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Drake Jensen headlines the hirsute confab of furry gays and their followers

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Portrait of the *art* teacher

Out educator
Jerome Larez
instills in his
students the
power of art

Cover story by
Steve Ramos



The background features a stylized American flag with a blue field of white stars and a red field with white stars. Two human faces are shown in profile, one at the top right and one at the bottom left, appearing to be in conversation. The text is overlaid on this background.

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Jerome Larez is an art teacher at Legacy Preparatory Charter Academy in Dallas

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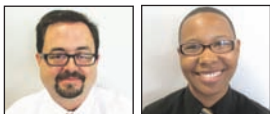
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PERSON OF INTEREST | Crystal Jackson and her girlfriend, Britney Cosby, left, and the sketch of a man police believe was the last person with the women before their deaths last weekend.

EQTX calls on police, public to help solve lesbian couple's death

Statewide LGBT advocacy organization Equality Texas is calling on the Department of Justice and local police to solve the deaths of a lesbian couple found dead in Port Bolivar over the weekend.

Crystal Jackson and her girlfriend, Britney Cosby, both 24, were found killed near a convenience store dumpster off State Highway 87 when a beer salesman noticed their bodies.

Police believe the women were killed somewhere else before being moved to the trash bin. They were in Galveston County last week celebrating Mardi Gras before family members lost contact with them. Autopsy reports this week revealed that Cosby died of blunt force trauma and Jackson was shot to death.

Family members told Houston's KTRK that Jackson was a mother to a 5-year-old girl. The couple had been together for two years.

Police released a sketch of the man who was last seen with the women. He's described as a black male with an average build, standing between 5 feet, 11 inches and 7 feet tall. He's in his late 20s or early 30s.

"Equality Texas is deeply saddened by this murder, and our hearts and prayers are with Ms. Cosby's and Ms. Jackson's family and friends during this difficult time," Equality Texas Executive Director Chuck Smith said in a statement. "For many in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community this is a stark reminder that nearly a third of Texas' hate crimes are motivated by bias against sexual orientation. A report issued last year by the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs found that 73.1 percent of all anti-LGBT homicide victims in 2012 were people of color.

"I have faith that the Galveston County Sheriff's department is working hard to bring closure to this senseless tragedy and will work with the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Department of Justice to fully investigate," Smith added.

Investigators are looking for Cosby's missing vehicle, a silver 2006 Kia Sorrento with paper tags.

GetEQUAL TX activist Cd Kirven has set up a reward fund to encourage people to come forward with information. All money collected will go to

Galveston County Crime Stoppers. Donations can be made online at TinyURL.com/GalvestonReward or checks and money orders can be mailed to Captain Cook with the Galveston County Crime Stoppers at 601 54th St. Galveston, TX 77551.

Anyone with information about the case should call the Galveston County Sheriff's Office tip line at 866-248-8477 or Galveston County Crime Stoppers at 409-763-8477.

— Anna Waugh

Frank Libro resigns his post as Dallas spokesman, takes CVB job

City of Dallas spokesman Frank Libro has resigned from his role as managing director of the Public Information Office to become the Convention and Visitors Bureau's vice president of communications.

Libro, who's openly gay, has worked for the city for nearly a decade and was instrumental last year in the making of an "It Gets Better" video, which featured more than a dozen city employees including himself. His last day is March 21.

In his resignation letter, Libro called his new role a "dream job" where he'll "continue to help promote our great city."

"I have worked with so many smart and talented employees — all working together to make our city better," he wrote in the letter. "I will look back on my time at City Hall fondly and with great pride and gratitude."

— Anna Waugh

Tegan & Sara book Dallas concert

Last year was a watershed for the lesbian twins Tegan & Sara. After years with a cult following, they released a new album, *Heartthrob*, with a decidedly pop bent. Suddenly, they became as hip as Justin Bieber became ... not. (Hey, we can only handle so many Canadian pop stars at a time.)

The duo just began their North American Let's Make Things Physical Tour, which will run nonstop throughout most of 2014, often in conjunction with Katy Perry's Prismatic Tour (after all, each of them has kissed a girl and liked it). One of the final stops will be opening for Perry at American Airlines Center — not a bad venue to prove your bona fides. The show hits Dallas Oct. 2 and 3.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

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Can art help a student become a scientist?

Out art teacher Jerome Larez develops his students' artistic skills, knowing it will help them excel in the core subjects like math and science

STEVE RAMOS | Senior Editor
ramos@dallasvoice.com

The University of California, Berkeley reported that when poet and former National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Dana Gioia gave the 2007 commencement address, he used the occasion to deliver an impassioned argument for the value of the arts and arts education.

"Art is an irreplaceable way of understanding and expressing the world," Gioia said. "There are some truths about life that can be expressed only as stories, or songs or images. Art delights, instructs, consoles. It educates our emotions."

Over a thousand miles away in Dallas, an art teacher at Legacy Preparatory Charter Academy has a curriculum designed to give his students those "truths about life."

Jerome Larez guides about 325 students, from kindergarten to 8th grade, through various art forms he believes will give them a better understanding of their world.

"Within my own art, I try to bring out the beauty I see in the world," Larez said. "But in my classroom, I not only try to instill that idea into my students, I also teach them a visual language."

Larez said the average American looks at 2,000 images a day, including billboards, computers and video games.

"Kids are bombarded with those images, so how do we sift through them?" he asked. "It's important to learn a visual language, and art gives us the ability to communicate."

Larez graduated from Texas Tech University with a degree in studio art photography. His master's is in photo theory. In his first year of teaching at Legacy, he's introducing his students to various art mediums, including painting, graphite, sculpture, mixed media and digital.

"The students are aware there are different art-making processes," Larez said. "Through our studies, they not only can identify an art piece, but they can describe it, analyze it and make interpretations from it."

But how do those skills help students academically, and are smart people drawn to the arts or does arts training make people smarter? Again, Berkley weighs in. Under the leadership of neuroscientist Michael S. Gazzaniga, the Dana Arts and Cognition Consortium assembled neuroscientists from seven universities to study whether dance, music, theater and visual arts might affect other areas of learning — and how.

Berkeley reported that after more than three years of research, the results of a \$2.1 million proj-



BUILDING THE ARTS | Students in Jerome Larez's 8th grade art class at Legacy Preparatory Charter Academy work on various projects that will help them develop skills in the core subjects. Larez is looking for funding that will cover the costs of taking his students to the city's museums. (Steve Ramos/Dallas Voice)

ect were published in a report titled "Learning, Arts and the Brain." Several studies in the report suggested that training in the arts might be related to improvements in math or reading skills. In one of the studies, a University of Oregon team, headed by psychologist Michael Posner, observed the brain activity of children 4 to 7 years old while they worked on computerized exercises intended to mimic the attention-focusing qualities of engaging in art. The researchers concluded that the arts can train children's attention, which in turn improves cognition.

For 8th-grade student Kayren Cox, the cerebral complexities behind her art projects are better left to the highbrows.

"I just like what we're doing," she said. "I love art class. I've learned a lot about art in Mr. Larez's class. I don't know if I'm good enough to go on

with it, but it's something I think will always help me."

Larez does know the importance of the relationship between art and the core subjects, but he's also working to take the education out of the classroom and into the city's museums. Financial realities, however, are making that project difficult.

"It would cost about \$2,000 to take the students to a museum, but it's so important to get them there," he said. "They need to see the art movements we've been talking about in the classroom, and they're excited about going to the museum, but we've got to come up with the money."

Legacy's administration is supportive of Larez's curriculum and his openness about being gay at the school.

"I think they knew when I applied and handed

them my resume," he said. "I have a project called Hope Is Never Silent, which is an art organization that displays queer art."

Larez had a recent showing of the art at the ilume Gallerie, and his goal is not only to highlight LGBT artists but allies, too.

"The art brings out the issues we go through in the community," he said. "We see the struggles in the art pieces."

Currently, Larez is occupied with the struggle of finding the funding to cover the costs of the bus to get his students to the museums.

"As a photographer, I frame the world as I would in a camera's viewfinder," he said. "I see detail. When I look at my students through that viewfinder, I see the details there, too. I see future artists, engineers and scientists. I hope my work in the classroom gets them there." ■

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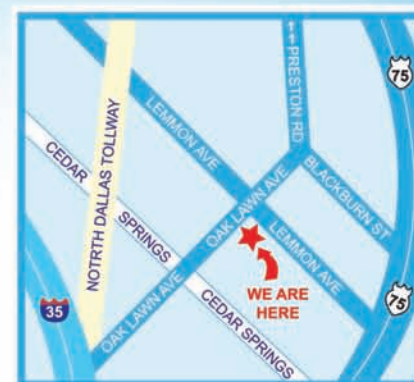
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localbriefs

G4G at the Arboretum

Gay for Good spends time in the Dallas Arboretum Children's Adventure Garden as gallery hosts on March 15. They'll be sharing the excitement of the garden with guests, guiding them through the interactive exhibits.

G4G mobilizes the LGBT community to interact with the greater community by volunteering time to various social welfare and environmental service projects. The Dallas chapter is the group's 10th nationwide.

On Saturday, G4G volunteers will be stationed in one of the many outdoor and indoor galleries of the Arboretum's newest addition.

Anyone interested in volunteering for G4G projects can contact the group on its website, GayForGood.org



Get thee to Renaissance GayBingo

Wayne Smith as Cher is the special guest at this month's Renaissance Gaybingo at S4 on Cedar Springs Road on March 15 at 6 p.m.

What would an evening of Renaissance be without performances by the cast from Scarborough Renaissance Festival? To add to the pageantry, the cast of Uptown Players Pageant performs in the Rumpus Room.

Get into the Renaissance spirit by dressing up for a chance to win prizes. This will be a knight to remember. ■

GALA meets the plaintiffs

Meet Victor Holmes and Mark Phariss, the Plano couple who sued the state of Texas for the right to marry. Last month, a San Antonio judge declared the Texas anti-marriage amendment unconstitutional but placed a stay on the ruling while it's appealed.

GALA NTX welcomes Holmes and Phariss at a happy hour at Bonnie Ruth's Bistro at Watters Creek, 916 Garden Park Dr., Building A, Allen on March 20 from 5:30-8:30 p.m.

pet of the week / LAWRENCE

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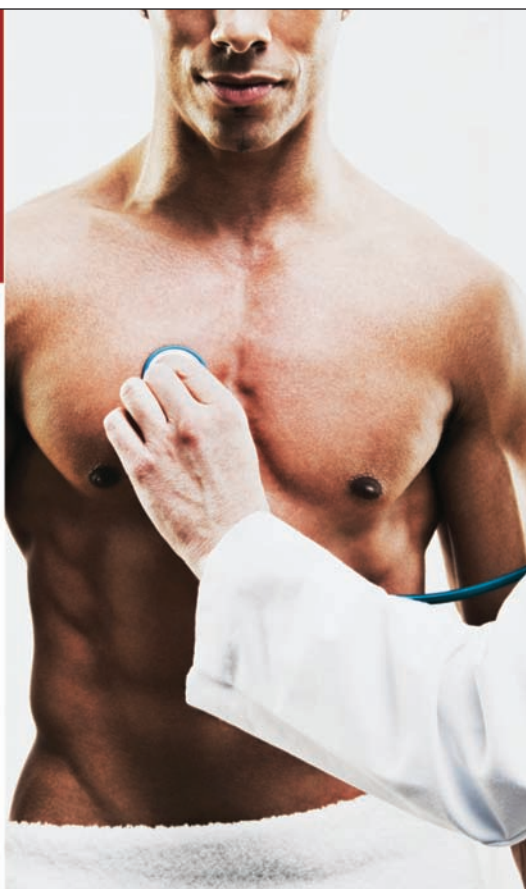
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A.C. Gonzalez: Change is coming for LGBT community

Dallas' new city manager has taken off running with a list of things advocates want changed at City Hall, promises to keep progress on the fast track

ANNA WAUGH | News Editor
waugh@dallasvoice.com

Dallas City Manager A.C. Gonzalez is a soft-spoken man who says he's determined to use his influence in his new role to bring change to City Hall.

Change was the chief demand when Gonzalez was selected to replace his longtime predecessor Mary Suhm in January, and in a recent interview with Dallas Voice, he said the changes also will embrace LGBT issues.

The equality resolution the city council approved last week officially directed Gonzalez and his staff to examine inequities in city employment and fix them administratively as well as through council approval. Gonzalez said the resolution is a good start in the work that needs to be done for the LGBT community.

"Now that we have some meat on the bones in terms of direction, we're going to be asking more specifically what are the things that need to be changed and how do we go about doing that," he said.

The resolution was stalled for a week when Gonzalez, Mayor Mike Rawlings and Councilman Jerry Allen agreed to discuss the council's legal questions during executive session. Many advocates viewed the move as a way to kill or water down the measure, especially after Rawlings prevented the marriage equality resolution from moving forward last year. But Gonzalez told Dallas Voice there were genuine concerns and a need to express them openly in closed session.

"Like many things that are different, people process them at different rates," he said. "And at that time, notwithstanding all the logical reasons why it might have been on a different schedule, there was just a need for some additional time for processing. And it happened."

One item at a time

Gonzalez has a lot of expectations weighing on him. The council unanimously approved him as Suhm's replacement with a \$400,000 salary, the highest city manager's salary in the nation and a large increase to the \$250,000 he earned as interim city manager. It's also a huge increase to Suhm's \$305,000 salary after more than eight years in the position.

With only a few months on the job, he's wasted no time addressing LGBT issues. He's met with



Dallas City Manager A.C. Gonzalez

staff about how to make the city, fire and police pension programs inclusive for same-sex spouses. Currently, opposite-sex spouses receive benefits for life when their spouses die, but same-sex spouses are treated like any other beneficiary and benefits run out after 10 years.

Since pensions have come up before, Gonzalez expects them, along with family leave, medical coverage and citywide cultural competency training to be addressed first when his office gives its quarterly presentation to the Finance, Budget and Audit committee in June. And while the city's Employees' Retirement Fund will discuss the pension in coming months, Interim Assistant City Manager Theresa O'Donnell said preliminary discussions with the pension board staff indicate a "status quo position."

"This institutional inertia presents a real opportunity for City Manager Gonzalez to demonstrate his leadership and commitment to LGBT employees by guiding the Pension Board and its staff in the direction of equity and fairness," she said.

So far, Gonzalez seems poised to fix the inequities in employment publicly, as opposed to Suhm's more quiet approach to resolving issues behind the scenes.

As for comprehensive transgender healthcare, there was a big push to add gender reassignment surgery to the city's insurance plan last year. Issues about what was actually covered for trans employees also came up with gender markers not being changed and hormones not being covered. Suhm told Dallas Voice in a previous interview that everything except surgery was covered, and adding that coverage was a financial concern, despite other

■ GONZALEZ, Page 12

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Legacy serving up love 25 years later



CAREGIVER | Jasmine Johnson said, "This is my purpose," as she chatted with clients while working in the kitchen at Legacy Founders Cottage. (Steve Ramos/Dallas Voice)

Organized as a hospice where people with AIDS could die with dignity, the Founders Cottage is now a house of healing and recovery

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
 taffet@dallasvoice.com

Brooke Nickerson's father knew she'd never make money as a social worker. When she took the position of program director at Legacy Founders Cottage in Oak Cliff, he had even more trepidations.

Those concerns, however, were assuaged recently when Nickerson took her father to work with her.

Within a few hours, he saw her bettering the lives of people who previously had little hope. He watched her advocate on their behalf to make sure they were getting the best medical care. He saw a staff that was proud of the work they were doing and smiles on the faces of patients in their care.

"You really do make a difference," he told her.

Legacy Founders Cottage has been making a difference in the lives of people with AIDS since 1996, and this month, parent organization Legacy Counseling Center celebrates its 25th anniversary.

Mike Vanderwater, one of the founders for whom the Cottage is named, donated the house. Melissa Grove was hired as its first director.

"I thought I'd do it for a year," Grove said.

When the Cottage opened, everyone had a terminal diagnosis. Within a year, protease inhibitors had been approved, and people began living with HIV. Grove thought her days in AIDS care were numbered, but today she is executive director of Legacy.

"We're busier now than ever," she said.

That's because the focus changed. Instead of a hospice, the Cottage became a place of transitional and respite care.

Patients are usually released from the hospital before fully recovering. After extended stays, they have often lost their homes and all their belongings, so they're released to a homeless shelter.

The Cottage gets people stabilized. When they're ready, Legacy's Home Base for Housing program helps them find a place to live, but first, some clients need to learn survival skills. One current resident, who asked her name not be used, said she's learning to be compliant with her medications and is dealing with depression.

"The counseling has really helped me," she said.

Although she still looks underweight, she's gained 30 pounds in the past few months. She said

she'd like to live on her own — something she's never done before. It's an option she's exploring with housing coordinator Tonya Moore, who's looking into group settings as well.

The resident said she still gets depressed a lot, but staff and other residents ask her if she's OK.

"I like that," she said, because she knows everyone at Legacy cares about her well-being.

Grove said the Cottage stops the cycle of re-hospitalization. Getting people stronger, having an advocate accompany clients to doctors appointments to find and treat any underlying health conditions and help them move into permanent housing all contribute to better outcomes.

Everyone who works at the Cottage shares that passion. Staff caregiver Jasmine Johnson said working at Legacy isn't just a job.

"This is my purpose," she said as she worked in the kitchen, chatting with a resident. "Whatever someone wants to talk about, we listen. We're always there, and they count on us."

She said the residents and staff become a family.

Nickerson said in the three years she's been at the Cottage, they've moved more toward respite care and away from hospice. In her first year, five residents died. The next year only three. She hasn't lost anyone in the last year, and none of the current residents is a hospice client.

"It's very rewarding to see people come through the door who had no hope moving out on their own," she said.

Moore said that's not as easy as it sounds.

"Each resident has a housing plan," she said. "The challenge is getting to the perfect intersection

of ready to go and housing available."

Legacy has several clients whose needs pose challenges. One current resident is undocumented and blind. He moves around the Cottage easily, but his blindness limits his outside housing options. His immigration status creates other obstacles that exclude him from some housing programs, Moore explained, but she approaches his situation as just another challenge.

Legacy operates with lots of volunteer help. Nickerson said Cottage volunteers cook, clean, shop, plan activities, take residents to appointments and hold fundraisers. Virtual volunteers even do database work from home.

To fill one volunteer opportunity, Nickerson is looking for someone with good shopping skills. She needs someone with a truck to make the Sam's Club run once every two months and then break down the packages and arrange them in the storage garage to make things accessible.

Cody Ellison, co-owner of lifestyle home accessory store Home on Bishop in Bishop Arts is a big fan of Legacy and called the staff selfless.

"My take on Legacy is there but for the grace of God go I," Ellison said. "Thank God I'm healthy."

Each year his birthday party benefits Legacy, but raising money isn't all he does. In April, his Bible study group will plant flowers and tend to the gardens at the Cottage. But more important than that, he said they'll spend time chatting with the residents.

"The last thing anyone there wants is to feel like they're outcasts," he said.

Certainly no one at Legacy thinks of them that way. ■



RUBBING SHOULDERS | Legacy Executive Director Melissa Grove, Legacy Board Chair Steve Weir and David Rogers attended a fundraiser recently at Home on Bishop. (Steve Ramos/Dallas Voice)



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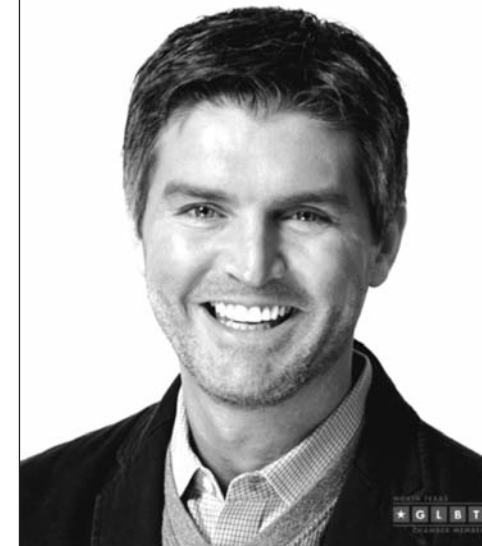
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Andy Smith named TI Foundation ED



CORPORATE ALLY | Texas Instruments has been a longtime LGBT ally, and the company recently named Andy Smith to executive director of Texas Instruments Foundation.

TI has made large contributions to LGBT causes and contributed to the community's cultural growth

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Andy Smith, a Texas Instruments employee for 17 years, will take on a new position with the company. He's currently the director of corporate philanthropy at TI, and on April 15 he'll assume the role of executive director of Texas Instruments Foundation.

Smith said that the focus of the foundation and corporate giving are slightly different. The foundation, which made \$12 million in grants last year, works on improving the quality of math and science teachers, supporting the arts and culture in Dallas and meeting critical community needs. One of the ways it meets those needs is through its United Way donations. Another is through individual contributions to organizations like Genesis Women's Shelter.

He said on the corporate side, the diversity initiatives give to a wide variety of community organizations. The TI Pride Network has donated to Youth First, Uptown Players and a variety of HIV/AIDS organizations.

When Congregation Beth El Binah worked with the Dallas Holocaust Museum to bring an exhibit on the treatment of gays during the Holocaust to Dallas, Smith worked with TI's LGBT, Jewish and Christian groups to help fund and set up the exhibit.

Smith is married to Paul von Wupperfeld, who also works for TI. Both have been LGBT activists since 1980 and have been together 23 years. They had a church wedding in 1997 in Austin and civil weddings in Canada in 2004 and California in 2013.

"It really shows that the company is living by the ideals we espouse," von Wupperfeld said about his husband's appointment. "It makes me very proud that somebody who is as out and open as Andy, who has a husband who is out and open, can achieve a position like this. The experiences we have had have helped both of us to empathize with people, but it has really helped Andy in his work in this position. He genuinely cares about people."

Smith joined TI in 1997, where his roles have included media relations and marketing communications. Prior to joining the company, he worked in Austin as public relations/development director for several nonprofit organizations.

"Andy has done so much to assist and improve many organizations, and has provided leadership as an openly gay man," Resource Center CEO Cece Cox said. "As a Texas Instruments employee, he worked with others to create an inclusive workplace for LGBT employees. He has educated others regarding LGBT cultural competency as a board member at United Way, and has contributed time and financial resources to various HIV/AIDS organizations. I congratulate him on his new position and wish him many more years of strong leadership."

Smith begins serving in his new position as the TI Foundation celebrates its 50th anniversary. ■

■ **GONZALEZ**, From Page 9

cities that added full coverage seeing a minimal budget impact.

Gonzalez said he's been made aware of the cases where there was a question of coverage and has worked to resolve them. As for adding the coverage, he said that'll be part of the conversation among a group of city employees who will discuss what benefits need to change this year, adding that he'll ensure a trans employee is included in the discussion. But he doesn't rule out the coverage being added.

"It's possible, but it's going to happen only after there's a lot more research and conversation," he said.

A longtime ally

Even without the resolution, Gonzalez, a 15-year veteran of City Hall, said he expected changes for the LGBT community to happen.

"I'd like to think that we'd still be moving forward, but it certainly helps that the value is now explicit, and so that creates more energy for change to occur," he said. "I think [change is] happening. Let's

not discount when the issue came up, some of our best and brightest were put on the case. And that's not insignificant."

Gonzalez is referring to O'Donnell and Assistant City Attorney John Rogers, who made three presentations to the finance committee before penning the resolution. The city also is hiring an ethics and diversity officer to ensure strategies, policies and trainings are inclusive, which will help bring about change at City Hall. Interviews began this month, and candidates will eventually meet with Gonzalez before a final decision is made.

Calling to mind the city's "It Gets Better" video made last year, Gonzalez said the new officer could work on similar projects to encourage and celebrate diversity.

Gonzalez's relationship with Dallas' LGBT community goes back decades. He worked as an assistant city manager from 1988-1995 before leaving and later returned to the post in 2006. During his first stint, he met with a lesbian who the Dallas Police Department refused to hire because she was gay. That was 1989.

Resource Center spokesman Rafael McDonnell said Gonzalez has been aware of the issues in the community for years and has worked with its

members to resolve them. The center's staff has already discussed the changes the resolution will bring at City Hall.

"He's been exposed to the LGBT community in Dallas going back a long time," McDonnell said. "I think that we're hopeful that we'll be able to build a real solid relationship."

'I don't get discrimination'

Gonzalez, a San Antonio native, grew up playing sports and learning the value of diversity in athletics and from his parents. So when it comes to inclusivity, he said he's all for it.

"I don't know that I see these differences, to be really honest," Gonzalez said about the LGBT community. "I don't get discrimination. I don't understand how that produces a good value to anybody."

As an example, Gonzalez said he was talking to a group of people about moving people around at City Hall. O'Donnell's role came up and the possibility of moving her to a higher-profile position. She's been an interim assistant city manager since he took over last summer as interim city manager. He said O'Donnell asked him how moving her up would be viewed, to which he responded that a lot

of women have top positions.

But O'Donnell was referring to the fact that she's openly lesbian in an office that has a number of openly LGBT staff. She and Assistant City Manager Joey Zapata were featured in the "It Gets Better" video.

O'Donnell said her position changing could be viewed as gay-friendly, and she worried if he "was being politically naïve to what those ramifications might be."

"In the city of Dallas there's a lot of council sensitivity about how the community is reflected in the staff," she said. "Overwhelmingly we got very positive response to the video, but there are still a few critics about why are they doing this. So I just wanted him to be thoughtful about that."

For Gonzalez, her sexuality wasn't an issue.

"I know that there's that factor. I'm not blind to that," he said, adding that her value as an employee outweighs what people may think. "She's extremely good at what she does and is a good person, so beyond that I don't know why the other labels are necessary. And so the people that I deal with are on that basis and their value is what they are able to bring to the table in terms of making good things happen." ■

Two AIDS walks benefit Dallas, Tarrant agencies



MADE FOR WALKING | Participants in last year's AIDS Walk South Dallas, also hosted by St. Philip's School, walked down Pennsylvania Avenue toward Fair Park. (David Taffet/ Dallas Voice)

AIDS Walk South Dallas sees growth in 4th year; AOC hopes Tarrant County's 22nd annual walk will replace other lost funding

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

With the closure of Lone Star Ride and \$160,000 in cuts from Ryan White funding this year, AIDS Outreach Center Executive Director Shannon Hilgart is counting on a strong community showing for the 22nd annual Tarrant County AIDS Walk.

The same day, AIDS Walk South Dallas, which named AIDS Interfaith Network as its sole beneficiary this year, expects to see healthy growth in its fourth year.

Both walks take place March 22.

Promotions before and after the event ensured the success of the Dallas walk. Sponsor Walgreens collected \$8,000 at several stores, including those in Oak Lawn by asking customers for a \$1 donation at the register. Not satisfied with that total, the company is holding a charity basketball game for employees later in the month. Proceeds will benefit the walk.

In February, The Original Cupcakery held a champagne jazz event to introduce its official South Dallas AIDS Walk cupcake that will be available through March 22.

"We're still looking for sponsors and vendors, and you can never have enough walkers," walk organizer Auntjuan Wiley said. "But we're maxed out on volunteers."

A caterer signed on this week to provide the walkers with food.

St. Philip's School and Community Center at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. hosts the walk. Registration begins at 8 a.m., and the walk steps off at 10

a.m. So far more than 140 walkers have signed up. Wiley expects a record turnout for the event because more than half the walkers usually don't register until the day of the walk. Online registration is available at AIDSWalkSouthDallas.com for a \$25 fee. Dallas County Health Director Zach Thompson will present the walk with a resolution on behalf of the county.

In Tarrant County, walkers will gather at Trinity Park Pavilion.

"Since the first acknowledgement of the pandemic of AIDS and subsequent advancement in medication which increases life-expectancy as well as quality of life, the attention to this disease has faded," Hilgart said. "Many people have no idea that this chronic disease has not been cured."

Because of the funding cuts to its dental and medical case management programs, as well as the loss of Lone Star Ride, Hilgart said success of the walk is critical this year.

To increase participation, Hilgart said they've used more mailings, flyers and store window posters to encourage group participation, especially church groups and corporations. They added a number of committee members who were able to get more community participation.

So far, about 180 walkers have registered, and Hilgart expects that number to double on the day of the event. The prize for the top individual fundraising walker is two tickets on American Airlines.

Radio personality Ana de Hara is master of ceremonies.

Online registration is available at AOC.org under the events tab. Adults are \$30, students and nonprofit employees are \$20 and pets \$10. Onsite registration begins at 8 a.m. Runners take off at 9:30 a.m. and walkers at 9:45 a.m.

Trinity Park Pavilion is at 2300 W. 7th St., Fort Worth. ■

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viewpoints

'Do you have to be soooo gay?'

The point of the rainbow should be that all colors are welcome

I was recently asked this question by someone who genuinely loves and cares about me but perceives that my behavior, social media commentary and the subjects I publicly obsess over all seem to be gay and gay-focused.

The contrarian in me wanted to flip my hair, bat my eyelashes and twirl while asking, "Whatever do you mean?" to force them to articulate the stereotypes on which they were judging me. I didn't. Because it's a fair question, from a certain point of view. And I actually do it on purpose.

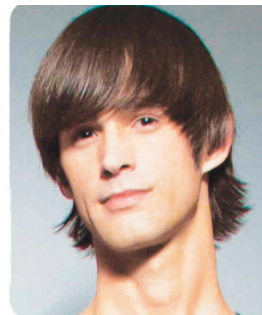
The real answer to the question is, "Well, it shouldn't matter." That's why I do it. There is no such thing as "too gay" or "not gay enough," despite what straight people — and more importantly, many within the LGBT community — seem to think at times when judging us or each other. I am extremely fortunate to live in a community in a city where I can feel safe and comfortable to be as gay as I want. I camp up and play into gay stereotypes because I can; not every member of our community is so lucky.

If I'm being honest, I often push my public gay persona (especially across social media) far beyond my typical behavior in person. In a one-on-one conversation, 50 yards of taffeta don't actually fly out of my mouth. I don't own a lip gloss, and I don't have a thing for Cher, Madonna or even (gasp!) Barbra.

But what if I did? At times I am likely to get caught singing "Defying Gravity" entirely too

loudly in the car with the windows rolled down, and in a group of more than five with Beyoncé playing in a bar, I will make a weird, angry dance face and try in vain to pop my non-existent booty. Sometimes, I check just enough boxes for an accurate assumption of gay to be made, and other times I fill all the boxes with so much glitter and rainbows the gayness is just impossible to ignore.

Because I can. Because it was an incredibly long journey to grow through the misconceptions I



Emerson Collins
Contributing Columnist

was taught about what it means to "be a man" and masculinity being a prize above all others. Because the point of the rainbow should be that all colors are welcome. Whether you are a lumberjack sports bar enthusiast or the pranciest of

makeup queens, gay should only ever mean what you want it to mean.

Most of the stereotypes that lead an outsider to assume someone is gay are based in an archaic model where the only known homosexuals were those who couldn't "pass." The queers. Those who were light in the loafers. The most obvious among us have always been on the frontlines because they have no choice but to be proud because based on a series of massive

generalizations, the rest of us can see it.

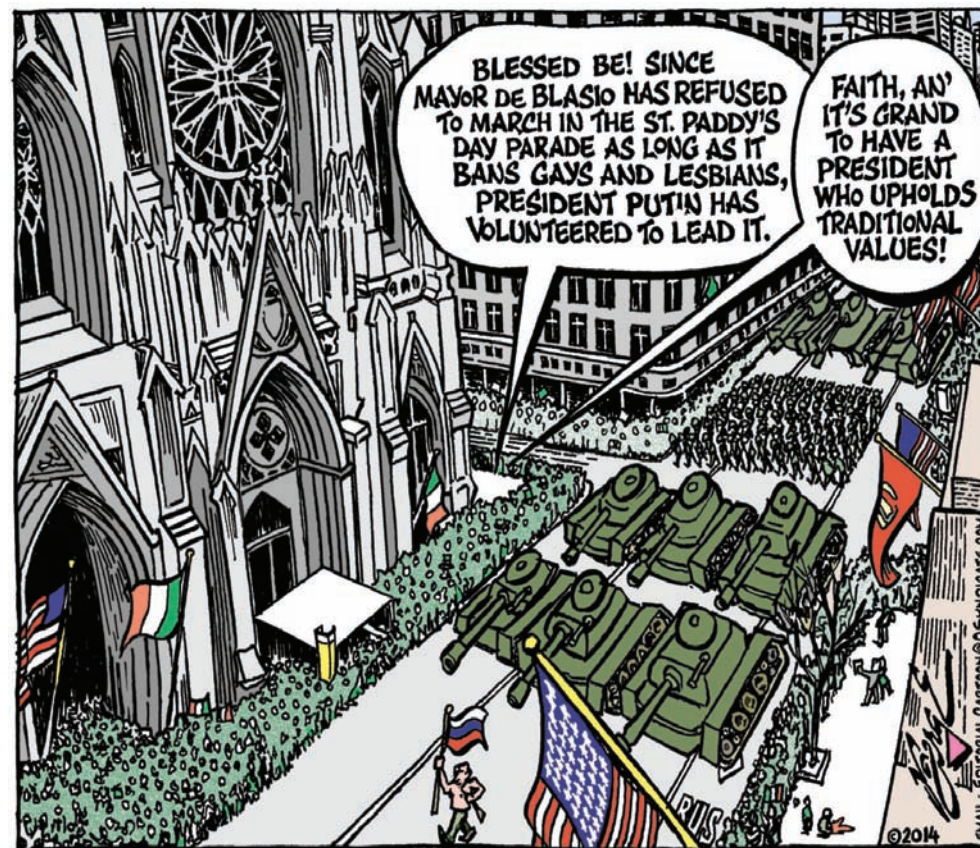
The problem with these assumptions today is that they're insulting to everyone. Looking at someone's behavior or interests and making a decision about what kind of sex they like should be deemed ludicrous at this point. It's insulting to suggest you can't be gay and masculine, and it's equally insulting to suggest that you can't be feminine — or just interested in traditionally feminine hobbies, careers or subjects — and be straight. Neither should be better or worse. They should just be.

For me, living publicly, and sometimes flamboyantly, gay is one of the small things I can do to be part of publicly challenging the idea that any of the stereotypes used to make the gay assumption are negative. For those who are concerned they might "come off gay" or seem "too gay" or live in a part of our country where it could be dangerous to be so — seeing the examples of those of us who are loudly, proudly and exuberantly gay, according to all of the stereotypical boxes — can serve as an example that any point on the spectrum should be awesome and accepted, even if that isn't the case where they are.

Yes, sometimes, I'm super gay. I talk about being gay, I talk about things I care about based on my perspective and experience as a gay man, and I care greatly about gay issues and gay politics. Some of the other "gay" things I like, well they really aren't that gay if you stop using ridiculous metrics like my love for musical theater, pop music and Speedos as a basis for seeing sexuality in so many things that have absolutely nothing to do with it. (Even though you happen to be right in my case.)

So no, I don't have to be that gay. But I choose to be because there's absolutely nothing wrong with any of it. So why on earth not? ■

Former Dallasite Emerson Collins is an actor, producer and blogger based in Los Angeles. Follow him on Twitter @ActuallyEmerson and find him on Facebook at EmersonCollinsOfficial.



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Country bear

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Out country artist Drake Jensen arrives in Texas — finally — to headline at the Texas Bear Round Up

RICH LOPEZ | Contributing Writer
getrichindallas@gmail.com

At age 40, what Drake Jensen thought was going to be a backburner project turned into an actual career move. He recorded an album, and then another, and before he knew it, “recording artist” was being used to describe him. Now, the openly gay singer finds himself a staple in the LGBT continuum as one of the pioneering voices of queer country music. (It’s not just Chely Wright, guys.)

With two albums under his Texas-sized belt buckle and a healthy calendar of performances booked, Jensen is a bona fide working musician. He’s performed throughout his native Canada and the U.S., worked in Nashville. But for a country singer, there’s one milestone he has yet to achieve: He hasn’t performed in Texas.

That item gets crossed off his dream (not bucket) list this weekend, when he headlines at the signature dinner during the Texas Bear Round Up, which appropriately enough, this year is themed Cowboys and Bears (which Jensen is plainly both). And he’s thrilled by the prospect.

“When the career got to a certain point, I knew I wanted to play there,” he says. “I mean it’s the heart of country music, and when I was asked to perform, it was a huge thing for me — and an honor as a Canadian country music artist. When I put that out there in the universe, and then they came to me, it was fantastic.”

Garnering accolades didn’t always come easily. He had to endure many people advising against his coming out if he wanted a serious career. He ignored them and came out in the middle of his 2011 debut CD *On My Way To Finding You*. By the time he recorded 2012’s *Outlaw*, he was blatantly, “can’t-hide-behind-vague-pronouns” out.

“I am who I am, and if [people] don’t like it, thanks but [they can] go somewhere else,” he says.

He almost needn’t have worried. The album “did really well and put me in a different place,” Jensen says. “*Outlaw* was the point where I was doing this for me, turned my back on everyone who told me to stay in the closet, and it sent me in a completely different direction.”

Like most iconic artists, what Jensen does is greater than merely recording music; he proudly puts a bear image out there beyond a scruffy twink or a hypermasculine bearded athlete. Jensen is proudly a 40something gay man with a dense forest of un-ironic salt-and-pepper whiskers, a hairy chest proudly on display with a burly, fit but overall normal build. He’s handsome but accessible. And mostly, he’s a bear.

“I’m a very different kind of artist. I’m 44, I’m not a size-30 waist, I have a grey beard and I’m not typically the image on a billboard,” he says. “But it’s an image lots of men my age relate to. Some people try to knock some pictures I take, but I create images that are provoking. I know what I like to see, and I try to bring some of that into my own art.”

The look and sound work together and create a healthy brand. His songs are truthful about his attentions. And while idealized in his branding, that rugged look is also who he is. Jensen is a fisherman, an outdoorsman, a singer. Perhaps he didn’t see himself in this role a decade ago, but with age comes wisdom — and he’s using it.

“Everybody grows every day and if you stop, you’re dead. At 40, I took a leap of faith, and I unknowingly went down a road where I didn’t know what was going to happen. Now I’m doing what I love to do. Every day I get to live that.”

While Jensen enjoys the attention his music and work brings, he strives to be genuine and keep his humility intact. He doesn’t want to be on some pedestal created by his fans. He wants to be only a storyteller. Every once in a while, though, he will succumb to some positive reinforcement.

“Someone did call me the ‘Daddy of Country Music,’” he says. “I’ll take that! It’s kinda hot.”

SILVER BULLET | Although Canadian, Jensen knows Texas is the epicenter of country music, so performing here is a feather in his Stetson. (Photo by Jonathan Edwards/Convidae Studio)

TEXAS BEAR ROUND UP

Through Sunday, Drake Jensen appears at the dinner Saturday at The Ranch. Visit TBRU.org for complete schedule.



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6 – 8 p.m.

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Hosted by Dallas County Commissioner Mike Cantrell
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From Folsom to ferry building, the SoMa gayborhood is a San Francisco treat



Encompassing a vast, architecturally and demographically diverse tract of central San Francisco that extends from the Mission District to the bay, SoMa — defined as the area south of Market Street — is an urban swath containing everything from shiny new loft condos to vintage refurbished warehouses, you'll find a vibrant stretch of waterfront on the bay, the culturally dynamic Yerba Buena Gardens complex, stylish hotels, the heart of the city's leather-and-Levi's queer scene, established gay dance clubs in the country, and trendy eateries.

Day or night, there's plenty to see and do in SoMa. Although LGBT tourists often look to the Castro as San Francisco's must-see gayborhood, SoMa's gay scene — concentrated around Folsom and Harrison streets near the confluence of the 101 and I-80 — has been humming along for even longer, and it offers an impressively eclectic, creative and edgy vibe that appeals to everyone from queer artists to sophisticated foodies to leather-and-fetish aficionados.

At the upper (northeastern) end of SoMa, closer to the Financial District and waterfront, the neighborhood is more touristy and traditional. It's anchored by the mammoth Moscone Convention Center, named for former mayor George Moscone who was assassinated in 1978, alongside gay rights activist Harvey Milk. Travelers are drawn to the several museums, upscale shopping malls, and luxury hotels in this area.

It's about a 2.5-mile walk (allow 45 minutes to an hour) to get from the bay to southwestern SoMa's border with the Mission District, and the section in the middle (from about 4th to 8th streets) can be a less interesting (though still safe). At night, consider cabbing it to the gay-bar and hip dining district.

SoMa sightseeing

Right where Market Street ends on the bay, at

Embarcadero, you'll find San Francisco's Ferry Terminal Building, which contains a slew of great restaurants and food shops. The gorgeously restored 1898 building overlooks San Francisco Bay — ferry boats to Oakland, Sausalito, Tiburon and elsewhere still leave from the piers behind the building. Inside, you'll find merchants and restaurants proffering a dizzying variety of mouthwatering morsels, including wines, olive oils, sausages, cheeses, coffee and tea, sweets — you name it. There's also a terrific farmers market early on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Across street, stop inside the small but very interesting San Francisco Railway Museum, which contains exhibits on the city's famed cable cars and F-line streetcars.

Yerba Buena Gardens comprises terraced gardens and waterfalls, sculptures, an arts center with performance halls and art galleries, cafes and an ice-skating rink/bowling center. Taking up two large city blocks, this complex also contains the huge and modern Metreon shopping mall and movie plex, and several intriguing museums: the Museum of the African Diaspora, the Cartoon Art Museum, the Contemporary Jewish Museum and the California Historical Society.

SoMa drinking and dining

SoMa's upper reaches abound with noteworthy restaurants, many located in the upscale hotels mentioned below. In the Ferry Terminal Building, don't miss Gott's Roadside for delicious burgers, seafood, and garlic fries; and the Slanted Door for upscale Vietnamese cuisine.

Many of the top tables in SoMa are down in the lower end, however, amid the neighborhood's gay bars. A culinary high point is RADIUS San Francisco, a stylish high-ceilinged storefront space specializing in gorgeously plated, locally sourced California cuisine and fine regional wines — on warmer days, dine on the patio.

RIDE ALONG | This trolley, which runs along Market Street, is more popular with tourists than locals, but that's what a vacation is for, as is a visit to the ferry building, opposite. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

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With vintage photos and framed *Life* Magazine covers on the wall, old-school Rocco's is a lively, gay-popular spot for well-prepared classic red-sauce Italian fare, from linguine with sautéed calamari to chicken marsala. Along buzzy 11th Street, check out Bergerac, a glamorous space with craft cocktails and creative small-plates snacks (Asian duck tacos, shrimp fritters) — and Bar Agricole, known for stellar mod-American cooking.

A fun place to dine out with friends, Fondue Cowboy offers a novel take on the old-school dining classic. These aren't your typical fondues — try the Quick Draw (Manchego cheese, white wine, roasted red pepper, roasted garlic) or High Noon (white chocolate with balsamic-strawberry puree). Fans of Asian cuisine should check out Basil Canteen, serving contemporary Thai food (grilled coconut-marinated pork skewers and stir-fried skirt steak with a chili-brandy sauce) in a handsome warehouse space with exposed-brick walls. Also notable is Izakaya House, a convivial late-night option for first-rate sushi and Japanese fare.

SoMa's lower section is home to some historic gay bars, including the End Up, which has been going strong since 1973 — it was famously featured in Armistead Maupin's *Tales of the City* series. The crowd these days is a catch-all: queer and straight clubbers of all ages, from college aged to those who may well have been here on opening night. Also legendary is The Stud, nearing its 50th birthday and justly famous for its Meow Mix gender-bender Tuesday variety shows and fun for dancing on weekends.

The neighborhood has long been one of the world's leading hubs of gay leather culture — it plays host to the infamous Folsom Street Fair each September as well as the Up Your Alley fetish fair in late July. The San Francisco Eagle, which shuttered for a time and was nearly redeveloped as an upscale restaurant (causing a huge community kerfuffle), reopened early in 2013 and is as dark and saucy as ever, if less strictly leather-oriented than it used to be. These days you'll find a diverse crowd, including otters and bears, hipsters, leather daddies ... and even some twinks! Other good bets along Folsom include the ultra-cruise-y Powerhouse, with such creative theme nights at Nipple Play and Kink Salon, and the venerable Hole in the Wall Saloon, which has long billed itself "a nice little queer bar for filthy bikers and loudmouth punks." Nearby, the Lone Star Saloon is a beloved neighborhood bar with a good-size patio, great happy hour drink specials and a furry all-ages crowd.

11th Street between Folsom and Harrison has gradually become SoMa's hippest bar-hopping block, with a slew of cafes, lounges and clubs, including the gay nightspot BeatBox, an eclectic space for dancing from country music on Tuesdays to Tea-Rex T-dances on Sundays; and DNA



Lounge, a huge dance and live-music clubs with a mixed crowd and adjacent 24/7 pizza joint.

Nearby, the massive 1015 Folsom nightclub has some highly popular circuit-style parties and raves — check the calendar for details. Cat Club is another cool dance space with different theme nights, many with a strong queer following — Throwback Thursdays and Wednesday's Bondage-a-go-go are two of the city's better mid-week clubbing adventures.

SoMa accommodations

Across from the Ferry Terminal Building, the sleek Hotel Vitale is part of the stylish Joie de Vivre chain; many of its airy rooms overlook the bay, and there's a great little urban spa on-site. Just a block away, occupying part of a historic YMCA building, is Harbor Court, one of two SoMa hotels in the gay-popular, San Francisco-based Kimpton brand. This 131-room property has a large ground-floor "living room" off the lobby with a fireplace and comfy armchairs — it's a lovely spot to spend an afternoon. The design-driven W Hotel rises 31 stories above Yerba Buena Gardens, its rooms chockfull of cushy amenities, and its TRACE restaurants drawing a see-and-be-seen crowd for drinks and dining.

One of the better deals in the neighborhood, the gay-popular Mosser Victorian is a smartly renovated redbrick beauty right in the heart of the neighborhood. Next door is Kimpton's dapper Palomar San Francisco, which has a decidedly plush and modern vibe, its rooms outfitted with gourmet minibars and iPod docks.

Closer to gay nightlife are several mid-range chains, the best being the Holiday Inn Civic Center and the retro-decorated Best Western Plus Americana. Next to the latter, the arty, eco-conscious Good Hotel is, indeed, a good place to lay your head for the night. And you can't beat the location for SoMa nightlife.

— Andrew Collins

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OK, chorale

Inside the TCC,
as it records its
first CD in 5 years



There are therapists who have struggled for years to do what The Turtle Creek Chorale does in about 15 seconds. In only six measures of the song “Sure On This Shining Night,” the basses and baritones take the assurance of healing to the peaks of their upper ranges. *All is healed, all is health*, they sing, and the music is imbued with an almost divine power.

“I think we’re the only men’s chorale group who produces that sound,” said Wayne Cavender, who has been a member of the chorale for 14 years. “We don’t really know where it comes from. Tim went to San Francisco and couldn’t reproduce the sound there. There’s just something about the chorale that conductors can’t find anywhere else.”

Cavender is referring to Tim Seelig, the chorale’s artistic director for 20 years who moved to conduct the San Francisco Gay Men’s Chorus. Since Seelig, the chorale has had two more artistic directors — Jonathan Palant and its current leader, Trey Jacobs.

Last week, Jacobs conducted the chorale through two days of recording music for the group’s latest CD — its first in five years — pushing the number of recordings to 39, according to the TCC website. For years, the chorale held the record for being the most recorded men’s chorus in the U.S., and it is still one of the most-recorded.

“I’ve recorded 31 CDs with the chorale,” says Kevin Hodges, TCC’s president, “and this is my 21st year with the group.”

Those recordings helped launch the

chorale to international prominence.

“The Turtle Creek Chorale established themselves in the early ‘90s through a series of recordings, and I think that is one of the reasons they are so known and respected,” said Joe Nadeau, artistic director and conductor of Los Angeles Gay Men’s Chorus. “They were able to reach an international audience because their CDs were available, and people could hear what this amazing men’s chorus in Dallas was doing.”

“Amazing” is an adjective that’s often used to describe TCC’s unique sound, and it’s that sound Jacobs is committed to recording again. When Jacobs began the second day of recording inside the Church of the Transfiguration, he played back one of the songs the members had recorded the previous day. The men had nailed a Rachmaninoff piece, “Bogoroditse Devo,” which begins in the higher register for the tenors — complicated by the direction to sing it pianissimo. It’s one of the most widely performed pieces of Russian Orthodox sacred music, and its graceful simplicity is woven with pious reverence. The chorale builds from the pianissimo to a powerful delivery of the word “raduysia” (rejoice), moving the soul and spirit. After listening to their stellar recording, one tenor joked, “Who was that?”

Jacobs told the chorale members he wanted them to hear what they had accomplished. He became emotional as he told them how exemplary their recording was.

“You gave your hearts, and you put so much of yourselves into this piece,” Jacobs told the men. “I wanted you to hear this. This is one of the most beautiful recordings I’ve ever heard, and

the world needs to hear it.”

That power and sound hasn’t been replicated anywhere, according to Harry Wooten, director of music at Royal Lane Baptist Church and artistic director of Irving Chorale.

“The chorale holds a completely unique position in the community in their choral sound and their larger philosophical reason for being,” he says. “They have beautiful turns of phrases, and there’s something visceral about their sound.”

In the five pieces the chorale recorded, the men are able to demonstrate that in their 34th year, they’ve lost none of the sound that has made them famous. Artistic directors of other men’s choruses say they’re excited to know TCC is recording again.

“For many of us, the chorale has an amazing sound,” Nadeau says. “If you hear a recording of the chorale, and you don’t know it’s them ahead of time, you can easily tell it’s them. Their strength is creating beautiful, lush music, and they offer an inspiring choral experience unlike anything else.”

Cavender agrees. “I feel like what we do means something to the people we are singing to. I get a sense of accomplishment, and I see what we do as a sort of ministry.”

The CD won’t be released until next year, when additional songs will be added, but fans can still buy any of the previously released CDs.

“That’s one of the things about The Turtle Creek Chorale,” Nadeau says. “You can hear their music everywhere, and who wouldn’t want to?”

— Steve Ramos



PUTTING IT TOGETHER | Scenes from rehearsals at the Church of the Transfiguration for TCC’s next CD. (Steve Ramos/Dallas Voice)

Laughactory

DCH kicks off 5th annual Dallas Comedy Fest

After seven award-winning seasons, *30 Rock* ended its run early last year. But Tina Fey's influence on the next generation of comedians took root over that span and is starting to bud.

Amanda Austin opened the Dallas Comedy House in 2009, but after reading Fey's 2011 autobiography, *Bossypants*, she put an excerpt from the book on the wall of the Deep Ellum club as a mantra for what she was doing: *Studying improvisation literally changed my life ... It changed the way I look at the world ... What has your cult done for you lately?*

The club has recently hosted several queer comics (Kevin Allison last month; the gay Throwing Shade podcast team performs March 14), but for the fifth annual Dallas Comedy Festival, which runs March 18-22, Austin has lined up a several workshops to help cult members hone their craft. She envisions DCH not only as a venue to see great local comedy, but as a training ground for the uninitiated and a platform for working comedians.

Terry Catlett, an instructor at DCH, used to be terrified at the unknown elements of improv. That same fear now excites him and keeps him coming back for more. He will take the stage with three separate troupes during the final night of the festival.

"Improv is everywhere, but what makes DCH special is the people managing, teaching and performing there," Catlett says. "These people have the talent and drive to perform anywhere in the country, and they choose to be here, building something from the ground up. I want to be a part of something special."

This year's workshops are being led by improv instructor Susan Messing, who helped found Chicago's Annoyance Theater after stints at Second City and iO Theatre; and Kate Duffy, who also hails from those well-known training grounds. The two will close the DCF. Messing's Friday workshop sold out quickly, which is a testament to her teaching aptitude and the abundance of Dallas improvisers.

Rory Scovel gets things started on Tuesday as the headliner for the stand-up portion of the festival. With a Comedy Central special already in the can and numerous late-night appearances, he seems primed for the leap to the upper echelon of stand-up gigs in venues much larger than the DCH, according to Austin. "We're lucky to get him while we can still afford him," she jokes.

No fewer than 19 comedians, including Dallas' Aaron Aryanpur, Paul Varghese and Dave Little, will ply their trade Wednesday night and early Thursday before improv troupes and sketch acts from all over the country take over. About 25 acts will perform, with many DCH cultists — er, *graduates* — putting into practice lessons learned from their five levels of training.

Nikki Gasparo, an instructor at DCH who will be performing at the fest, loves the sense of community the club fosters and the fun and freedom improv provides.

"As a suburban wife and mother, I am expected to play a certain role, to set a good example for my child and the children of others. This requires me to often bite my tongue and say and do things that I necessarily would not, if I didn't have impressionable ears around. That completely goes out the window when I perform. Improv gives me the freedom to be characters who do and say awful things. The response is not outrage, but laughter," she says.

Recent graduate Ashley Bright, who performs Saturday with her troupe F.A.C.E., says she found a home in comedy at DCH.

"Improv will be a lifelong hobby that has lit the fuse on other creative endeavors," she says. "In the 14 months that DCH has



JOKER'S WILD | Dallas Comedy Festival booked up-and-coming standup Rory Scovel, before he got so famous they couldn't afford him, jokes founder Amanda Austin.

been in my life, I've quit a job I felt stuck at, moved to the big city and met so many wonderful humans that I'm lucky to now call friends."

"It's a place of support and encouragement. A place where I learned to stop talking about the things I wanted to do and just do them. Since I've been at DCH, I feel like I'm speeding toward a happier me," Bright says.

"We all have our issues with our humanity and how we come to terms with it, and improv helps me hash out all of mine," Gasparo says. "It's the best therapy in the world."

— Jason Philyaw

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L+S auto

Rings of fire Audi's Q5 TDI: A hot rod for all seasons

CASEY WILLIAMS | Auto Reviewer
crwauto@aol.com

We may hate to admit it, but hot roadsters are not ideal for all roads. Sure, they're great for storming freeways or those special track days, but gravel, rough asphalt and downtown potholes are a no-go. Maybe instead, you need a performance car that can handle *almost* any road — maybe something like the Audi Q5 TDI diesel.

The key word for Audi is “understated.” Smooth bodies are shaped for the Autobahn, but designers make no effort to be flashy. Oh sure, there's the big grille with Audi's four-ring logo, projector beams with LED halos, and large foglamps. Sporty 19-in. alloy wheels with snow tires make a statement. I just pray to all things tacky that the “TDI Clean Diesel” graphics on the side are just for advertising.

Inside, more understated class. The cabin reminds me of the best from Mercedes' and BMW's past. Everything is well-made, laden with real woods, but focused on giving the driver what she needs. There are no reconfigurable instrument displays, just two large gauges. A thick leather-wrapped steering wheel and heated leather seats are delights.

Understated does not equate to under-equipped. Our test vehicle came with a panoramic roof, fold-flat rear seats with armrest pass-through, tri-zone automatic climate control, power hatch and Bluetooth phone/streaming audio. Safety is enhanced by a backing camera, bumper sensors, blind spot indicators and a full array of airbags.

Audi's MMI infotainment system uses a console-mounted joywheel, surrounded by function buttons for audio, radio, navigation and vehicle

information. A small volume/seek knob is placed close to the front passenger. I'm not usually a fan of random buttons for simple functions, but Audi's system works well.

All great, but lift the hood to get a peek at the 3.0-liter V6 turbo-diesel that generates 240 horsepower — enough for a mid-size crossover, but it also produces a whopping 428 lb.-ft. of torque to leap off the line or thrust forward on the highway. Power hits pavement through an eight-speed automatic transmission and Audi's venerable Quattro AWD system. Fuel economy is rated 24/31-MPG city/hwy.

'14 Q5 TDI
Audi. 240 horsepower, 2.0 liter V6 turbo. 24/31-MPG city/hwy. As-tested price: \$51,445

During a four-hour Interstate run, my partner and I had time to settle in. There's no denying the joy of driving an Audi with the diesel engine. It accelerates so easily that I often looked down to realize I was running 10 mph faster than I thought. In the pure German tradition, the Q5 feels heavy, yet nimble. It is the kind of car you want to drive a very long distance just to spend time with it and your special person.

Not everyone likes stiffly-sprung German iron, but I do. On rough city streets, the suspension gets a work-out. Many people spending Q5 coin will prefer less understatement (witness the Cadillac SRX, BMW X3, or Mercedes-Benz GLK). Audis look a lot like Volkswagens: good and bad. While the diesel produces lots of power, there are less-expensive midsize crossover choices if fuel economy is your aim.

Most people think of diesels as frugal, but Audi makes a strong case for diesels being the go-to choice of driving enthusiasts and environmentalists. They deliver power and efficiency in a package that is hard to out-pack.

If you're willing to lay down \$51,445 for the pleasure of strumming the Q5 TDI, there's a lot to like. Best of all, you won't have to tip-toe around those side-sliding gravel roads.

Consciences & Queen

Rock's glam days reborn, and 'Hamlet' becomes a comedy at Theatre 3



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

The biggest surprise about *Less Than Kind*, a 70-year-old romantic comedy from British playwright Terence Rattigan making its North American debut at Theatre 3, is: Who knew Rattigan did comedy? His works were the quintessence of veddy English, stiff-upper-lippery, often dealing with abstract notions like justice (*The Winslow Boy*), emotional repression (*The Browning Version*), fidelity and honor (*The Deep Blue Sea*, *Separate Tables*). His is a morally foggy universe, where the reality rarely comports with the ideal.

Those themes are in play with *Less Than Kind*, though the tone is decidedly more buoyant — surprising even more, since it is set during the London blitz. Sir John Fletcher (Paul Taylor), a wealthy industrialist and current wartime minister, has been living with his fiancé Olivia (Lisa-Gabrielle Greene) pending his final divorce from Lady Diana (Jenna Anderson). They all seem content with the arrangement until Olivia's teenaged son Michael (Zak Reynolds), returned from studying in Canada, learns of the affair and can't decide if he's more upset that mom is bedding someone other than dear ol' dad, or that she has chosen a capitalist dog to

lay with. He forbids the relationship — or if that won't work, suggests a few drops of poison in the ear (or a well-placed night at the theater) might do away with Fletcher, or at least reveal the conscience of the king.

Of course, that only works in melodramas and the minds of teen boys (is there a difference?), but Olivia isn't so steely. Can she choose between the man she loves and her only child? And can she live with the consequences?

On paper, the play *sounds* like a melodrama, but Rattigan — even at his most theatrical — was always able to rise above clichés and imbue his characters and situations with a contemporary realism. He dealt with extramarital sex and homosexuality in mature ways that were ahead of his time (at least in mainstream drama), reflecting the way even polite society talked when they weren't in public. The situations here are well-layered: Olivia is a bit of a ditz, if not an outright gold digger, and wonders herself if she loves the man or the money; Sir John is priggish and secretive, but not one-dimensional; even his shrewish ex doesn't seem all bad. Indeed, if it weren't for Michael's petulance, there wouldn't really be much of a conflict at all. He's a drama queen, and we all know what *they* bring to ordinary events.

■ STAGE Next Page

I SEE A LITTLE SILHOUETTE OF A MAN | The future is bleak on the iplanet, but the music of Queen could save humanity in the campy, tuneful rock musical 'We Will Rock You.'

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■ STAGE From Previous Page

Rattigan branches into unexpected moments of absurdism in this well-constructed romantic farce, though the dialogue's erudition always earmarks it as more highbrow than low comedy. When the longish Act 1 ends, it *seems* like the play could end on a completed idea, but Act 2 still squeezes out a few tricks.

Director Jac Alder teases out likable performances from Taylor and Greene, and even taps into Michael's tantrum-like naïveté that so dis-

tinguishes an only child. It's a joy rediscovering an old work, and better still, to see it so joyously showcased.

LESS THAN KIND

Theatre 3, 2800 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Through March 30. Theatre3Dallas.com.

Some more old stuff that seems new can be found at Fair Park Music Hall, where **We Will Rock You** continues through the weekend. A hit in London for nearly a decade, this jukebox musical takes the songs of Queen, constructs a campy, futuristic story around them, and sets a host of muscular, titanium-lunged singers on rock's most iconic glam band.

Of all the pop song catalogues that have been

adapted for Broadway — from ABBA to Johnny Cash, Motown, Gershwin, the *Footloose* and *Xanadu* soundtracks and countless more — the music of Queen is probably the most daunting. The group's legendary lead vocalist, Freddie Mercury, was a sorcerer of soaring arena rock ("We Are the Champions," "Another One Bites the Dust"), whose mellifluous pitch-perfect tone adapted effortlessly to softer ballads ("Crazy Little Thing Called Love") and even kitschy bubblegum pop ("You're My Best Friend"). His powerhouse voice would be diffi-

WE WILL ROCK YOU

Fair Park Music Hall, 901 First Ave. Through Sunday. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

cult to recreate, like turning Meat Loaf's songbook into something high school students could pull off.

In fact, the style of *We Will Rock You* most resembles another musical with a side of Meat Loaf: *The Rocky Horror Show*. Both build joyous set-pieces around an affectionate and self-aware love of

both rock 'n' roll and science fiction. In this case, Earth's future is a bleak one: Now called iPlanet dominated by GlobalSoft corporation's rampant technologies, music has been outlawed unless programmed by the evil CEO Killer Queen (Jacqueline B. Arnold). But a band of bohemians — rebels holed up at a base in the devastated remains of Las Vegas — still dream of the rhapsodic ecstasy possible if only they can invent a musical instrument and decode the ancient texts that talk about *da-do-ron-ronning* and *shama-lama-ding-donging*.

Their only hope is a Neo-like prophet named Galileo Figaro (Brian Justin Crum), who "hears" these tunes and lyrics in his head. Can he and his on-again-off-again girlfriend Scaramouche (Ruby Lewis) decipher the clues and finally fulfill the wishes of their god, Mercury?

Scaramouche, Killer Queen, "Bohemian Rhapsody" — these are barely-veiled code words for Queen devotees, or really any fan of music for the past half-century. Writer-director Ben Elton has fashioned dialogue and plot points that cobble together lyrics and titles from a litany of songs, artists (the leader of the bohemians is Brit, short for Britney) and images from rock's storied history. Remarkably, none of the references elicit groans — they are so transparent, it's more like a well-meaning inside joke for the Music Hall's 3,000 closest friends.

It all works because the performers are having as much fun as the audience. Lewis actually received a mid-act standing ovation with her delivery of "Somebody to Love" early in the show, and the encore ("Bohemian Rhapsody," natch) had most everyone present on their feet, singing along and waving lighters. It's as close to a rock concert as you can get without drunk girls lifting their shirts and overpriced beer getting spilled on your back.

Subtlety isn't the point, but unlike, say, *Rock of Ages* — which feels heavy-handed and relies on bad jokes and a less interesting collection of music — *We Will Rock You* seethes with sex appeal, style and a light-hearted energy, plus an inventive staging that includes video components and up-to-date pop culture references (Miley Cyrus twerking, for instance).

Lewis also isn't the only one with the pipes to keep up with winged Mercury's vocal gymnastics. Crum is a passionate, sex Galileo who can do the fandango whenever he wants; Arnold's fat-bottomed Killer Queen sashays like a contestant on *RuPaul's Drag Race*; and Ryan Knowles (as Buddy), P.J. Griffith (as Killer Queen's icy henchman) and Jared Kirilli (as Brit) each have stand-out moment. As with the Green Day musical *American Idiot*, *We Will Rock You* proves that not all jukebox musical have to sound (and look) alike. Who needs radio ga-ga when you can have "Radio Ga-Ga?" ■



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Friday 03.14



Throwing Shade Live dishes down and dirty at Dallas Comedy House

She's a snarky feminist, he's a bitchy gay guy, and together they have been throwing shade for several years. In fact, their popular podcast, *Throwing Shade*, is a must-download of the Internet age. Now, Erin Gibson and Bryan Safi show audiences how to do it right — and live — with a late-night set at the Dallas Comedy House. Come ready to laugh.

DEETS: Dallas Comedy House, 2645 Commerce St. 10:30 p.m. ThrowingShade.com.

LIFE+STYLE

best bets

Friday 03.14



Texas Bear Round Up kicks off with BearDance

The sun came out this week, and the bears emerged from their hibernation to descend on Dallas for the 19th annual Texas Bear Round Up. The weekend-long party features several events (see the story on Page 16), but Friday gets everything rolling with the BearDance at Station 4, including a hirsute runway fashion show. Get ready to sweat!

DEETS: Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Doors at 8 p.m. BearDance.org. More events at TBRU.org.

Thursday 03.20

Savor Dallas kicks off 10th year of foodie fun at the Arboretum

There are food and wine festivals around Dallas as soon as the weather gets nice, but few are as tasty as Savor Dallas, which enters its 10th year this week. The brainchild of Jim and Vicki White, it's a monster three-day celebration of food, wine and spirits. It launches on Thursday with a trip to the Dallas Arboretum and a chance to taste exciting wines and bites, as well as get an exclusive chance to wander around the Dallas Blooms floral display without having to fight the crowds. The rest of the weekend takes place in seminars, an Arts District wine stroll and a huge tasting featuring the food of dozens of local chefs at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center.

DEETS: Dallas Arboretum, 8525 Garland Road. 6:30–9 p.m. Visit SavorDallas.com for full lineup of events.



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THEATER

Out of the Loop Fringe Festival. WaterTower Theatre's annual expo of independent theatrical productions continues. Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. *Final weekend.* WaterTowerTheatre.org.

The Fortress of Solitude. A world premiere new musical about racial tension, based on a best-selling novel; written by Itamar Moses and gay composer Michael Friedman. Directed by Kevin Moriarty. Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through April 6. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

I Love Lucy — Live on Stage. Two episodes of the classic sitcom are recreated before your eyes. *Final weekend.* Bass Performance Hall, 435 Commerce St., Fort Worth. BassHall.com.

Lend Me a Tenor. Ken Ludwig's farce. Pocket Sandwich Theater, 5400 E. Mockingbird Lane. Through March 29. PocketSandwich.com.

Less Than Kind. A rediscovered play by gay author Terence Rattigan gets its North American premiere. *Reviewed this week.* Theatre 3, 2800 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Through March 30. Theatre3Dallas.com.

The Motherfucker with the Hat. Kitchen Dog Theater presents the regional premiere of this racy comedy. *Final weekend.* The MAC, 3120 McKinney Ave. KitchenDogTheater.org.

We Will Rock You. A jukebox musical featuring the songs of Queen. *Reviewed this week.* Music Hall at Fair Park, 901 First Ave. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

FESTIVALS

Dallas Blooms. The 30th anniversary of the Dallas Arboretum's celebration of spring kicks off. Dallas

Arboretum, 8525 Garland Road. Through April 6.

FRIDAY 03.14

COMEDY

Throwing Shade Live. The comedically queer podcasters bring their live version of their vlog to Dallas Comedy House, 2645 Commerce St. 10:30 p.m. ThrowingShade.com.

COMMUNITY

Texas Bear Round Up 19: Cowboys and Bears. The Dallas Bears host the 19th annual gathering of bears, cubs and chasers, with events planned all weekend. Host hotel: Crowne Plaza — Dallas Market Center, 7050 N. Stemmons Freeway. March 13–16. Visit TBRU.org for complete lineup.

High Tech Happy Hour. Monthly mixer for techies and friends. The Social House, 5100 Belt Line Road, Addison. 5:30–7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY 03.15

COMMUNITY

Classic Chassis Car Club. Members conduct their first "cruise night" of the year. Meet at Keller's, 6537 E. Northwest Highway at 6:30 p.m. with a lawn chair and a sweet ride.

SUNDAY 03.16

CONCERTS

Voices of Change: Man in the Moon. The chamber group performs. City Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. 2:30 p.m. \$25–\$30.



BRIT COM | A woman (Lisa-Gabrielle Greene) and her fiancé (Paul Taylor) deal with her son's (Zak Reynolds) Hamlet-like distress at the idea of his mother remarrying in the American debut of 'Less than Kind,' a rare comedy by gay playwright Terence Rattigan. See review on Page 23.

MONDAY 03.17

THEATER

Oral Fixation. This month's topic is "Elephant in the Room" — revealing awkward personal histories. Hamon Hall inside the Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 8

p.m. \$25. OralFixationShow.com.

BROADCAST

RuPaul's Drag Race. The sixth season continues, with the two "premiere" groups of six queens each merging into one group. Logo at 8 p.m.

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Dallas. The Texas-set nighttime soap continues its third season. TNT at 8 p.m.

Harry Hines Blvd. 8 p.m. \$40. SammonsCenter.org.

TUESDAY 03.18

COMEDY

5th Annual Dallas Comedy Festival. Five days of standup, improv and classes on comedy. Dallas Comedy House, 2645 Commerce St. March 18–22. Visit DallasComedyHouse.com for full lineup.

THURSDAY 03.20

DINING

Savor Dallas. One of North Texas' largest foodie events kicks off its 10th year with Savor the Arboretum, a chance to enjoy the Dallas Blooms display (without all the crowds), followed by the popular Arts District Wine Stroll (March 21) and the International Grand Tasting (March 22). SavorDallas.com.

CONCERTS

Diana Sheehan: The Songs of Gertrude Lawrence. If you missed Sheehan in Uptown Players' Vanya and Sonia, or at WaterTower's Out of the Loop Fringe Festival, you still have a chance to see her perform this month with her cabaret show featuring the icon star's best numbers. Sammons Center for the Arts, 3630

FRIDAY 03.21

OPERA

Die Tote Stadt. Dallas Opera stages this under-known work from composer Erich Korngold, best known for his Hollywood film scores. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. March 21–April 6. DallasOpera.org.

this week's solution

R	I	N	G		S	T	A	B		A	S	T	O
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S	L	E	D		N	E	S	S		W	A	N	D

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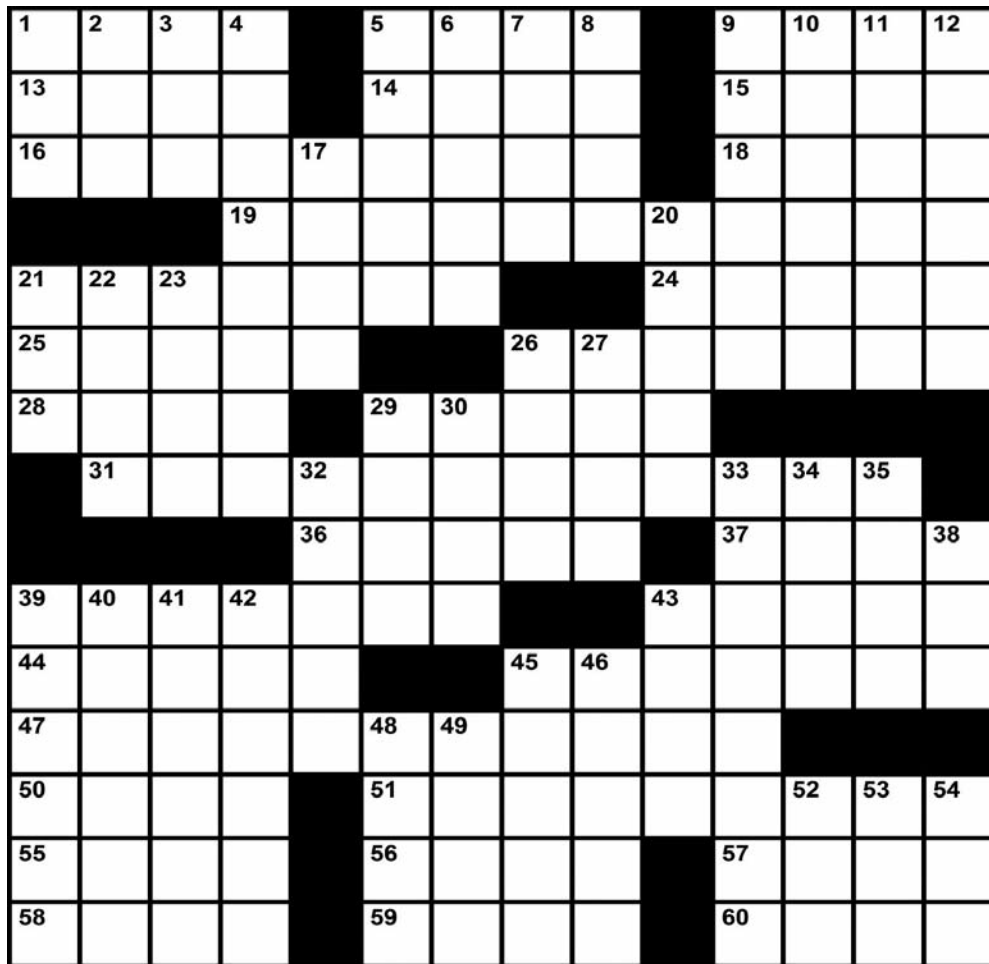
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Dallas Buyers Club Med

Solution on page 27

Across

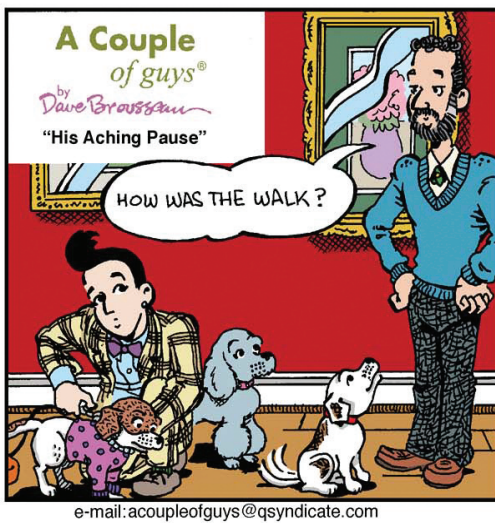
- 1 Where boxers are visible
- 5 Prick
- 9 Regarding
- 13 Chocolate sandwich
- 14 Part used in forking around
- 15 Direction from Stephen Pyles
- 16 Last name in out talk-show hosts
- 18 Emulate Clay Aiken
- 19 Start of a *Dallas Buyers Club* med comment
- 21 Wilde country
- 24 *The Wizard of Oz* scorer Harold
- 25 Balls in battle
- 26 Whitman and Proust
- 28 Wolfson of *Freedom to Marry*
- 29 Bethlehem product
- 31 End of a *Dallas Buyers Club* med comment
- 36 Sentence subjects, often
- 37 Like Palm Springs' climate
- 39 No one can collect it
- 43 One ruled by a dictator?
- 44 Freudian slip follower
- 45 Lickety-split
- 47 Character who made the comment

50 Disney sci-fi flick

- 51 Rita Mae Brown novel
- 55 Type of crime
- 56 A girl named Frank
- 57 Singer Anita
- 58 You might ride one in Aspen
- 59 Monster's loch
- 60 Fairy godmother's stick

Down

- 1 Poet McKuen
- 2 It makes one hot
- 3 Master of photog.
- 4 Tries for a Hail Mary
- 5 Howard, who went drag for Miss America
- 6 Fagged out
- 7 From the top
- 8 Rupert Everett's *The Next ___ Thing*
- 9 State with conviction
- 10 Sit on, in a way
- 11 Fire starter
- 12 Keyboardists finger them
- 17 Home st. of Maupin
- 20 Ethiopia's Selassie
- 21 "___ Got You Under You Under My Skin"
- 22 Sitarist Shankar
- 23 Cowboy actor Jack
- 26 Get off the breast
- 27 Stonewall Jackson and others
- 29 Like an A-List gay
- 30 Oddly shaped testicle?
- 32 Bridge bid, briefly
- 33 Transfer of computer info
- 34 Unrefined metal
- 35 "Is so!" rebuttal
- 38 Initial sound, in *The Sound of Music*
- 39 Results of nongay sex
- 40 Lacking family values
- 41 Indicate
- 42 Occurred to (with "on")
- 43 Where a cobbler puts the tongue
- 45 Jeremy of *Brideshead Revisited*
- 46 Schnozzolas
- 48 *The Good Earth* heroine
- 49 Ready to come out of the oven
- 52 Lupino of *Women's Prison*
- 53 Boy played by Martin and Duncan
- 54 Rock guitarist Barrett





Herschel, Lupe, Lindsay and Pete at the Round-Up Saloon.



Mike and Luis working the door at S4.

Making the SCENE the week of March 14–20:

Alexandre's: Walter Cunningham on Friday at 10 p.m. **Bad Habits** on Saturday at 10 p.m.

BJ's NXSI: Shut Up and Glow Me St. Patrick's Day Party. Free glow giveaway. Saturday.

Dallas Eagle: Texas Bear Round Up weekend. **Deaf Bears & Friends Social** on Friday at 5–7 p.m. **President's Ice Cream Social** on Friday at 6–8 p.m. **Cigar Bears Social** on the patio on Friday 10 p.m.–midnight. **Bears in Kilts** on Friday 11 p.m.–1 a.m. **DFW Leather Corps seminar** on Saturday from 2–4 p.m. **TBRU Beary Happy Hour** on Saturday at 2–4 p.m. **TBRU After-Party Glow Bear Trash Disco** on Sunday at 8 p.m.

Eden Lounge: DJMarky Marc on Friday at –8 p.m.–2 a.m. **Kathy & Bella** performing on the rooftop on Sunday.

Garlow's: Miss Gun Barrel City State and State at Large. Saturday at 8:30 p.m.

Rainbow Lounge: Party bus leaves at 3 p.m. for **Best Friends Club** for 30 minutes then off to Dallas for **Randy's Club Cherries**. Next stop is anyone's choice. Then back to Fort Worth. Three or four trips through the evening. Saturday. \$30 includes two drinks on board.

Round-Up Saloon: The **Hottest Karaoke Contest Around**, a six-week karaoke contest with a \$500 grand prize, continues. Sunday 9 p.m.–2 a.m.

Sue Ellen's: **Ciao Bella** on Friday. **Sarah & The Mearies** and **Sarah Slaton** on Saturday. **Jenni Dale Lord Band** on Sunday. **Bella & Darla** on Wednesday.

The Rose Room: **Miss and Mr. Highland Park USofA 2014** starring **Jenna Skyy**, **Patrick Mykyles**, **Skye O'Hara Paige**, **Ethan Edwards**, **Layla LaRue**, **Manny Marxx** and **Asia O'Hara**. Thursday at 10 p.m. ■

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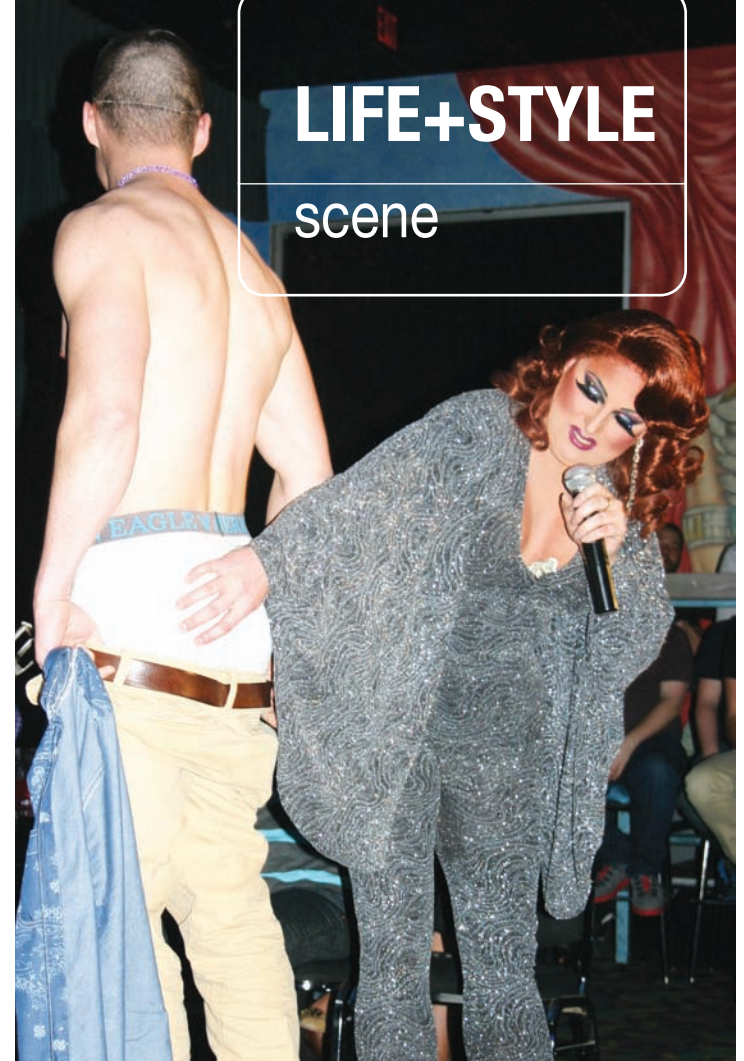
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Mary and Brandi at Sue Ellen's.



James and Melissa at BJ's NXS!



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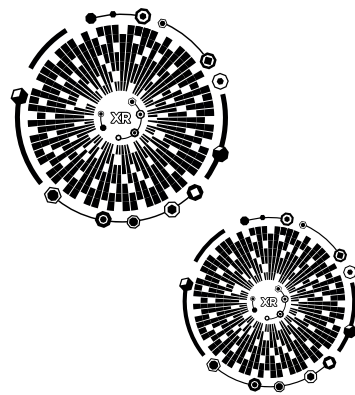
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Contact Rob Miller at
214-320-9598
for more information.

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May 10: RISE | Pool Party @ SISU
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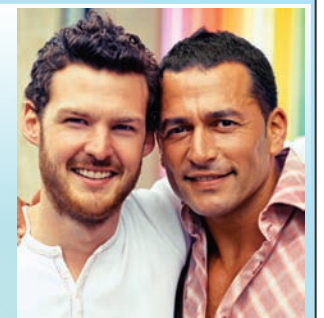


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