

Dallas lesbian opens fertility firm

LGBT-focused agency provides clients with various services

After donating her own eggs, Carolina Azevedo decided to become a mother and help others become parents

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THE MUSIC ISSUE

Musician Jason Dottley, long a fixture in Dallas' club scene, finally breaks his silence — and starts a new project

- | Jason Dottley on music after Del Shores
- | Joseph Veazie, Dallas' unsung troubadour
- | DJ Brandon Moses' new Podcast

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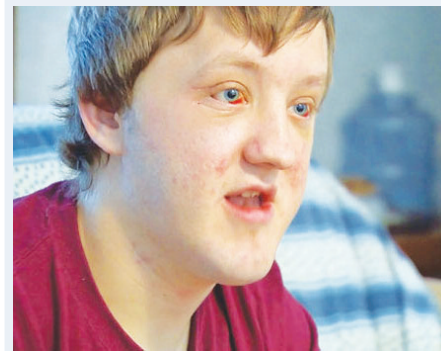
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Dallas gay man brutally beaten starts fund for medical bills



Arron Keahey, the victim of a brutal beating over Labor Day weekend, has started a GoFundMe account to help cover his medical bills.

Keahey, who lived in Dallas a time, was in Springtown, a small town about 70 miles west of Dallas in Parker County, visiting family for the weekend. He went to a man's house after meeting him on the social app MeetMe, and was attacked when he arrived.

Keahey's injuries included brain trauma, nerve damage and broken facial bones. He had to have facial reconstruction surgery and has a metal eye socket now. His goal on the site is to raise \$10,000.

Brice Johnson, 18, was arrested for aggravated assault causing serious bodily injury, a second-degree felony, which Springtown police are investigating as a hate crime.

If prosecutors seek a hate crime enhancement under state law to a first-degree felony, he could face five years to life in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine, according to the Texas Penal Code.

Keahey writes on the site:

"My name is Arron Keahey and I was recently lured and ambushed, beaten to almost an inch of my life, after meeting someone on a social app, because I am gay. I had to have facial reconstructive surgery, had brain trauma as well as memory loss, and am having problems with anxiety and depression. I am having to start my life over and I am needing help for medical bills, as well as everyday expenses and buying a car. Any donation to me will be truly appreciated, and I cannot thank you enough for your support.

"Even if you do not have the resources to donate, please at least share this article and spread the word of what happened. I truly believe that the more problems like this in this country are talked about, the less it will happen and the closer we will be to a solution."

To donate to the fund, visit GoFundMe.com/69haaw.

—Anna Waugh

UHD to have gender-neutral restrooms by month's end

Students at the University of Houston-Downtown will likely have the option of using gender-neutral restrooms by the end of the month.

The proposal passed the student government unanimously on Jan. 10, making it the first university in Texas to have gender-neutral restrooms.

Kristopher Sharp, openly gay student body vice president who spearheaded the proposal, told Dallas Voice on Monday the process to convert two

restrooms in each building to gender-neutral facilities should begin as early as next week.

"Ideally we would have this done by the end of January at the latest," he said.

"This is an important step in UHD's mission to include diversity and inclusion at the cornerstone of everything that we do," Sharp wrote in a post on a Facebook group advocating for the restrooms.

"With a unanimous passage by our Senate, this truly shows how important this issue is to the UHD community."

—Anna Waugh

Resource Center receives grant from Elton John foundation

The Elton John AIDS Foundation awarded Resource Center a \$38,000 grant for its Latino HIV/AIDS outreach and prevention program, Valor Latino.

The grant will support existing services including a monthly social support group for Latino gay and bisexual men, Spanish language prevention materials and advertising.

Resource Center CEO Cece Cox said she was grateful to the EJAF for its support.

"HIV/AIDS disproportionately impacts the Dallas-area Hispanic community and Valor Latino is actively leading efforts to reduce HIV infections," she said.

In 1996, the Center established the first HIV prevention program to target Latino gay men in Dallas. Valor Latino is a comprehensive HIV prevention program offering bilingual and culturally appropriate education, outreach, counseling, testing and referral services with a focus on Latino gay and bisexual men in North Texas.

In 2012 and 2013, Valor Latino tested 1,627 Latino gay and bisexual men. Just over 4 percent of them tested positive. More than nine out of 10 of those diagnosed with HIV now receive medical care and services.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, Latinos are the racial/ethnic group most likely to receive late diagnoses.

Since 1992, the Elton John AIDS Foundation has raised and distributed more than \$300 million for projects across the globe focusing on HIV prevention, harm reduction, community health and human rights empowerment campaigns, stigma eradication, and compassionate public policy development.

—David Taffet

Anderson Cooper's UTA appearance rescheduled for Feb. 10

If you missed out on getting tickets to see out CNN anchor Anderson Cooper in November, you have a second chance to see him in February.

Cooper's appearance as part of the The University of Texas at Arlington's 2013-14 Maverick Speakers Series was rescheduled due to his work schedule.

Tickets for the Feb. 10 event went on sale this week. Tickets for the November event won't be honored.

Out journalist and immigration activist Jose Vargas opened the speaker series in September.

For more information about the series, including upcoming appearances by CNN medical correspondent Sanjay Gupta and NPR legal affairs correspondent Nina Totenberg, visit UTA.edu. For tickets to see Cooper, visit UTATickets.com.

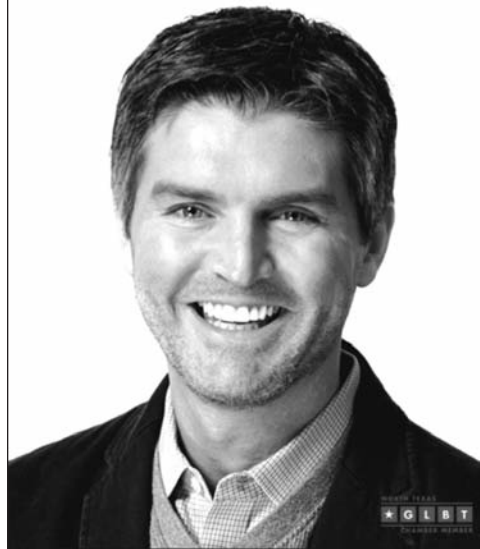
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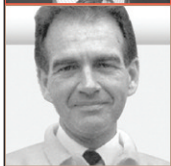
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TX congressman files State Marriage Defense Act

Bill would cut federal benefits for same-sex couples living in non-marriage-equality states; advocates say bill has little chance, targets gay opponent

ANNA WAUGH | News Editor
waugh@dallasvoice.com

New legislation filed by anti-gay Congressman Randy Weber aims to prevent the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriages in states that don't recognize their marriages.

Weber, R-Friendswood, filed the State Marriage Defense Act of 2014 on Jan. 9. The measure would require a couple's place of residency to be verified as one of the 17 states or Washington, D.C. that has marriage equality. The U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in June found Section 3 of the federal Defense of Marriage Act unconstitutional, requiring the federal government to recognize all same-sex marriages in the country. But the law still allows states to decide whether to allow their gay citizens to marry or not.

Weber said in a statement that the legislation was introduced in an attempt to uphold the 10th Amendment, which allows states to govern themselves on issues unrelated to the federal government.

"For too long, however, the Federal Government has slowly been eroding state's rights by promulgating rules and regulations through federal agencies," Weber said. "I drafted the 'State Marriage Defense Act of 2014' to help restore the 10th Amendment, affirm the authority of states to define and regulate marriage, as well as, provide clarity to federal agencies seeking to determine who qualifies as a spouse for the purpose of federal law. By requiring that the Federal Government defer to the laws of a person's state of legal residence in determining marital status, we can protect states' constitutionally established powers from the arbitrary overreach of unelected bureaucrats."

The bill has 28 co-sponsors, 11 of which are from Texas, including Rep. John Carter, R-Round Rock, who will face openly gay veteran Louie Minor in November for his seat. Minor is running unopposed in the Democratic Primary.

The bill has been endorsed by several anti-gay organizations, including the Family Research Council, National Organization for Marriage, Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission and the U.S. Conference on Catholic Bishops.

But it has little chance of passage with a Democratic majority in Congress a few months after the U.S. Senate approved the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would prohibit workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation



Randy Weber



Donald Brown

and gender identity.

Southeast Texas Stonewall Democrats released a statement about Weber's legislation, saying that "it was not that long ago it was open season on the LGBT community," the statement reads in part. "Stonewall is here to meet this challenge."

Jennifer Daniel, chair of Southeast Texas Stonewall Democrats, said the group has thrived since it started last June, and she expects Stonewall to help politicians in the area support LGBT issues and replace the ones that don't, like Weber.

Daniel said she doesn't expect the bill to go anywhere. Instead, she said Weber filed it to appeal to his extremely conservative voter base and bring up LGBT issues when one of the Democratic challenges, Donald Brown, is openly gay.

"It's purely political," Daniel said. "He's trying to get the conservatives riled up about the election. ... It's purely a publicity stunt."

Congressional District 14 spans Southeast Texas from Freeport to Beaumont. While the district is Republican-leaning, Daniel said the issue

is voter turnout and Stonewall is helping register voters "so hopefully we can get [Weber] out of office."

Stonewall endorsed the other Democratic chal-

“ We do see it as a shot across the bow to the LGBT community. Stonewall is here to meet this challenge.

—Southeast Texas Stonewall Democrats

lenger Buck Willis in the race. Daniel said "it was a hard choice" between the two, but the group felt that Willis, who's an ally, was more qualified.

Buck, medical director at Galveston Clinical Research Foundation, "supports Marriage

Equality acts and will work to protect the rights of gays and lesbians in the workplace and elsewhere," according to his campaign website.

Brown, who owns Silverstone Mortgage, is seeking the endorsement of the Washington, D.C.-based Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, a political action committee to elect LGBT candidates.

He decided to run for Congress after seeing the story of a boy in his district have his lunch thrown away because he was 30 cents short.

His main platforms are education and making sure children never go to bed hungry. He also said Weber voting against Hurricane Sandy relief when he represents coastal counties is wrong.

Asked whether Weber's legislation was a way to gay-bait him, Brown said it was filed "because I have been talking about issues that are weaknesses for him. Because I have the issues on my side, he's trying to distract the voters of district 14."

Talking with people in the district, Brown said people aren't opposed to LGBT equality, but the issues have always been addressed as special rights.

"It's not that they want to restrict equality," Brown said. "Once they see that we're trying to get the same thing that they have, their response is 'Oh, we're fine with that.'"

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localbriefs

Trinity MCC turns 30

Trinity MCC celebrates its 30th anniversary on Jan. 18-19.

Moderator, the Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson is the special guest at a banquet and dance Saturday night. The event, open to members, friends and guests, begins at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 18 with a suggested donation of \$10. Children under 16 are free.

Wilson will be the special guest pastor at worship service on Sunday at 11 a.m. Her books will be available to purchase over the weekend.

Trinity MCC is located at 933 East Ave. J, Grand Prairie.

LGBT on TV 1960-present

Gray Pride Cafe presents Resource Center's Communications and Advocacy Manager Rafael McDonnell speaking on "LGBT on TV, from the 1960s to today."

McDonnell takes a look at how the LGBT community has been depicted on television in both news and entertainment programming.

Gray Pride Café takes place at Fellowship Hall, Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road on Jan. 17 from 5-8 p.m.

Gaybingo begins a new year

Based on feedback, Gaybingo returns to S4 with some changes. The new season includes a VIP

lounge with more spacious seating.

The two Gaybingo experiences include one with high-energy entertainment with Valerie Jackson and guest host Eric Way upstairs in The Rose Room and campy entertainment downstairs in the new Rumpus Room with Josslynn and Chris Gregory.

Come dressed as a sailor, pirate or any other cruising fanatic for High Seas Gaybingo at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road on Jan. 18 at 6 p.m.

GALA Youth speaker

David Hearn, founder and president of Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund, will speak to GALA Youth about his organization and ways to help on Sunday.

The group will also make plans for 2014 including gathering ideas for speakers, activities and movies.

GALA Youth meets at 201 W. Boyd, No.105D, Allen on Jan. 19 at 6 p.m.

Dallas Stonewall Democrats finalize primary endorsements

Dallas County Democratic Party Executive Director Taylor Holden and county party chair Darlene Ewing will speak at the Stonewall Democrats of Dallas monthly meeting Tuesday. The organization also votes on its endorsements for the March 4 primary. The group meets at Ojedas, 4617 Maple Ave. on Jan. 21 at 6:30 p.m.

pet of the week / MINNIE PEARL

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Dallas lesbian opens fertility firm aimed at LGBT couples

After donating her eggs to a gay couple, Carolina Azevedo said she wanted to help more LGBT couples start families with her own business

ANNA WAUGH | News Editor
waugh@dallasvoice.com

When Carolina Azevedo decided she and her wife wouldn't have any children of their own, she opted to give the gift of children to a couple who couldn't have kids.

Azevedo donated her eggs to a gay couple in California in 2012, but while she was willing to help them, she had the requirement that the children had to be told who their biological mother was if they wanted to know when they turned 18. Luckily, the dads-to-be wanted an open relationship so the children would meet and know Azevedo from early on.

"So because I wasn't going to have any children, I wanted to help other people have them," she said.

While some may think donating eggs would be difficult if they've thought about having children and then decided against it, Azevedo said she knew what donating meant, but was glad for the open relationship to know the children.

"I was psychologically prepared for what I did. I felt very lucky that they wanted an open relationship," she said. "Having an open relationship is so much fun because you get to see the gift you gave someone and how you've turned their life around. You gave them something no one else can."

The couple wanted six children eventually, and using two surrogates had a set of twin girls last May and twin boys in June. The experience of donating her eggs made Azevedo want to help more couples create families. So while visiting the twins last summer, she started working with Dr. Gary Ramsey at the Pacific Fertility Institute in anticipation of starting her own company. She then launched Family Fertility Solutions, aimed at helping straight and lesbian couples and which has a separate program for gay men called Two Dads and a Baby.

Her agency serves as a liaison between the intended parent or parents and fertility and adoption specialists. Azevedo helps set up everything involving doctors to lawyers and even booking flights and hotels for adoption for surrogacy situations. She also helps people find services for egg/sperm donors, surrogates, in vitro fertilization (IVF), fertility yoga and acupuncture, weight management programs, or anything else parenting-related a client might need. She said her partnerships with agencies help lower the cost of expensive options, like a surrogacy agency that offers her clients a fee of \$15,000 instead of the regular \$25,000.



OPENING HER HEART | Carolina Azevedo, pictured with twin girls Leonie and Leona, decided to donate her eggs to a gay couple before she started her own fertility consulting business.

She said her consulting agency helps couples understand the difficult processes that come with fertility options, especially for LGBT couples. And her agency is one that specifically reaches out to gay and lesbian couples. She's even worked with couples internationally in China and Brazil to help them with surrogacy and adoption options and laws in their country.

"I want to make a difference in Dallas since I live here, but I also want to make a difference worldwide," Azevedo said.

Azevedo's egg donation also sparked something else in her besides entrepreneurship; she decided to have children of her own now. She said her wife is 21 years older than her, so they decided against having children. But after seeing the twins born last year, she said the experience made her realize she wants to be a mother herself, and she and her wife plan to start a family in the future.

Azevedo also wants to make Dallas a place for gay parenting and parenting in general. She's now a co-chair of the Dallas HRC Family Project Committee and said that since LGBT equality is gaining momentum, it's time for LGBT families to be loud and proud.

"I think the next step is gay families, and I want to be the one to provide that in my city," Azevedo said.

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■ texasnews

Queer bars jockey for position



Tyler Curry

No longer restricted to the gay ghetto, men and women are discovering the offerings and acceptance of a new kind of bar

thrilling escapades that followed. But these days, with the gay rights movement moving forward at record speed, the draw to our city's homo hangouts are waning as the emergence of queer bars continues to flourish in the Dallas social scene.

TYLER CURRY | Contributing Writer

As the gay culture goes, those of the pink persuasion have typically been confined to their designated pocket of the city. Affectionately known to many as the "gayborhood," Cedar Springs is where the Dallas same-sex culture has thrived for years. With a rich history of community, frivolity and cheap drinks, the businesses in the Dallas gay area have also prospered thanks to their dedicated patrons and, let's be honest, an entirely captive audience.

A queer bar isn't a gay bar, but an alternative bar that creates an environment that's open to all types of people. These places are just the right amount of trendy and casual so that both the heterosexual and homosexual crowds feel at ease. But for the gay audience, there is a particular appeal to the queer bar that the managers on Cedar Springs are finding harder to avoid.

Queer bars offer an infusion of variety that is lacking in the traditional gay party scene.

With a name like Beauty Bar, this place has no choice but to be quite gay friendly. With an eclectic and funky boutique, excellent music and a happy hour that offers a manicure with your martini, this is the perfect definition of a queer bar. On any given weekend, you can find this bar's dance floor mixed with gays, straights and in-betweens. With this hipster crowd, half of the fun is trying to guess which team the cute guy

in the Dallas gay bar lineup



across the bar plays on.

The South Side NYLO pool bar offers a chic and sophisticated option for anyone looking for some city ambiance with his or her spirits. This rooftop hotel bar offers 360-degree views of the Dallas skyline, expertly crafted cocktails and zero judgment.

If you are looking for something a little more casual, the Windmill has been attracting gay bar defectors for years. This no-frills bar offers one hell of a pour, sans pretention, and is right next to the guilty pleasure of the Tin Room. The old school cafeteria tables add just the right amount of kitsch to this dive.

These are just a few of the many bars around the city that Dallas' gays are more and more frequently calling their own. No longer confined to conventional gay establishments, homosexual men and women are adding a little gay to places that fit the rest of their personalities. But with the emergence of the queer bar, will the gay culture of Dallas inevitably suffer?

Despite the country appeal of Round-Up, the sports-centric Woody's and the subtle variations between the rest of The Strip, there are only modest differences between the ambiance and aesthetic of the gay bars on Cedar Springs. These

places offer little in the way of interesting drink menus, trendy décor or signature style that appeals to the tastes of the individual in all of us. Instead, we are left with three simple classifications: Dance, Drink or Dive.

This 3-D model has sufficed for the last several decades due to the fact that most gay men and women were rather uncomfortable when venturing off of Rainbow Street. Now that we are safely past the days of strict homo/hetero sorting, the attraction of a mixed crowd has dramatically increased.

The popularity of queer bars, mixed with the more prominent app-based meeting forums, have led to smaller and smaller crowds on Cedar Springs. Many fear that if these trends continue, the Dallas gay culture will become homogenized, and our traditions will be gentrified through hetero-mixing.

But the trend to venture out is far from an attempt to assimilate with our heterosexual neighbors. It is merely evidence that Dallas is further embracing the diversity of its residents, and there is less need for the strict homo zoning of the past.

You are more and more likely to see a visibly gay group cackling next to a table of straight males at Katy Ice House, or a mixed table laughing away at the Grapevine, possibly the original Dallas queer bar. Maybe the proximity to such hetero-culture will rub off on homosexuals. But it goes both ways as many more straight men and women become more accepting of communal spaces and just a tad more gay.

No matter how much these bars develop into their queer category, they will never replace the fundamental appeal of a gay bar. In a way, these bars are the birthplace of the gay rights movement and will forever be considered home to most of us, whether we want to admit it or not. So no matter how close or how far we move away from our roots, the sentiment of home will forever keep us coming back to visit.

The Dallas gay scene is a thriving hub of history and culture that deserves to be preserved for the people it has served for decades. But just like any demographic niche, we must continue to progress with society in order to survive. Some specific homo-establishments just may need to re-evaluate who their competitors are and compete to attract their desired audience.

They are no longer dealing with a captive audience and will need to take into consideration what their customers want, not just what they will settle for.

That means evaluating and adapting to the interests of our population and attracting new groups so that our culture can be shared.

You know, if the straight men and women of Dallas knew just how cheap and strong a drink is from J.R.'s or Alexandre's or how fun a turn around the Round-Up dance floor is, us gays might just have the overpriced cocktails of Uptown to ourselves.

Beware of what you wish for ... ■

IMMIGRATION ATTORNEYS

Oklahoma LGBT community celebrates equality ruling

'Moral disapproval ... of same-sex marriage ..., is not a permissible justification for a law,' judge wrote

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

OKLAHOMA CITY — Oklahoma's LGBT community celebrated after U.S. District Judge Terence Kern on Tuesday declared the state's constitutional ban on same-sex marriage illegal.

Scott Hamilton, executive director of Cimarron Alliance, Central Oklahoma's largest LGBT equality organization, said the community held impromptu parties, but they decided not have a rally until marriages actually begin.

"Yesterday was explosive," Hamilton said.

"People were so excited."

He said he expects a court challenge.

Gov. Mary Fallin was displeased with the ruling, she said, because 75 percent of the state's voters passed the amendment.

"I support the right of Oklahoma's voters to govern themselves on this and other policy matters," she said in a statement. "I am disappointed in the judge's ruling."

Hamilton said that was the same logic used after interracial marriage, which was opposed nationally by about the same percentage, became

legal.

He expects the state to appeal.

Ken Upton, Lambda Legal supervising senior staff attorney in the South Central office, called the decision an interesting, conservative opinion. He said he thought the Oklahoma ruling would be easier for an appeals court to uphold than the Utah ruling. He said Oklahoma might try to consolidate the cases so it would have input in the Utah case, which is already in the courts. Utah may or may not want Oklahoma involved because it would slow down the case. Both states are in the 10th Circuit, so a decision in either case would affect both.

Upton, who has appeared in Kern's court, called him an attorney's dream judge — organized and fair. He said the opinion reflected none of the judge's personal views.

As additional rulings are handed down in Southern and other conservative states, Upton expects them to be similar to the Oklahoma opinion because it's grounded in what the Supreme Court has already ruled. While he said he agrees with the broad ruling issued in the Utah case, he's more comfortable that Oklahoma's will be upheld.

Kern based his decision on three Supreme Court cases and quoted from them.

The first was *Romer v. Evans*, which overturned a Colorado constitutional amendment preventing local governments from offering nondiscrimination protections.

"... a Colorado constitutional amendment targeting homosexuals based upon animosity lacked a rational relation to any legitimate governmental purpose," Kern wrote.

Next was *Lawrence v. Texas*, which overturned the sodomy law.

"... moral disapproval did not provide a legitimate justification for a Texas law criminalizing sodomy," Kern wrote.

The *Windsor* case decided last June also played an important part in this ruling.

"... the U.S. Constitution prevented the federal government from treating state-sanctioned opposite-sex marriages differently than state-sanctioned same-sex marriages, and that such differentiation 'demean[ed] the couple, whose moral and sexual choices the Constitution protects,'" he wrote.

In his decision, Kern also quoted Oklahoma legislators who supported the marriage amendment.

"To recognize something other than what God has ordained as traditional marriage obviously detracts or deteriorates the importance of the traditional marriage," House Minority Floor Leader Todd Hiatt said.

"This is a Bible Belt state. ... Most people don't want that sort of thing here. ... Gay people might call it discrimination, but I call it upholding morality," state Rep. Bill Graves said.

Using these quotes, Kern wrote that "moral disapproval of same-sex marriage" was at least one reason many voted in favor of the amendment. He acknowledged moral disapproval may stem from deeply held religious beliefs.

"However, moral disapproval of homosexuals as a class, or same-sex marriage as a practice, is not a permissible justification for a law," he concluded.



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Pa. advocates keep eyes on key gay marriage case

State's GOP-controlled Legislature has refused to consider bills to reverse ban on same-sex marriage

MARC LEVY | Associated Press

HARRISBURG — Federal court decisions to overturn bans on same-sex marriage in two conservative states may not have an immediate effect in Pennsylvania, the only northeastern state that does not recognize gay marriages.

Rather, Pennsylvania state Rep. Brian Sims said Wednesday that the gay rights community is keeping its eyes trained on a scheduled federal court trial in Harrisburg. The high-profile case was filed six months ago and represents the first known challenge to a 1996 Pennsylvania law that bans recognition of same-sex marriages.

"The communities working on marriage equality in Pennsylvania ... are really paying close attention to June 9," said Sims, a leading gay rights advocate.

About a half-dozen other cases challenging aspects of the state's ban have been filed since and are pending in county, state and federal courts.

Still, a federal court decision in Oklahoma on Tuesday and one in Utah on Dec. 20, resulting in those states' bans being struck down, is cheering Pennsylvania gay marriage advocates.

"We're talking about the Bible Belt here," Sims said. "It's one thing when California and New York come out in favor of marriage equality."

Lawyer Witold J. Walczak of the American Civil Liberties Union says the case's legal team is planning on going to trial and has no plans to seek an emergency ruling to strike down Pennsylvania's law, citing decisions in Oklahoma and Utah.

"This is a tremendously important issue and we want to do it right," Walczak said. "Building a record at trial will help the judge appreciate the nature and full scope of the discrimination, and will be vital for the expected appeal."

Sims and Walczak expect the case to ultimately go to the U.S. Supreme Court. When appeals courts consider weighty matters, especially on constitutional law, they generally prefer to have a full record, Walczak said.

Republicans who control the Pennsylvania Legislature have refused to consider bills to reverse the state's ban on same-sex marriage, and Gov. Tom Corbett, also a Republican, opposes gay marriage.

Not including Utah and Oklahoma, 27 states still have constitutional prohibitions on same-sex marriage. Four more — Indiana, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Wyoming — do not

permit it through state laws.

The closely watched Pennsylvania case is being handled by U.S. District Judge John E. Jones III, a Republican and an appointee of former President George W. Bush who is perhaps best known for his handling of one of the biggest courtroom clashes between faith and

evolution since the 1925 Scopes Monkey Trial.

In that 2005 decision, Jones barred the Dover Area School District in southern Pennsylvania from teaching "intelligent design" in biology class and said its first-in-the-nation decision to insert it into the science curriculum violated the constitutional separation of church and state.

He called it "a religious view, a mere re-labeling of creationism, and not a scientific theory."

Sims said Jones is adept at handling big cases that are bound for higher courts.

"He's building a very solid and a very complete case in the knowledge that it's going to the Supreme Court," Sims said. ■



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viewpoints

Cedar Springs is our Champs-Elysees

S4 occupies the space once taken by The Old Plantation, but when I walk by it, I remember my first time on The Strip 34 years ago

It was a moment that would have done Barbara Walters proud. Last week, I was working with Dallas Voice reporter David Taffet on his story about the evolution of the gayborhood, talking to him about my own history with Cedar Springs. To borrow a phrase from Sophia Petrillo, “Picture it. Dallas. 1980.”

Two friends and I loaded up in my dented '67 Ford truck like we were the Clampetts headed for Beverly Hills. We must have been a sight. I had rolled the truck the previous winter in a snowstorm near Amarillo, so the cab was a little smashed in, and the twisted headache rack was higher on one end than the other.

The back passenger-side tire wobbled a little, and I noticed other drivers would maintain a safe distance from me, usually half a football field away. No doubt, they wondered if the convulsing tire was going to fly off and smash through their windshields. A few other brave and concerned folks pulled up to me, rolled down their windows and shouted through the rushing Texas air, “Hey, I think the bearings in your back tire went out.” Bless their neighborly hearts.

If the clanking mechanical mess that was my truck wasn't enough, my friends and I completed the picture. Three hicks, green and naïve, rolled down the highway like we were the last hillbillies out of Moore County. Our straw cowboy hats had more feathers stuck in the bands than a Sioux war bonnet, that being the style in those days. We sang along to the 8-track mounted next to the CB radio.

One minute we were singing, “if we make it through December” with Merle Haggard and the next pretending we were the Bandit, alerting other drivers through the CB to the wiles of the smokey we saw hidden in a stand of trees.

For those uninitiated in the movie and music culture of the '70s and early '80s, the Bandit was Burt Reynolds, a role he made famous in the movie “Smokey and the Bandit,” which is just about the greatest movie ever made. Period. And if you don't know who Merle Haggard is, well you're just not American and probably shouldn't speak to me, lest I also find out you don't know all the words to Patsy Cline's “Crazy.”

So this traveling mayhem makes it to Cedar Springs right about as the summer sun is disappearing behind buildings taller than the grain elevators back home.



Steve Ramos
Senior Editor

We were slack-jawed and stared in amazement. My friends and I had never been to Dallas, mostly because our families thought it was a city akin to Gomorrah, full of Yankees and other people of no count. They predicted we would one day switch on the evening news to see Dallas in flames, courtesy of God whose patience had been worn thin with all that wanton carrying on.

When speaking of Dallas, the men back home would push their hats back on their heads and stare off to the south where Highway 287 disappears into the wasteland that becomes Lubbock. They would switch their tobacco from one cheek

to the other, their expressions conveying they had once seen Dallas and weren't the better for it, like Iwo Jima veterans.

“I had a cousin who married a gal from Dallas,” said family friend O.B. Thomas. “Not a lick of good came from it.”

Of course, that talk just made my friends and me even more anxious to see Dallas. You can't talk about the bearded lady and expect people not to go see her. I had been in the Air Force, stationed in San Antonio, but that city was a dowager compared to the tart

that was Dallas. We walked down Cedar Springs toward The Old Plantation, ready to give the Dallas boys what for. Three lanky Panhandle boys in bad shirts, we were all hat and no cattle.

As I talked to David Taffet about those days, the levees that had contained so many memories crumbled, and images tumbled in, filling my mind with scenes not visited in years. A lot of them were hilarious. Some not so much.

David moved to Dallas in 1979, and I moved to Fort Worth in '86. By then, AIDS waged war in our community, and we were scrambling to survive. After laughing with David about my early adventures on Cedar Springs, I suddenly fought back tears, but they spilled out, to my embarrassment.

I volunteered with Oak Lawn Community Service's Buddy Project in those days, helping men dying with AIDS by taking them to their medical appointments, shopping for them, cooking their meals and cleaning their homes. Sometimes, we just listened to them. Listened to their hopes for a miracle that would give them another month to live, another week. Maybe even just another day. Listened to them rail in the emotional darkness that had invaded so cruelly.

As David and I talked about those days and the energy that filled Cedar Springs, I'm grateful for all the memories. The ones of The Strip before AIDS ravaged our community and the ones of when we mobilized and came together in the war against the disease.

Cedar Springs is our Champs-Elysees. In some ways, I'm still that slack-jawed Panhandle boy who first set foot on the street 34 years ago. A little wiser, maybe, but still in awe of a community that bickers within itself but immediately circles the wagons when attacked from the outside. I've seen that protective attitude at Dallas Voice as well.

And as for Dallas being full of Yankees? Well, all I can say is I love you, David Taffet. Bless your little New York heart.

Steve Ramos is senior editor at Dallas Voice. He can be reached at ramos@dallasvoice.com.



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More than a year after his public split from Texas writer Del Shores, actor-musician Jason Dottley finally talks about his divorce, his music and his Love Story Project

When *Sordid Lives* star Jason Dottley married his long-term partner, playwright and filmmaker Del Shores, in 2003, the pair imagined theirs would be a love to last a lifetime. Together, the “first couple of West Hollywood” (as they were dubbed by fans of the show) fought hard for marriage equality, becoming posterboys of the movement. That was, until late 2012, when Shores announced via Facebook that they were splitting. In his post, Shores wrote, “This was not what I wanted, but I must now accept what Jason wants.”

Disappointed fans waited to hear Dottley’s reason for ending the relationship — and were kept waiting and waiting. The Mississippi native chose to remain silent. Even Shores admitted in an interview in *Dallas Voice* that he didn’t know why Dottley departed. “Let me put it this way,” he explained, “I come up with reasons I don’t cast certain [actors], but the bottom line is, I don’t want [them] to play the role. The bottom line was, Jason said, ‘I don’t want to be married to you anymore.’ And there was no negotiation on any level.”

After a year of personal contemplation, Dottley is ready to break his silence. More than that, he is eager to experience love again. He sings about it in “Love Story,” his new song that drops Jan. 28. A slice of ‘80s pop, layered with emotionally compelling lyrics, is the first of a three-part experience Dottley is calling The Love Story Project that will also include a music video and a Love-U-Mentary film.

— Mick Sandoval

Visit JasonsLoveStoryProject.com for more information.



Dallas Voice: Your marriage with Del Shores was so public, why did you choose to keep your divorce private for so long? Jason Dottley: I chose to keep my pain and my journey to myself, to write about it, to learn from it. Discussing it with total

strangers while I was lost in the trek myself was not on the agenda for me.

How long has it been since the divorce became final? April, 2013.

You were married nine years. Walking down the aisle, did you intend for it to be forever? Of course I did.

When did the blooms first start falling from the rose? That sounds so pretty. About two years before we separated.

Were you fighting or simply drifting in different directions? We evolved into people who didn’t compliment and inspire each other any more. We stopped healing, growing. It wasn’t like I threw the towel in the first time it got ugly. It was two years of collapsing before the foundation had to be scrapped entirely. Then we fought. Divorce doesn’t bring the best out of you.

When did you know it was over? At some point, a fire inside of you for someone burns out. It’s a cold, lonely feeling. You just know.

What is your relationship with Del like now? We are peaceful and out of each other’s lives.

Are you prepared to see him with a new man? I saw pics of Del with a guy that I heard he’s dating. He looked so happy. It eased my guilt for leaving. As for him seeing me with a new man, well, once I’m ready to share that part of my life openly again, he’ll see, and he’ll be fine.

Is it true that Del recast you in *Sordid Lives*? Can you imagine for one minute how awkward that set would be? I’m not friends with anyone in that cast because of my divorce. If he has recast the role, congrats to the new guy, who I hear is the original Ty from the movie. My life has moved on from *Sordid Lives*, so it’s not something that I feel I lost. It’s cherished, and I’m fine to leave my work as Ty complete as-is. And I am definitely the better Ty. [Laughs] Yeah, I said it. Del knows it, too.

Has it been hard to contemplate love after divorce? If you go out looking for love, you might as well stay home. Love will find you.

What is one thing you will do in your next relationship as a result of what you learned from your last? I will communicate better. I will compromise more, and I will always make sure he knows that he’s my everything.

Will you walk down the aisle again? You bet your ass.

Will the next time be forever? Who can say? I believe we are intended to have a series of love affairs.

You don’t believe in one soulmate? I absolutely believe in soulmates. Nothing about a soulmate says that you are meant to be together forever, or even together at all. My three best friends are all my soulmates, but I’m not romantically interested in them.

Do you believe in monogamy? One hundred percent. I do not share. I’ll guest star occasionally, though.

STARTING OVER | Dottley, who has made no public statement about his late 2012 split from Del Shores until now, says he’s glad that his ex has started dating again, but is even happier to launch a new project.

Why did you decide to launch The Love Story Project? The Love Story Project is my attempt to shine a light on gay love. The project aims to help people see gay lovers as people and not ideas. I encourage everyone to visit the website, share your story and become a part of it yourself!

Are you encouraged by the response the project

has received so far? I am! It has pushed me further than I ever thought I could take this project.

What are you looking for in your own next “love project?” Someone who is ambitious, fearless and inspiring. I’ve already found him, but I ain’t giving details! I’ve learned the hard way to keep my heart private.

CD REVIEWS: Bey and Gary

Beyoncé, *Beyoncé*

It's a new year, but we're not done gushing over Beyoncé and that juggernaut of an album she surprise-dropped to a web blitz of industry-shattering joyousness. She was all like, "I'm just gonna put this here" when the pop behemoth snuck 14 songs and 17 music videos up on iTunes around Christmas, a game-changing move that was only outdone by the actual contents of the sprawling project.

Easily Bey's most personally inspired, sexually uninhibited work, it's what *Erotica* was to Madonna, what *The Velvet Rope* was to Janet, and what *ARTPOP* should've been to Gaga. *Can you lick my Skittles, it's the sweetest in the middle / Pink is the flavor, solve the riddle*, she sexes on "Blow," a flirty, innuendo-drenched '70s throwback that has all sorts of roller-skating vibes radiating off its Donna Summer-esque shimmer (and naturally, it has Bey skating in the video). Sex is recurring on *Beyoncé*, as is feminism, love, family, spirituality, death and self-image; it's as all-encompassing as we've seen its creator, making for a provocative, multi-layered, career-best opus that's reflective, sophisticated and decidedly not very mainstream.

"Mine," with Drake, is a morphing, six-minute-plus piece of minimalism that, despite its trippy style, is still profoundly affecting. So is "Heaven," the best of two child-inspired ballads (though the big-hearted "Blue" endears greatly). The song is pure and powerful, reiterating the sentiment that "heaven couldn't wait for you, so go on, go home" — the "you" presumably being the pre-Blue baby she miscarried. In that context, especially, it's wrenching, but it's also real — more real than Beyoncé, known for her elusiveness, has ever been. Here, the star lets down her guard and, for just a bit, lets us into her heart, her soul, her world.

— Chris Azzopardi

Gary Lynn Floyd, "Music in the Meaning"

Dallas' Gary Lynn Floyd has been making warmly-toned piano-vocal music for more years than he'd probably want to admit, but even after a few decades at his, his breathy tenor is still one of the pitch-perfect delights of the local music and theater scenes. His voice has always been suited to quasi-spiritual ballads, and his single "Music in the Meaning" — out just last month and available on iTunes; a full album is due — definitely fits into that category. But the usually unplugged Floyd has added a great electric guitar solo on this inspiring, up-beat track that works as adult contemporary, country and pop. *Dance with the audacity, find triumph in the tragedy*, he says. Easy — nothing tragic here.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

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L+S music

Easy Veazie

Out Dallas musician Joseph Veazie forges his own career path with humor, determination




For any struggling musician, finding one's signature sound is key to moving on and developing as an artist. But Joseph Veazie somehow manages to move along his music career with ease while still trying to find his own voice. In short, he's lucky ... though talent probably has a lot to do with it. With regular paying gigs as a solo musician and part of a working party band, Veazie really does make it look easy. We talked to the local out musician about his hopes for an album, his influences and watching big men twerk. ■

— Rich Lopez

For more information, visit IDTBand.com.

Dallas Voice: OK, you get one shot at telling us the struggles of an arty musician. Go! Joseph Veazie: I'm "finding my sound" aiming for an indie-rock, singer/songwriter sound with elements of soul and pop. I've written some pop, country, even metal, so who knows what my first album is going to sound like?

So, there is an album in the works? I had a general outline for it a couple years ago, but can't stop tweaking things. Leonardo da Vinci said "Art is never finished, only abandoned," and that's how I feel about most of my songs when I think I'm done. I was going to record in September, but I went through a lot of changes personally and musically, so I stepped back. I have one song that I wrote back in 2009 and finally recorded in 2012. Maybe I'll release it for free to get it out there, but I may end up changing it. I'm a perfectionist when it comes to my music, which is a blessing and a curse.

What influences you? Musically, my influences are all over the place. Smaller acts like Circa Survive, City &



Company, Cool River Cafe and other venues. We're also starting a trio called The Professionals. It's going to be different for the cover band scene. I'm stoked about it, so be on the lookout for that soon.

Are you doing the solo thing still, though? Because of the writing and IDT, I won't be doing any solo shows for a while. I would like to have an album out, and I want to take my time with everything to surprise people with my new live show.

You love the bears and the bears love you. Give us some tea. Ha! My favorite was at a friend's birthday party. You can't have a party with bears and not have a pool, so I planned on being background music, but people came to listen. I was doing an Adele medley, and two of our drunk

friends got in front of me and started twerking like nobody's business. And not regular twerking, but floor-twerks, wall-twerks, wheelbarrow twerks ... to an Adele song. I didn't even know dudes could twerk like that. There's a video of it somewhere.

Hold on for a minute. We're searching for it. OK.

Wow. Those boys do have some moves. So, how are you setting up 2014? I will be starting a YouTube series of cover songs. I'm looking forward to getting my own album out this year. It's been a long time coming, but I think this is the year for me. Oh and I really want to go to the gym and put some meat on my bones. I can eat all day every day and still somehow end up losing weight sometimes...

OK, stop right there. We're done.

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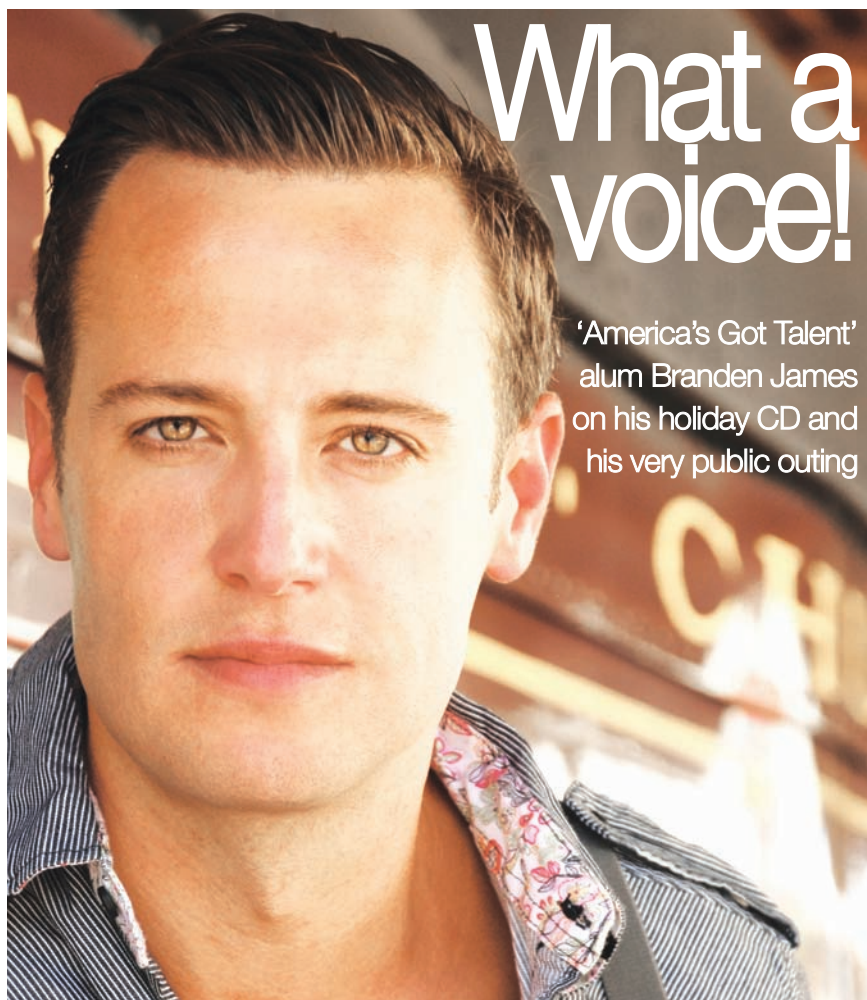
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Colour and As Cities Burn are up there, but my favorite now is Coldplay. I'm a huge fan of movies, so lyrically there may be nods at certain films. I recently got out of a serious relationship, so I'm sure there'll be one or two sappy, emo songs I'll be working on sooner than later. Maybe I'll channel my inner Adele.

Hugs! If we grabbed your iPod, what would come up? My day-to-day playlists can have anything from Frank Ocean to Nobuo Uematsu to Lady Gaga to Queen. I wouldn't be surprised if I've played them in that order before.

How's band life for a solo artist? I joined a professional cover band called IDT Band (formerly Identity Theft) in August and absolutely loving everything so far. They are some of the best and most professional musicians and amazing individuals. They've helped me grow in every aspect of my life and push me to be a better person and musician. I can't thank them enough for letting me be part of the band. We play weddings and corporate events and locally at Sherlock's, British Beverage



What a voice!

'America's Got Talent' alum Branden James on his holiday CD and his very public outing

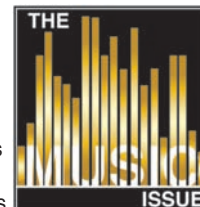
Brandon James made the LGBT community proud when he was a finalist on the eighth season of NBC's talent competition show *America's Got Talent* last summer. James, a gay classical crossover artist (and performer with Chicago's Lyric Opera), made an indelible impression on the audience with his stellar rendition of Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah," a song he has included on his debut CD *The Voice of Christmas* (MCON). A welcome addition to this year's crop of holiday music, *The Voice of Christmas* is the perfect showcase for James' breathtaking vocal gifts. What better way for him to display them than through such celebratory music?

We spoke with Branden about the CD, his next career step and making Heidi Klum cry.

— Gregg Shapiro

Dallas Voice: Last summer you were competing on *America's Got Talent*. How would you rate the experience on the whole? Branden James: There were parts of it that grew old so quickly because they asked the same 50 questions 100 different ways — it's reality television. We assume, as an audience member, that it's more or less reality, but so much of it is situational or scripted. They would ask me questions [and say], "That's a great answer, but can you make it this way or take it to this place? Can you answer that again and really go to that emotional place?" They were drawing out the drama, so to speak. That's one aspect of it that was intense. The other one was simply that on a professional and a personal level, I was living out two new stories for me: One being that I'm a classical singer and have never been a commercial artist. That environment was completely different for me. It was kind of jarring in a way to be in a TV studio and suddenly be on live TV when I was used to being on an opera stage or in a concert hall, a smaller, less intense setting. The other thing was that this conflict between my parents and me, regarding my sexuality. We were still working things out while the show was going on. It was a lot to take in emotionally. I feel like I didn't really have a chance to process that until the show was over.

Was that situation with your parents resolved in a positive way? Yeah, everything's great with my parents. As with any change in your life it takes some time to process. When you're



on a show like that you don't really have the emotional space to do it. I had to do it afterwards while I was recording this album [laughs]. The experience was intense, and the post experience was intense. Now I'm in a nice relaxed mood.

Do you have a favorite memory or moment from your time on *America's Got Talent*? I think my favorite moment was making Heidi Klum

cry.

Your recent CD is *The Voice of Christmas*. Has it always been a dream of yours to record an album such as this? It has. I've always had a soft spot for holiday music. I spent a couple of years over in the U.K. doing the largest Christmas show in Europe. There are 60 members in the choir, there's a 40-piece orchestra and 25 dancers. It's a huge production with elaborate costumes. I've always loved Christmas and would love to produce my own Christmas show at some point in the future. So, a holiday album was a perfect fit. I was voted off the show in the finals the week before the finale. It's funny because when I hired a team of publicists and marketers to put this project on its feet they all said, "This is great, but you should've called us two months ago." People start working on Christmas over the summer at the very latest. We had about three weeks to turn around this whole project. It was a very intense little pop of time. But I'm so glad I did it, and I'm so proud of the product that actually came out in that very short amount of time.

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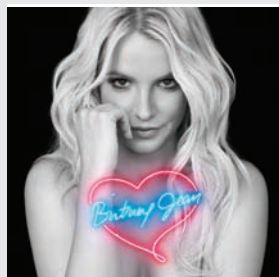
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What's next for you professionally? I'm going to finish up my contract at Lyric Opera. My plans are to move back home to Los Angeles. Every week I get calls asking me to come out there and do some work. I'm under contract and regret fully have to say no all the time. It's been a little bit frustrating. I'm looking forward to making the transition back to being a freelance artist. I have a bunch of private and corporate gigs that I have booked. I'm headlining the GLBT center's gala here in March, which is very exciting. After that I will make me way back to California and see what happens.

Do you have favorite Christmas albums from your childhood? I grew up in the church, and something my mom would always play at home was Amy Grant's Christmas album. I still returned to that because the songs are festive and wonderful. I also love anything that Frank Sinatra or Bing Crosby recorded. I'm kind of old-school like that. And whose favorite song isn't "All I Want For Christmas" by Mariah Carey [laughs]? I was just at the Zoo Lights at Lincoln Park Zoo on Sunday night, and that was playing with a light show, and I was in gay heaven.

Your rendition of the song "Twas The Night Before Christmas" made its debut on your album. How did that come to pass? It was written by a young composer named Brian Katona, who has done a lot of Broadway and opera compositions in the past, and he and I have had a long working relationship. I met him almost 10 years ago now in Los Angeles while working on an original operatic setting of *Alice in Wonderland*. He is now a professor at Rutgers University. He offered to write a song for me. He said, "What about this text?" I said, "I love the story, and it's a classic text." I'm very happy with the new setting. I love the way it turned out.

One more time Pop princess shows fatigue on 'Britney Jean,' but can still pack a punch



After her less-than-dramatic *I Am Britney* on E!, the more we knew about Britney Spears was probably all she *didn't* want us to know. In the documentary previewing her two-year stint in Las Vegas and highlighting her latest CD, *Britney Jean*, we don't see the confident superstar she should be. And she was the next Madonna?

But perhaps it's all part of her game. Do we underestimate her blatant apathy for her work as laziness or has she simply put her fans

under a spell? Why not both?

On her eighth album, *Britney Jean*, Spears leaves a lot of questions — and strangely, some not about her album, but about what's next, period. She fulfills her recording contract with this album, and she's showing signs of tiring; her live shows aren't as intense as they used to be; and her music choices are borderline lazy.

That's especially true on track 2 of *Britney Jean*: Her collaboration with T.I. in "Tik Tik Boom," which fires off bad-ass production value but is about as effective as virgin cocktail; and "Chillin' With You," her pseudo-ballad with little sis Jamie Lynn — a pedestrian effort that belonged on big sis' first album. But it also highlights the trouble with Britney. With adolescent ambience, she still wants to be a girl *and* a woman and this translates to a simpler template of music.

Once these two songs are out of the way, however, Spears goes and kicks our ass with a healthy tracklist of strong beats and power ballads. Like Brit herself, the album comes back.

Her first single, "Work Bitch," works on all the right levels: Killer beat, irreverent tone, modern and fresh. Spears has learned her voice excels at club levels. And what queen hasn't already worked the runway in their own house to this song?

will.i.am is all over *Britney Jean* as a producer and contributor, and their collab with the high energy "It Should Be Easy" is as effective as "Work." Sometimes the lyrics don't fit into the beat, but the merge of pop, techno and dub here is a spot on and ready for many New Year's resolution get-fit playlists. That tone continues with the DJ's wet dream of "Til It's Gone."



While I've picked on Brit's thin voice over the years, she displays some lovely maturity in her ballads, which vie for the album's strongest suit against the club tracks — most notably "Perfume" which is Spears at her most vulnerable since "Everytime." Here, she embraces her womanhood as she battles for her cheating boyfriend. And when she not-so-subtly delivers *I'm gonna mark my territory*, it's crazy-ass girlfriend and "you-go-girl" at the same time. But when we rule her out for having a complex approach, she delivers in spades the album's most shining moment.

She equals that with album opener (and potential single) "Alien" and the harmonious "Brightest Morning." Sometimes the poetry is out of a high school class, but she gives these ballads a heavy dose of honesty which buoys the album into a stronger release than probably expected.

But what's left to expect? I doubt this is the last we'll hear of the mother of two. She's locked out with her last few releases to select good enough material to keep her relevant, but at times, her lack of interest is apparent. *Britney Jean* is a testament to both of that.

— Rich Lopez

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Toni Braxton's values

The R&B legend talks retirement, her plan to go lesbian and her hit song that she hates



Toni Braxton is getting deep. Real deep. "I have a bit of a cold," she says, her voice doing that sexy-low thing it does when she sings, "so yeah, it's very Bea Arthur from *The Golden Girls*."

A little cold can't stop Braxton, who's already faced bankruptcy, is managing lupus and — before friend/producer Babyface intervened — almost retired from the music business altogether. Luckily, he changed her mind, and hearts everywhere were unbroken.

Love, Marriage & Divorce, her first album since 2010's *Pulse*, brings Braxton back together with Babyface. The two most notably collaborated on her self-titled debut, the singer's mega-selling caper that scored her a Grammy for Best New Artist in 1994.

Braxton was candid as ever in our recent chat, talking about why she told Babyface she's a grown woman ("I have breasts now"), her desire to have a lesbian experience and why she shares a lot in common with Auntie Mame.

—Chris Azzopardi

Dallas Voice: First of all, thank god for Babyface. I am so glad he wasn't about to let you throw in the towel. What were you smoking when you said you were gonna give up on music? Braxton: Obviously not weed, because I would've still stayed in the business! [Laughs] You know what? I was just in a sad space in my life. I think everybody goes through that, but I didn't realize, I guess, just how sad I was at that time — and friends like Babyface, Missy Elliott, Fantasia and Anita Baker helped talk me out of that state. Sometimes you just need friends and family to rally around you and let you know it's gonna be OK.

And now you're in it for good? I'll never retire. I'll be 85 years old singing at the Cafe Carlyle like Eartha Kitt.

How do you make a love album with an attractive, talented man like Babyface and not fall in love? I've been in love with him since he was in ['80s R&B group] The Deele. I was a huge fan. Very quickly he became my big brother when we started working together. I was the girl who was like, "I'll never have a chance with him," and from there we just became brother and sister. Our relationship was really weird. I will always, always love him. But it's like having a crush on your cousin, and you realize, "Maybe I shouldn't have a crush on my cousin. That's not hot." [Laughs]

So then with "Sweat," a song off the new album, is it weird to sing about makeup sex with your "brother?" Well, we really aren't brother and sister, so it wouldn't be incest! But I call him my "musical husband" — we are married, just musically. We're kind of like Elliot Stabler [and Olivia Benson] on *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*. You want them to get together, there's a bit of attraction, but we've never crossed the line. That's kind of where it is with us.

How does *Love, Marriage & Divorce* compare to the work you and Babyface did in the '90s? It's similar. Kenny Babyface helped make my dreams come true. He helped develop my sound, and so I'm more comfortable with him

than any other producer I've worked with. And he's given me great songs in my career but not the biggest songs in my career, which is really odd. He didn't write "Un-Break My Heart," he didn't write or produce "He Wasn't Man Enough," but I was still on his label, so he still fostered my career. But whenever we're together, he is the one I'm most comfortable and creative with, and I feel home.

So these recording sessions must have felt nostalgic for you and him. Working together was actually tough at first. The first couple of months, we struggled because I'm his artist, and he kind of developed me, so his artist grew up, and I have my own opinions, my own thoughts, my own philosophies, my own judgments and my own career. We talked about it, and it took a second for him to understand. We argued a bit — not bad-argued, but we just had creative differences. Later on he said, "You know, Toni, I have to give you credit. You're an artist now, and it's sometimes hard for a brother to accept that his sister is growing up." I said, "I know, Kenny. I have breasts now and everything." [Laughs]

Looking back at some of the songs you did with Babyface, which stand out most to you? "Breathe Again" is my favorite song to sing. It makes me happy. It's a beautiful, sad love song. I love "Another Sad Love Song." But of all the songs that I ever recorded with him, I love them all except for "Seven Whole Days." Hated it. Didn't understand it. Why am I singing it? And it turned out to be a big urban song for me.

You've been very passionate about wanting to play a lesbian role on *Orange is the New Black*. Where's that stand? My agent is working on that for me as we speak! I got a call [re-



cently] that said, "We're working on it." We believe they're taping in March, so we'll see. I'm excited about it.

Why the interest in playing a lesbian character? I just want something out of character. When people see

me, Toni, as a performer, they see something completely different. If I were to play a lesbian, they could see me as an actress: "Oh, maybe the bitch can act!" And every girl has her lesbian crush. My lesbian crush would be Ellen [DeGeneres]. I love how she dances. I like her haircut. Love everything about her. So this would be a way for me to channel my inner Ellen.

And you already have the short hair. I'm

BABYFACE'S BABY
Braxton reunited with the acclaimed producer for her new album, her first since 2010.



halfway there!

There's some intense lesbian sex on that show. Would you be up for getting it on with another woman? Would you go as far as they'd ask you to? If the role called for it, I would be willing to do it. It would be a great endeavor, and I think I would be comfortable in that role. I don't think it would be a stretch for me.

It wouldn't be a stretch? Are you saying you've had a lesbian experience? I've never had one in my life! Ever! This would be my first lesbian experience if I did *Orange is the New Black*, because I've never had one. There are a lot of things I haven't experienced that I need to start experiencing. I need to start living. Like Auntie Mame said, "I need to live!" I would like to say, "I lived."

How do you feel about gay people having the right to love and marriage and divorce?

We're all people, so I don't even like to get into those conversations. As an African-American woman, we were told we couldn't vote, we were told we couldn't have interracial marriages — and my dad's biracial. So I hate that people put labels on how you should love and whom you should love. I think that's ridiculous. Everyone should be able to love.

How would you say this album looks at relationships differently than the love songs you sang a couple decades ago?

You're aging me! Twenty years ago, I was just singing about having my heart broken, and now I'm dealing

with my heart *being* broken — and possibly having to start over and look for love again. Kenny and I both went through divorces. For me it was more therapeutic than for Kenny, and we decided to put words and music to what I went through recently and what he went through in the past. It definitely helped me a lot. I wanted to call the album *Love, Marriage & Divorce* and Babyface wanted to call it *Love, Marriage & the D Word* and I'm like, "Kenny, we're grown, let's just say it. Put it out there. It's divorce."

Is it different singing from a personal perspective? Yes! It's really different because you're telling your story and you're exposing yourself, but at the same time you're using it as a healing

tool. Every song on the album isn't about something I've experienced solely. There's a song on the album called "I Wish," and it's my mother's story of my mom and dad's divorce. It's a really beautiful song that she inspired me to write.

How about "Sweat"? Was that inspired by your own life? I think everyone's experienced "Sweat" and I-hate-you sex. I haven't had that in a while because I really haven't been dating since my divorce, so I long to experience "Sweat" again. That would be lovely.

Why does the androgynous mystique interest you? Is it a conscious decision? No, no. It just fits my face. When I first came out, I had

short hair on the first album. By the time I got to the second album I put some extensions in my hair, but I'm always comfortable with my short hair. My short hair gives me my strength. I know that sounds weird, the lack of hair, but I feel more powerful. I feel more indigenous of the artist I was when I initially came out. It makes me feel more at the center of my roots again.

And it also could be your ticket to Orange is the New Black. I'm hoping so. They may make me take the little wave out, and I may have to have a little afro, but we'll see!

If anyone can make an afro look hot, it's you. What a beautiful lie, but I appreciate it.

MOSES' MIXOLOGY



Dallas DJ **Brandon Moses** spins at 2014's first Dick's Happy Hour at Avenu on Friday. If you like Moses' music but aren't able to make the party — or if you can make the party but still just love listening to Moses' mixes — have we got a treat for you.

Starting Jan. 24, Moses — who won Dallas Voice's "Best DJ" title in last year's Readers Voice Awards — will prepare (exclusively for Dallas Voice listeners), a monthly Podcast called **Moses' MIXology**, downloadable on the home page of DallasVoice.com. Each month, Moses — and some of his DJ friends — will provide 50–80 minutes of the hottest beats, ideal for workouts, commutes or just chillin'.

In addition to music, the site will also include bios, information about where to find local DJs and other news to get your weekend started right.

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— Arnold Wayne Jones

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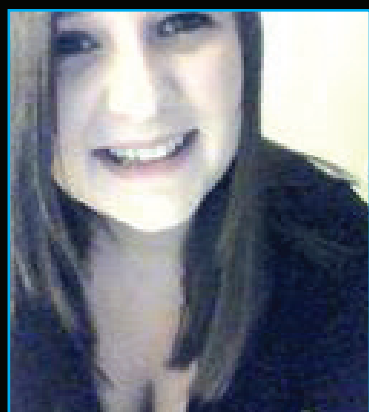
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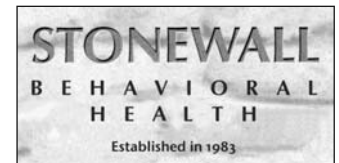
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Friday 01.17

Uptown Players opens annual fundraiser 'Broadway Our Way'

The divas will be out in force at the Kalita Humphreys Theater this weekend, and that's how it should be. Uptown Players kicks off its 2014 season with its annual fundraiser, in which boys sing the girls' songs and vice versa. And the bench is deep with local talent (including host B.J. Cleveland, pictured with Lon Barrera). It's also a chance to preview the new season, and hear songs from their upcoming musicals: *Pageant* and *The Boy from Oz*.

DEETS: Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Jan. 17–26. UptownPlayer.org.

LIFE+STYLE

best bets

Friday 01.17

'Enchanted April' arrives in Arlington

It's only January, but Arlington is already celebrating April — *Enchanted April*, the fluffy-light comedy set in the early 1990s, when several British women go on an excursion to Italy to splurge on beautiful weather; romantic entanglements ensue. Theatre Arlington is mounting this whimsical fantasy, the perfect tonic for Texas' unpredictable weather. Through Feb. 2, it will remain sunny in the Mid Cities.

DEETS: Theatre Arlington, 521 W. Main St., Arlington. Jan. 17–Feb. 2. TheatreArlington.org.



Friday 01.17

Saturday 01.18

Pilobolus returns to Dallas

Pilobolus is technically a dance troupe, but for anyone who has seen the shows, it's much, much more: A celebration of movement, music, light, physical prowess and invention. The acclaimed troupe returns to Dallas, courtesy of TITAS, for two nights of magic — and that includes the spell these beautiful dancers will cast on your hearts.

DEETS: Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 8 p.m. TITAS.org.



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For an interview with gay dino-puppeteer Jackson Eather, visit DallasVoice.com and click on Life+Style.

ARTSWEEK: NOW PLAYING

THEATER

Broadway Our Way. The annual performance and fundraiser for Uptown Players, with previews of the upcoming season including numbers from *The Boy from Oz*, *Pageant* and *Soho Cinders*. Kalita Humphreys Theater. 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Jan. 17–26. UptownPlayers.org.

On the Eve. The award-winning guerrilla production gets the full treatment from Theatre 3. The rock musical — about a time-traveling Marie Antoinette and a living statue — was one of the best shows of 2012. Theatre 3, 2800 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Through Feb. 9 (in previews through Jan. 19). \$10–\$50. Theatre3Dallas.com.

Avenue Q. The hit musical moves from its home at Theatre Too over to Cowtown's Stage West with the original cast. Stage West, 821 W. Vickery Blvd., Fort Worth. Through Feb. 15. StageWest.org.

Enchanted April. A romantic comedy set in a sunny resort. Theatre Arlington, 521 W. Main St., Arlington. Jan. 17–Feb. 2. TheatreArlington.org.

Oedipus el Rey. The Dallas Theater Center continues its season with this original work by Luis Alfaro, an adaptation of Sophocles' classic *Oedipus Rex*, set in the barrios of contemporary Los Angeles. Directed by Kevin Moriarty. Wylly Theatre's Studio Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through March 2 (in previews through Jan. 22). Tickets from \$15. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

Paper Backs. An artist and writer navigate through the turns in their relationship. Presented by Sundown Collaborative Theatre. Directed by Tashina Richardson. PointBank Black Box Theatre, 318 W. Hickory St., Denton. Jan. 17–26. 8 p.m. 940-220-9302.

Rehearsal for Murder! Pegasus Theatre presents its latest production in its patented Living Black and White style, to resemble (eerily) a 1940s Black-and-white film. Directed by Michael Serrecchia. Eisemann Center for Performing Arts, 2251 Performance Drive, Richardson. Through Jan. 26.

I Love You, You're Perfect Now Change. The romantic musical comedy is back at Theatre Too. Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Through Feb. 16. Theatr3Dallas.com.

DANCE

International Association of Blacks in Dance 26th Annual Festival and Conference. The Dallas Black Dance Theatre hosts this conference of workshops, master classes and performances. Friday–Sunday. Visit DBDT.com for complete schedule.

Pilobolus. The edgy modern dance troupe performs a two-night engagement. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. Jan. 17–18 at 8 p.m. TITAS.org.

BURLESQUE

Cirque du Burlesque. The spinoff of Viva Dallas Burlesque takes place every third Friday at the Lakewood Theater, 1825 Abrams Road. 9 p.m. VivaDallasBurlesque.com.

FINE ART

Hopper Drawing: A Painter's Process. The towering 20th century painting Edward Hopper is revealed in a collection of pencil drawings and sketches that inform his creative choices. Includes several finished paintings, including the iconic *Summertime*. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through Feb. 16. Special exhibition fee: \$16. DallasMuseumofArt.org.



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Through March 2. Free. CrowCollection.org.

The Jerry Lee Musslewhite Collection of Korean Art. The late docent at the Crow, also a devoted collector of Korean art, left behind this exquisite collection of pottery, stoneware and furnishings from Korea's storied past. Crow Collection of Asian Art, 2010 Flora St. Through Aug. 24. Free. CrowCollection.org.

Living in Limbo: Lesbian Families in the Deep South. Photographs portraying same-sex couples and often their children. African American Museum, 3536 Grand Ave. Through Feb. 28. AAMDallas.org.

Small Works: Holiday Show. An exhibit of smaller pieces, suitable for gift-giving, at the Norwood Flynn Gallery, 3318 Shorecrest. Jan. 18 (extended). NorwoodFlynnGallery.com.

FRIDAY 01.17

COMMUNITY

Dick's Happy Hour. Brandon Moses spins at the first Dick's of the year. Avenu, 2912 McKinney Ave. 6–10 p.m. No cover. RSVP at DHH17.Eventbrite.com.

BROADCAST

Real Time with Bill Maher returns for its 12th season on HBO. 9 p.m.

SATURDAY 01.18

COMMUNITY

Gaybingo. The first Uptown version of 2014 features a new host and the theme High Seas Gaybingo in this

fundraiser for Resource Center. New developments this year include an improved VIP experience and two different ways to enjoy the fun: Upstairs in the Rose Room with host Valerie Jackson and guest Eric Way, and downstairs in the new Rumpus Room with camp from Josslynn and Chris Gregory. Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs. 5 p.m. doors, 6 p.m. curtain. \$25–\$45. MyResourceCenter.org.

THEATER

Dinosaur Zoo Live. A two-night-only, family-friendly walk through prehistory, with lifesized puppets. Majestic Theater, 1925 Elm St. Jan. 18–19. DinosaurLiveZoo.us. (For an interview with gay puppeteer Jackson Eather, visit DallasVoice.com.)

MONDAY 01.20

COMMUNITY

Are You Smarter Than a Drag Queen? The sassy game show is back, with more games and a cash prize. The Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road. 9 p.m.

TUESDAY 01.21

COMMUNITY

Turtle Creek Association quarterly membership

mixer. Happy hour prices on drinks at Mattito's at The Centrum, 3102 Oak Lawn Ave. 5:30–7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY 01.23

COMMUNITY

S&C Events Networking Mixer and Launch Party. A new networking company kicks off with this mixer. The Woolworth, 1520 Elm St. 6–9 p.m.

CONCERTS

Olga Kern. The Cliburn gold medalists officially opens the Kimbell's Piano Pavilion Auditorium with a two-night concert. Kimbell Art Museum, 3333 Camp Bowie Road, Fort Worth. 7:30 p.m. Cliburn.org.

this week's solution

W	H	O	A		L	I	V	E	D		I	S	T	O	
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AHOY, MATEY! | The first Gaybingo at Station 4 of 2014 arrives Saturday with the theme High Seas!

Ai Weiwei: Circle of Animals. The controversial Chinese artist reimagines zodiac figures of the Chang dynasty. Crow Collection of Asian Art, 2010 Flora St.

browse

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

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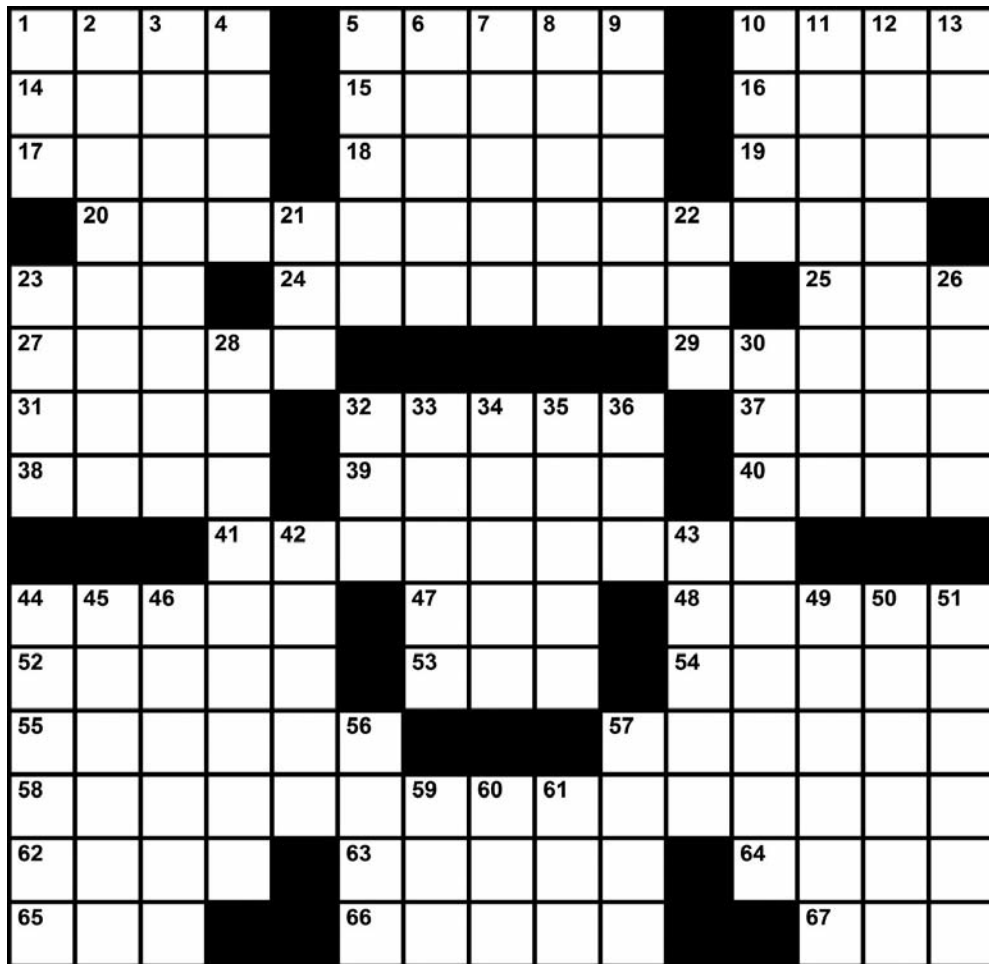
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It Figures, Skater

Solution on page 25

Across

- 1 "Hold your horses!"
- 5 Resided
- 10 Words in an analogy
- 14 Apiece
- 15 City of Lorca's homeland
- 16 Helped with a line
- 17 Homo leader to toga-wearers?
- 18 ___ Room
- 19 Composer Thomas
- 20 Start of a quote from Brian Boitano
- 23 Legal matters
- 24 Showy bloomers
- 25 Threesome on a sundial
- 27 Come together
- 29 Singer Marilyn
- 31 Clay Aiken was almost one
- 32 More of the quote
- 37 Go on and on
- 38 Peter Pan pooch
- 39 *The Jungle* novelist Sinclair
- 40 Ingrid's *Casablanca* role
- 41 More of the quote
- 44 Orgasm, e.g.
- 47 Whisper sweet nothings

- 48 Have coming
- 52 Campbell of *Martin*
- 53 Where to see two bears at night
- 54 Cara of *Fame* fame
- 55 G, for one
- 57 Black eye
- 58 End of the quote
- 62 English actress Diana
- 63 Dutch resort isle
- 64 One on Bernstein's staff?
- 65 Curve shape
- 66 Use your butt to demonstrate
- 67 Composer Rorem

Down

- 1 Pee-___ Herman
- 2 Estate for Frida
- 3 Special time
- 4 Clumsy come-on
- 5 Bolivian city that means "peace"
- 6 Trump ex
- 7 Record material
- 8 Top
- 9 Country house, to Nureyev
- 10 "___ almost taste it!"
- 11 Extremely precise
- 12 They may mount
- 13 Verse on a vase
- 21 Poet Sarton
- 22 Conclusion of sex?
- 23 Screw royally
- 26 Tiny bit
- 28 Main members of fleets
- 30 Standard
- 32 Believe, informally
- 33 *Spartacus* and others
- 34 "Not to worry!"
- 35 "But there is ___ in Mudville ..."
- 36 Horny African animal
- 42 Kitchen appliance brand
- 43 Bessie of the blues
- 44 Went boldly
- 45 Instruments for Elton John
- 46 Sunflowers
- 49 The Bible Belt, e.g.
- 50 "Jailhouse Rock" singer?
- 51 Came together
- 56 Foie follower
- 57 Adult ugly duckling
- 59 Corn starter
- 60 Family magazine
- 61 J. Edgar Hoover's org.

T&A SUNDAYS



WRITTEN BY TYLER CURRY
ILLUSTRATED BY CLARIONE GUTIERREZ



LIFE+STYLE

scene



Friends getting frisky at the Round-Up Saloon.



Ernesto, Mike and Isaac at JR.'s Bar & Grill.

Making the **SCENE** the week of Jan. 17–23:

JR.'s Bar & Grill: NetChix with Krystal and Asia on Monday. JR.'s Potluck with Edna Jean, Onyx, Chanel, Kamara and Alana on Tuesday.

BJ's NXS! Dallas Radio Online Launch Party with DJ Michael Jon spinning all night on Tuesday 10 p.m.–2 a.m.

S4: Rose Room performances on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. GayBingo on Saturday at 5 p.m.

Eden Lounge: Live band on Sunday.

Woody's Sports & Video Bar: Jada Fox welcomes special guests each week on Thursday at 11 p.m.

Alexandre's: Liz Mikel on Friday. Jason Huff and Ignition on Saturday. Alicia Silex on Thursday.

Dallas Eagle: DFW Leather Corps seminar on Saturday at 2 p.m. TGRA presents Riding for the Rodeo with host Frank Thompson featuring rodeo games, auction and entertainment on Saturday at 7 p.m.

Kaliente: Miss Universo Latina 2013-2014 with emcee Nicky Lauren on Tuesday.

Sue Ellen's: Miss Marcy & the Texas Sugar Daddys on Friday. Ciao Bella on Saturday. Cami Maki opens for Story Tellors on Sunday. Bella & Darla and Dana Goldberg Live — Crossing the Line on Wednesday.

Round-Up Saloon: Dance lessons with Juanita on Thursday at 8:30 p.m.

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



Valerie and Antonio at the Tin Room.



Serving shots at Kaliente.

LIFE+STYLE

scene



Clay at Woody's Sports & Video Bar.



Evelyn and Bri at Sue Ellen's.



Austin and Louis at the W.

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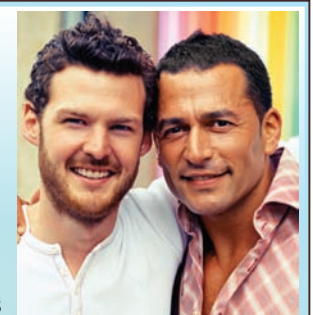
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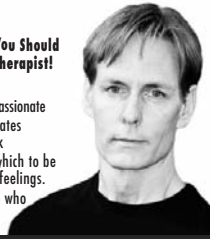
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Prayer of Application:
To the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit,
You who solve all problems, who
light all road so that I can attain
my goal. You who give me the
divine gift to forgive and forget
all evil against me and that in all
instances of my life you are with
me, I want, in this short prayer,
to thank You for all things & to
confirm once again that I never
want to be separated from You,
even & in spite of all material illu-
sion, I wish to be with you in
eternal Glory. Thank you for your
mercy toward me & mine. The
person must say this prayer for
3 consecutive days. After 8 days
the favor requested will be
granted even if it may appear
difficult. This prayer must be
published immediately after the
favor is granted without men-
tioning the favor and your initials
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