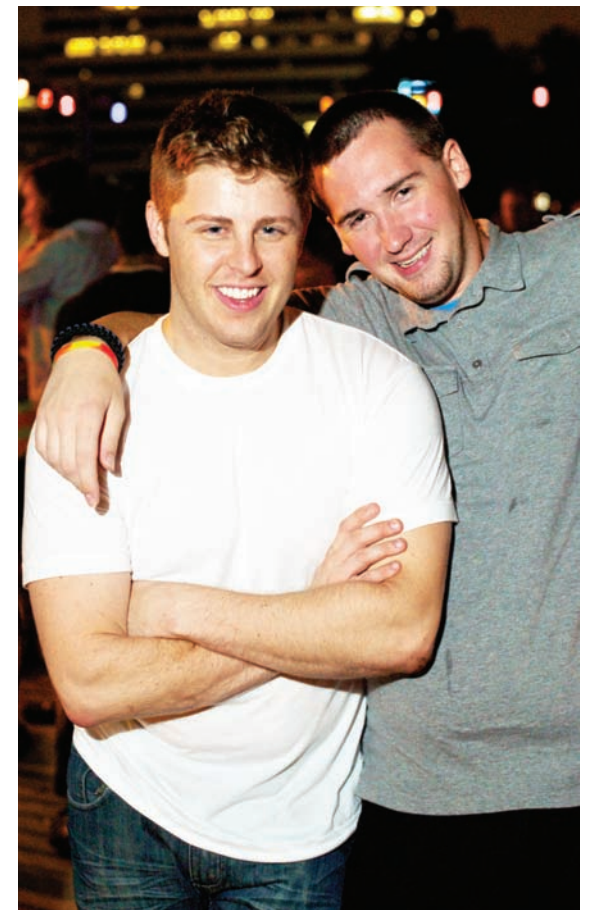
Chris and Tim at Alexandre's.



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AIDS INTERFAITH NETWORK — 501 N. Stemmons, #200, Dallas 75207; 214-943-4444 (Programs), 214-941-7696 (Administration); aidsinterfaithnetwork.org.

AIDS OUTREACH CENTER — 400 North Beach Street; Fort Worth, 76111; www.aoc.org; 817-335-1994.

AIDS PREVENTION PROJECT — 400 S. Zang, Dallas 75208; 214-645-7300, 214-645-7301.

***AIDS SERVICES OF DALLAS** — 400 S Zang Blvd, Dallas 75208; 214-941-0523; aidsdallas.org

AIDS SERVICES OF NORTH TEXAS — 4210 Mesa, Denton 76207, 940-381-1501; 2540 Ave. K, Ste 500, Plano 75074, 972-424-1480; 3506 Texas, Greenville 75401, 903-450-4018; 102 S. First, Rockwall 75087; 800-974-2437; aidsntx.org.

EXHALE SERVICES — 405 S. Elm, Denton 75201; 940-484-2516.

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***LEGACY COUNSELING CENTER & LEGACY FOUNDERS COTTAGE** — 4054 McKinney, #102, Dallas 75204; 214-520-6308; legacycares.org.

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***NELSON-TEBEDO HEALTH RESOURCE CENTER** — 4012 Cedar Springs, Dallas 75219; 214-528-2336; rcdallas.org/nthr.c.html.

NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS HIV PLANNING COUNCIL — 1101 S. Main, #2500; Fort Worth 76104; 817-321-4743 (Office), 817-321-4741 (Fax); notexasaids.com.

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS ALLY PROGRAM — 940-565-2000; ally@unt.edu; ally.unt.edu.

■ MEDIA

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GAY & LESBIAN ALLIANCE AGAINST DEFAMATION — 800-GAY-MEDIA; glaad@glaad.org; GLAAD.org.

LAMBDA WEEKLY — GLBT talk-radio show. KNON 89.3FM; Lambda Weekly, KNON FM, P.O. Box 71909, Dallas 75371; lambdaweekly@aol.com; www.lambdaweekly.com.

PRIDE RADIO — 14001 N. Dallas Parkway, #300, Dallas 75240; 214-866-8000; prideradiodfw.com/main.html.

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OAK LAWN SYMPHONIC BAND — 2701 Regan Street, Dallas 75219, Dallas 75219; 214-621-8998; info@oaklawnband.org; oaklawnband.org.

NEW TEXAS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA — P.O. Box 190137, Dallas 75219; 214-526-3214 (x101); ntsso.org.

TURTLE CREEK CHORALE — P.O. Box 190137, 75219, Dallas 75219; 214-526-3214 (x 101); turtlecreek.org.

WOMEN'S CHORUS OF DALLAS — 3630 Harry Hines Blvd., #210, Dallas 75219; 214-520-7828; twccoffice@twcd.org; twcd.org.

■ POLITICAL

DALLAS STONEWALL DEMOCRATS — 4145 Travis St.; #204; DallasSYD.org

LIBERTARIAN PARTY OF DALLAS COUNTY — P.O. Box 541712; DALLAS 75354-1719; lpdallas.org.

LOG CABIN REPUBLICANS OF DALLAS — P.O. Box 191033, Dallas 75219; 214-346-2115; robschlein@aol.com; dallas.logcabin.org.

STONEWALL DEMOCRATS OF DALLAS — P.O. Box 192305, Dallas 75219; 214-506-DEMS(3367); stonewalldemocrat-sofdallas.org.

STONEWALL DEMOCRATS OF DENTON COUNTY — P.O. Box 3086, Denton, 76202; 972-890-3834; info@stonewalldemocratsofdentoncounty.org; stonewalldemocratsofdentoncounty.org.

TARRANT COUNTY STONEWALL DEMOCRATS — P.O. Box 11956, Fort Worth 76110; 817-913-8743; info@tarrantcountystonewalldemocrats.org; tarrantcountystonewalldemocrats.org.

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ALLIANCE OF DESIGN PROFESSIONALS — 214-526-2085.

CATHEDRAL BUSINESS NETWORK — 214-351-1904 (x304); cbn.info@cathedralofhope.com; cathedralofhope.com/cbn.

DALLAS GAY AND LESBIAN BAR ASSN. — 214-540-4460; adamseidel@aol.com; dgjba.org.

GLOBE — P.O. Box 50961, Dallas 75250; 972-308-7233; marie.garza@irs.gov; fedglobe.org.

IBM EAGLE — eagleibm@earthlink.net.

LAMBDA PRIDE TOASTMASTERS — 2701 Reagan 75219; 214-957-2011; lambdapride@freetoasthost.us; http://reports.toastmasters.org/findadub.

LEADERSHIP LAMBDA TOASTMASTERS — info@leadershiplambdafreetoasthost.com; http://leadershiplambdatoastmastersclubs.org.

LGBT LAW SECTION OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS — www.lgbtlawtx.com, 800-204-2222 x 1420.

NORTH TEXAS GLBT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE — 3824 Cedar Springs Rd., Suite 101-429, Dallas, 75219, 214-821-GLBT; http://glbtchamber.org.

OUT & EQUAL DFW — www.outandequal.org/dallas-fort-worth, DFW@outandequal.org.

TI PRIDE NETWORK — 12500 TI Blvd., MS 8683, Dallas, 75243, 214-480-2800, tipridenetwork-officers@list.ti.com.

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DALLAS/FORT WORTH FEDERAL CLUB — P.O. Box 191153, Dallas 75219; 214-428-3332; dfwfederalclub.org.

DALLAS GAY AND LESBIAN ALLIANCE — P.O. Box 190712, Dallas 75219, 214-528-0144; info@dglja.com; dglja.com.

DALLAS TAVERN GUILD — 214-571-1073; michaeldoughman@sbcglobal.net; dallastavernguild.org.

***JOHN THOMAS GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY CENTER** — 2701 Reagan, P.O. Box 190869, Dallas 75219; 214-528-9254; Phil Johnson Historical Archives and Library; 214-540-4451.

GAY AND LESBIAN FUND FOR DALLAS — 3818 Cedar Springs Rd. 101, #371, Dallas 75219; glfd.org; 214-421-8177; volunteers@glfd.org.

GAY & LESBIAN SWITCHBOARD — 214-528-0022; rcdallas.org/glc.c.html.

HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVE OF NORTH TEXAS — 214-855-0520; info@hrionline.org; hrionline.org.

LAMBDA LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND, SOUTHWEST REGION — 3500 Oak Lawn, #500, Dallas 75219; 214-219-8585; lambdalegal.org.

LEGACY OF SUCCESS FOUNDATION, INC. — P.O. Box 700072, Dallas 75370; heritagecelebrationdfw.org.

TARRANT COUNTY GAY PRIDE WEEK ASSOCIATION — P.O. Box 3459, Fort Worth 76113; info@tcgpwa.org; tcgpwa.org.

TRIANGLE FOUNDATION — P.O. Box 306, Frisco 75034; 972-200-9411 (Phone), 501-643-0327 (Fax); collinequality.org.

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BITCHNBRUNCH — bitchnbrunch.org; bitchnbrunch@yahoo.com.

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NORTH TEXAS RADICAL FAERIES — groups.yahoo.com/group/ntrradfae.

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HARVEST MCC — 725 North Elm St Ste 18. denton, TX 76201; 940-484-6159 (Phone), 940-484-6159 (Fax); harvest@harvestmcc.org; harvestmcc.org.

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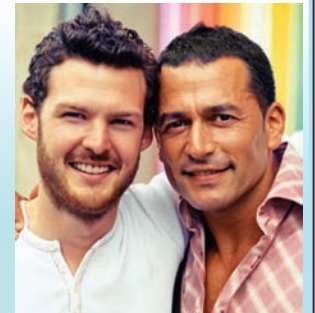
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Meeting Date
Date: Thursday, October 17, 2013
Place: Resource Center
Time: 6:30 - 8 PM
For more information, please contact:
Marketing Committee
marketing@hrcdfw.org

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http://northtexasglbtchamber.chamber-master.com/Events/details/business-connections-mixer-10-10-2013-25

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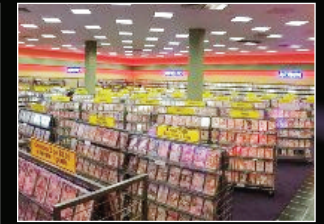
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