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BRUCE 1960-2014 WOOD

The sudden passing of the great North Texas dancer and choreographer, just weeks before his latest show, leaves a void in the arts community

Cover Story by Arnold Wayne Jones

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PRIDE PROCLAMATION | Dallas County Commissioner Elba Garcia read a Pride proclamation at Commissioner's Court on June 3. The proclamation detailed the history of June being designated Pride month nationally dating to the Stonewall Rebellion on June 28, 1969. Garcia also praised Dallas County as being the first and only county in Texas with nondiscrimination laws that include sexual orientation and gender identity. About 10 members of the LGBT community attended the court meeting to hear the proclamation. Resource Center CEO Cece Cox spoke first thanking the court for the recognition. Activist Cd Kirven told the court that it was nice to have allies and not have to fight for every bit of recognition and inclusion.

Dallas police ask for help to find Oak Lawn murderer

Dallas Police released the video of an individual fleeing from murder victim Joshua Tubbleville's wrecked vehicle. Detectives need help identifying the individual shown in the footage.

On May 30, Tubbleville was found dead in his car after it crashed into a tree at the Shell station on the corner of Oak Lawn and Lemmon avenues. He was shot by a passenger in the car who is seen in surveillance video running from the car after it crashed.

The suspect is described as a black male 6-foot-1, in his early 20s. He was seen wearing tan pants, a yellow shirt with a red stripe and a leopard print baseball cap. If anyone has information on this offense, please contact Det. Sayers at 214-671-3647.

Church kicks out Boy Scout troop for gay admission policy

Incoming Texas state Sen. Don Huffines isn't happy with Northwest Bible Church kicking out the Boy Scout troop he led until October. But he's not at all happy with the policy adopted last year to allow the inclusion of gay Scouts up to the age of 18.

The church made no public statement but indicated the new policy allowing gay Scouts goes against their principles. The church is located on Douglas Avenue at Northwest Highway.

Huffines resigned from his leadership position with the troop in October 2013 to challenge state Sen. John Carona in the March primary. Huffines won the primary and has no challenger in November. His district includes parts of Oak Lawn.

According to Preston Hollow People, Huffines said, "I think it was a big mistake what BSA did. They said they were not going to change the policy,

and then eight months later they came back and changed it. The national leadership of the BSA cannot be trusted. They can't be trusted not to open the door for more infiltration from the gay agenda. Eventually we'll have gay scouts and gay scoutmasters and gay troops. They'll keep coming until their mission is fulfilled."

Robert Gates, former defense secretary under presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, is the newly appointed president of the Boy Scouts and the national leadership that Huffines can't trust.

The troop is part of Circle Ten Council, which includes Dallas and 11 other North Texas counties. Circle Ten CEO Pat Currie said his council has 54,000 Scouts and is not aware of any who have declared their homosexuality.

"It's not about if you're gay or straight. It's about who you are as a person," Currie said. "I haven't found a church yet who said they would remove someone from the church just because they said they were gay."

Despite Currie's assurances that no church would throw out a gay kid, the odds are next to zero that out of 54,000 Scouts, not one has come out. Either Currie is oblivious or his organization remains a completely unsafe place for gay kids to be honest about who they are.

LGBTQ student dance

Fort Worth group LGBT S.A.V.E.S. is hosting an end-of-the-year dance for 18 and under middle and high school students on June 7 from 7-10 p.m. Food, beverages and door prizes will be provided and music will be by DJ Larissa. Free. Agape Metropolitan Community Church, 4615 E. California Pkwy, Fort Worth. To RSVP, email lgbtqsaves@gmail.com.

— David Taffet

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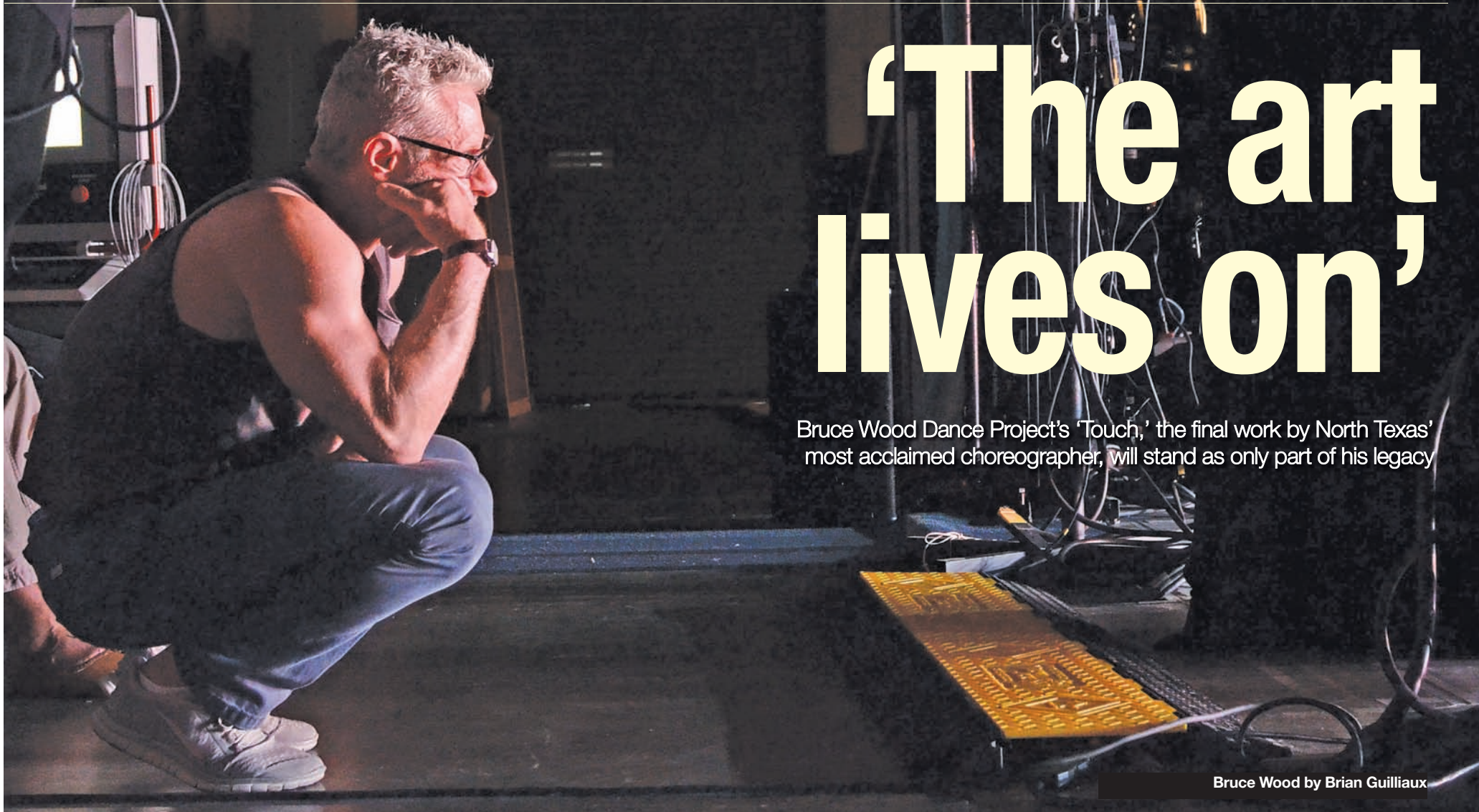
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'The art lives on'

Bruce Wood Dance Project's 'Touch,' the final work by North Texas' most acclaimed choreographer, will stand as only part of his legacy

Bruce Wood by Brian Guillaux

When Bruce Wood — the Fort Worth son of a football coach who rose to prominence in the ballet world before starting two acclaimed dance troupes in North Texas (Bruce Wood Dance Company and Bruce Wood Dance Project) — died suddenly last week at age 53, it sent shockwaves throughout the entire arts community. A tireless worker, Wood was only two weeks away from debuting his latest work, *Touch*, which will open (as scheduled) at City Performance Hall this week.

While *Touch* — which consists of three original works, including *Home*, *The Only Way Through is Through* and the eponymous world premiere — will no doubt be regarded as an historic part of his legacy (the company has officially designated it as a memorial celebration), the impact Wood had — on the arts, on his friends, on dancers and colleagues — extends far beyond the walls of a performance venue.

To honor Wood, we asked his friends and associates to weigh in on what Wood meant to them, as a person, as an artist, as a friend, as a leader. Here are some of their reactions to the passing of a giant in the world of dance. ■

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Touch at City Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. June 12 and 13 at 8 p.m. \$15–\$100. 214-428-2263. BruceWoodDance.org.

I was Bruce Wood's right arm for four years and had the extraordinary privilege of being there by his side as he created works, envisioned future works, challenged his artistic sensibilities, and practiced like a silent warrior. B. lived one foot in the present and the other in the future. He was always busy on what was coming next. His art was evolving and growing into new realms of dance-making. *My Brother's Keeper* was simply a groundbreaking masterpiece — an all male, multigenerational cast of actors/dancers/singers from 18-78 years of age. B.'s next work was going to be a new version of *Appalachian Spring* expressing the struggles and hopes of the American Dust Bowl of 1930s. He planned to create it on a mixed cast of dancers, singers, actors and have it performed to live chamber music. And for this June show, he was working on studies for *Touch* — that latter would be developed into an evening long work for the BWDP five-year celebration in 2015. What a unique voice that resonated, resounded and invigorated appreciation for dance. His dances touched our lives and left lasting impressions. I'm grateful and in awe. A person of his caliber passes through our lives maybe once. He touched mine. I was blessed to be there right by his side for this extraordinary journey. I'm proud to call him my partner and best friend. B. was truly awesome and his star shines brightly.

— Gayle Halperin, producer, BWDP

Losing Bruce is a blow — a hard punch to the gut that has left us gasping. Bruce was easy to admire; he's impossibly hard to lose. His important imprint on dance survives him, and that's all fine. But it's not enough: I'm still in mourning, grieving not only Bruce but the works he won't create. Gone. How devastating for us all!

— Jac Alder, artistic director/co-founder, Theatre 3

Each time I watched one of Bruce's works, there was always that moment when the dance worked its magic and I was moved. Whether his choreography spoke quietly with vulnerability and tenderness or powerfully with courageous determination, Bruce's eloquent ability to tell his tale filled me with emotion and understanding of the human spirit.

— Linda James, BWDP board member and dance faculty of Booker T. Washington High School for Performing and Visual Arts

Bruce and I met in Austin and worked together for 18 years. For as long as I can remember, Bruce has been one of my favorite choreographers to collaborate with. Every time a new work was being created, we would have a short conversation. He would usually have an initial visual idea that would hook me into how I would approach lighting the new work. And if he struggled or was stumped by an idea, his works would always speak to me and I'd give him an option. His brilliance as a choreographer, his musical choices and his sensitivity to artful pictures still brings me to tears and joy.

— Tony Tucci, lighting designer, BWDC and BWDP

Much has been said about the breadth of Bruce's talent, but what set him apart was his work ethic. He said it so often it was practically a mantra: If you aren't willing to put in the work, all the talent in the world won't save you. He was a legendary taskmaster but he worked harder than anyone and set the standard for those around him. Working for someone of his caliber was immensely satisfying.

— Deborah Barr, production and stage manager, 1997–present

Bruce will be greatly missed as a friend, choreography and a great leader in the dance field. He has choreographed several ballets for Dallas Black Dance Theatre including *Smoke* with music by Ray Charles and a favorite solo *On the Edge of My Life* set on principal dancer Nycole Ray. We are all saddened by his death but each have wonderful memories of the enjoyable times we shared. Our hearts go out to his mom whom he loved dearly, his sister and brother.

— Ann Williams, founder, Dallas Black Dance Theatre

Bruce was my dance mentor, but not in a "you should or shouldn't" kind of a way — rather, in a "trust in yourself as I do" kind of a way. He was extremely stern and loving at the same time. Always asking for the very best of you, then demanding just a little bit more. I trusted him in every way. As a choreographer, a teacher of life and as my dear friend. He would say "I will make you beautiful, trust me," and I would know that to be the absolute truth. One of my favorite things he would ask me was, "Do you like your dress?" — costume — which I always did, and he would say "That's good ..."

■ BRUCE WOOD, Page 14

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■ localbriefs

Pride at City Hall rescheduled

The annual Pride at City Hall celebration was rescheduled. The event takes place on June 11 in the Flag Room on the 6th floor of Dallas City Hall from noon-1 p.m.

Members of the council are expected to join during their break between sessions. Ally awards will be given and Pride cake is usually served.

During Pride Month, a Pride flag hangs in the lobby of City Hall.

Pride at City Hall was arranged by the Mayor's LGBT Task Force chaired by Councilman Adam Medrano.

Other upcoming Pride events:

June 12: SOLID Talk: Building Confidence in You, Oak Lawn Branch Library

June 19: LGBT Book Club, North Oak Cliff Branch Library

June 20: Youth First prom at Cathedral of Hope

June 21: Bahama Beach family day

June 21: Rainbow Gardening Club of Dallas, Skyline Branch Library

June 21: Rainbow Family Day at the Dallas Public Library, J. Erik Jonsson Central Library

June 25: Dallas Zoo family day

June 28: Give Back Day

LGBT horror film festival

Queers for Fears IV, a gay film festival for horror buffs, plays in Oak Cliff Saturday as a benefit the Gay and Lesbian Alliance of North Texas' GALA-NT Youth Program. Among the festival offerings

is Alexander Roman's *Playing in Playing in Darkness*, Tony E. Valenzuela's *Zombie*, Davy Sihali's *Plug & Play*, Richard Mansfield's *The Secret Path* and a world premiere from Dallas filmmaker Shawn Ewert called *Sacrament*.

The Texas Theatre, 231 W. Jefferson Blvd. June 7. Doors open at noon; program 1-6 p.m.

Anti-gay language removed from Texas Republican platform

Metroplex Republicans President Rob Schlein reported from the Republican state convention in Fort Worth that wording his organization wanted removed from the platform is gone.

"Good news!" Schlein wrote. "Platform subcommittee votes unanimously to remove the hateful anti-gay language in the platform."

The removed language read: "Homosexuality — We affirm that the practice of homosexuality tears at the fabric of society and contributes to the breakdown of the family unit. Homosexual behavior is contrary to the fundamental, unchanging truths that have been ordained by God, recognized by our country's founders, and shared by the majority of Texans."

The platform has to be approved by the convention, but Schlein said the chair supports the removal of the language.

"We even got an apology from the subcommittee chair about the language," Schlein said. ■

■ pet of the week / CHINA

China is a spayed female, brownish-black lab mix. She's about 6 months old and has a puppy's energy but can be just as happy cuddling up with her human. Who could resist those beautiful brown eyes? She's been at the shelter since April 18, so her adoption fee has been waived. Please visit her at Dallas Animal Services, 1818 Westmoreland Road, and ask for China, A833337.

The Adoption Center is open 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday to Saturday and 12 noon until 5 p.m. on Sunday. All adopted pets are spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and microchipped. Standard adoption fees are \$85 for dogs and \$55 for cats. They also offer discounts on adoption fees for pets over 6 years of age, to any senior citizen that adopts a pet, and to anyone adopting more than one pet at a time. For more information, visit www.DallasAnimalServices.org or find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/DallasAnimalServices. Photo contributed by Judi Burnett.



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Guest hosts entertain at Gaybingo



O-69 | Gay Bingo has been going strong since 2000 and organizers say it's because it has remained family-friendly. (Photo courtesy Cher/Musico Roots Photography)

Resource Center wants its monthly show at S4 to remain family-friendly by keeping it light and fun

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Guest hosts will entertain at Gaybingo over the next few months as a search for a replacement for previous host Valerie Jackson begins. Jackson said she was fired from hosting because of her language.

"I think we're going to go in a different direction," she said she was told after the May show.

Gaybingo is produced by Resource Center, whose spokesman Rafael McDonnell said he couldn't comment on personnel matters.

McDonnell said Jada Fox would host the June 21 event, with special guest Deanna Dewberry, an investigative reporter from NBC 5. The theme is Jungle Gaybingo.

Jackson had been hosting Gaybingo since November. She said she was first told the show was rated NC-17.

"Push it, but don't overstep the line," she said were her instructions. "I gave them what they wanted."

She said in January she was told to pull it back.

Paul J. Williams, who hosts Gaybingo North at the Courtyard Theater in Plano as his Sister Helen Holy character, says he's "always known what the boundary is." He said that while no children are present, the show is always family-friendly.

"We're raising money and having fun," he said.

Williams said Sister Helen wouldn't use inappropriate language, so it's easier for him to keep within guidelines. Once, he said, he did drop an F-bomb, and as soon as he came off stage he was asked to stay away from strong language.

"I got it," he said. "Keep it light and keep it fun."

The next Gaybingo North is on June 15. Heavenly Father's Day Bingo is the theme. "It's BYOD," Williams said. "Bring your own daddy."

Sister Helen said the show begins at 3 p.m. so people have time to go to church and time to spend with loved ones before going out to gamble.

"And for those of you who can't get out of bed, there's time for a late service," she said.

Gaybingo at S4 is held in The Rose Room on the third Saturday each month, except December.

The September event will mark the 150th Gaybingo. The monthly fundraiser began in 2000 and was initially held at the Lakewood Theater; it moved to Cedar Springs Road in 2006. Planning is underway for the milestone with special entertainment and the theme "Proud Mary." ■

Longview mayor refuses to issue Pride proclamation

Members of the gay community in Longview plan to attend that city's next city council meeting to tell the mayor and council why a proclamation should be issued for its first Pride celebration.

Organizers requested the proclamation for its June 21 event, but Mayor Jay Dean has refused.

The Longview City Council meets at Longview City Hall, 300 West Cotton St., Longview on June 12 at 5:30 p.m. Organizers suggested arriving by 5 p.m. to get a seat.

"This is a great opportunity for folks to express why the proclamation should take place," organ-

izers wrote on their Facebook page. "If you don't wish to speak, please come to the meeting to observe and show your support."

Longview's Pride event will take place even without the proclamation. P-FLAG Longview is sponsoring the June 21 event that takes place at Heritage Plaza in downtown Longview from 5-9 p.m.

Organizations and businesses from Longview, Tyler, Shreveport and Dallas will have booths and there will be music and food. ■

—D.T.

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■ texasnews

'It was just the right thing to do'



GETTING IT RIGHT | Carmen Saenz is one of Waco's LGBT activists who's spent the past few years talking to religious leaders and other groups to lay the groundwork for this week's adoption of an inclusive employment policy for city employees. (Photo courtesy of Carmen Saenz)

Waco enacted employment nondiscrimination for city employees and the city manager hasn't even received a phone call about it

DAVID TAFFET | Staff Writer
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Police continue to guard the mayor of Houston because she received death threats after passage of a nondiscrimination ordinance last week. In Waco, however, a measure to protect LGBT city employees passed this week with little notice.

City Manager Dale Fisseler made an administrative change to Waco's employment policy, adding sexual orientation and gender identity to other protected categories.

"All I'm doing is updating our internal policy ... just to clarify that we don't discriminate based on sexual preference and identity," Fisseler said.

Fisseler has been city manager since March. In 2011, he became Waco deputy city manager. Although he was raised in Waco, he began working for Fort Worth in 1990 and became Fort Worth City Manager in 2007.

Waco Public Information Officer Larry Holze said the change does not need to go before city council, but the council was briefed on the policy in executive session.

When the policy was announced in the Waco Tribune Herald on Monday, Holze said he expected to be flooded with phone calls.

"There's been no outcry from the public," he said. "No calls." He said he hasn't even received other calls from media outlets other than Dallas Voice.

Last summer, the city's Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee recommended the change. The former city manager rejected the suggestion because he said the city had never had a complaint from an LGBT employee. He wrote to the committee that current policy discrimination and harassment are not allowed, irrespective of whether a category is on the protected list.

Fisseler said he based his action on additional information after talking to people in the LGBT community.

Carmen Saenz is among the city's LGBT activists who has been working to have the policy changed. She said the additional information Fisseler referred to were stories of city employees going to work in fear that they'd lose their jobs if they came out at the city.

Saenz said she and other Waco LGBT community members have been laying the groundwork for this change in policy for two years. She said she's been speaking to religious groups and organizations such as the NAACP.

"We've been explaining and educating," she said. "We worked so hard addressing concerns and allaying fears."

She always made the story personal, explaining that even if there were differences in beliefs, "I still had a right to go to work and I had a right to have a place to live."

Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance President Patti Fink, who was graduated from Baylor University in Waco, said, "People of Waco are more progressive than people on the Baylor campus." Fink said she thought many conservative people find firing people based on anything but job performance distasteful, and she complimented Fisseler.

"It's awesome when a city employee can take care of it when they're empowered to do so," she said.

Fink opined that the difference between Waco and Houston was more than just the scope of Houston's ordinance. She said the ordeal with Houston's ordinance was pure politics.

"People are upset with the momentum in marriage equality and are striking out where they can," she said.

Resource Center spokesman Rafael McDonnell agreed that Baylor is a conservative campus, but said some even more conservative ones bring in diverse ideas. McDonnell was in Houston for the final debate and vote for HERO, the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance.

"I was stunned by the vehemence of the opposition," he said. "I felt like I was in a bit of a time warp."

With people outside Houston City Hall chanting, he said the scene reminded him of the ugliness in Dallas when Micah England was applying to become a police officer 25 years ago.

McDonnell said part of the difference is because the Waco policy wasn't as broad as HERO.

In Waco, the issue was handled as a simple employment issue.

Holze summed up the decision by saying court decisions were all moving in the direction of nondiscrimination being extended to the LGBT community.

"It was eventually going to happen," he said. "It was just the right thing to do." ■

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■ **texasvoices**

The transgender bargaining chip

Until all the letters in LGBT are equal, none of us are

EMERSON COLLINS | Contributing Columnist

It's a tried and true tactic in successful negotiations: Always start out by asking for more than you actually want to get out of a deal in order to get what you need. That way, you have room to give up some things to the other side to make them feel like you are reaching a compromise while still getting everything you originally wanted. It's a technique used by everyone from a 3-year-old who asks to eat every cookie in the jar and settles for four to celebrity divorce proceedings where someone gives up the Aspen house and the Miami condo to keep the primary residence in Hollywood. The tactic is most successful when what you are giving up is something you truly do not care about, or do not care about enough to really fight for it.

We have a long-running problem in the march toward LGBT equality. Often in the course of our work to enshrine equality in legislation from the municipal to the federal level, the first thing offered up a compromise at the negotiating table is equal protection for the transgender community.

We absolutely have to stop doing that.

Annie Parker, only the second woman and the first lesbian to be mayor of Houston, pushed an expansive non-discrimination ordinance in her city. Expectedly, it has received significant push-back. One major point of contention for Republicans and church leaders was a paragraph explicitly protecting the right of transgender individuals to use the restroom consistent with their gender identity.

In a move toward compromise, Mayor Parker and her supporters announced an agreement to remove this explicit protection in an attempt to mollify their outrage. In response to LGBT objection, they pointed out that transgender people would still be able to file a discrimination complaint if they were denied access. Those protections simply won't be spelled out.

I'm not naïve. I can only imagine the incredible challenges Mayor Parker has faced in crafting the ordinance in the face of staunch right-wing opposition. Until last week, Houston was the largest city in the country without a city-wide nondiscrimination law. The amount of deal-making required to reach even this point is clear when considering the odious inclusion of a "good faith belief" clause that would essentially allow a business owner to deny a transgender person access if they didn't believe them.

But at some point — and really it should have been a very long time ago — it has to stop being acceptable to the cisgender LGB part of the community to even consider giving up transgender equality protections in order to succeed in creating new laws. If that is the price of success, it is not a success. It is an abject failure.

It cannot be enough that cisgender LGBs get our protection. Fighting for equality cannot mean "fighting for just enough equality to include me." If that were the mindset of straight allies, LGB equality would not be where it is.

Beyond that, the transgender community have been with us, and stood with us, all the way back to Sylvia Rivera at Stonewall. In the 45 years since, they have been integral to our community, and we have repaid that by repeatedly shunting their issues and their rights aside in order to create legislation just barely palatable to conservatives to be passable.

Achieving nondiscrimination legislation is historically a lengthy and difficult process. Every time. However, that pales in comparison to the difficulty in amending such legislation to include a group left out in the first place. If gender identity is not included along with sexual orientation in the initial action, we are actually making it even harder for the transgender community by excluding them. We are not just leaving them behind; we are actively pushing them backward.

We can go round and round on the issue of whether getting 90 percent of what you want in the legislative progress is better than getting one hundred percent of nothing by failing to get it passed. There are likely times in the past where compromises felt like deals with the devil, but were better than nothing. The problem is, the damage done by ugly compromises can take years or decades to undo. The arduous journey to roll back the Defense of Marriage Act and "don't ask, don't tell" policy are perfect examples of how complicated "better than the alternative" compromises can make things worse.

All of the equivocations that could be offered and over-analyzed about the difficult necessity of certain concessions that led to past successes for the cisgender LGB community that were complete failures for transgender equality should be irrelevant today. With the cultural tide of our nation swinging definitively and permanently in the direction of cisgender LGB equality, it is our responsibility to use that momentum to fight for those who have fought with us.

"They're not even gay," is an appalling counter

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offered often by cisgender LGB persons when discussing transgender rights. So what? What difference does it make? First, they are an integral part of our community, and if you do not understand that, get off your uneducated ass and learn something about LGBT history. Second, and more importantly, equality is not equal until it applies to everyone. *Every single person.* Regardless of any single aspect of what makes them who they are. It should absolutely be enough simply to know that there is injustice toward a group of people that needs to be corrected. If that reason alone is not all the explanation you need to be committed to transgender rights and equality, then you're an embarrassment to our community ... and, frankly, humanity.

The transgender community is growing in leaps and bounds in exposure with a strong and varied group of voices to represent them in the national dialogue, but they are nowhere near the awareness level that the cisgender community has reached. It is certainly not our job or place to speak for them. However, we can support them as the first and strongest allies we are supposed to be by shining a spotlight on them with our power to command national attention, and then giving

them the stage to speak.

Harvey Milk famously said, "It takes no compromise to give people their rights ... It takes no political deal to give people freedom." Thirty-five years later, it is time for cisgendered LGBs to stop considering compromise and political deals at the expense of the transgender community. We cannot consider compromising the rights of others. We cannot consider political deals that do not give all people freedom.

The rights and protections for the most legally vulnerable part of our community have to stop being the part of the bargain we are willing to give away. Equality for the transgender must be an integral part equal to our demands for gay equality. Even if it takes longer to achieve some of our goals, making sure all of us get there and all of us are included when we get there should be worth that. At the very least worth that. We owe that to them. Not because we are all in the LGBT rainbow, nor because our own allies have made our victories possible, nor because they have waited beyond long enough. We owe that to them because human rights have to be just that — rights for all humans. None of us are equal until all of us are equal. ■

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■ **BRUCE WOOD**, From Page 6

Every dancer chick deserves nice dresses." He was honest about everything, with his feelings and honest about his work. I think he prided himself in that. I loved his work, he was beyond brilliant, and I adored him immensely.

— **Nycole Ray**, *protege and artistic director, Dallas Black Dance Theatre II*

Bruce was a warrior and fought the battle with HIV every day of his life. It was always present in his work. Unfortunately, we lose sight of the fact that the fight is far from over.

— **John Ahrens**, *costume designer for BWDC and BWDP*

Before I had ever met Bruce, he had his company in Fort Worth, and his dancers would constantly say to me, "Please talk to Bruce and start photographing his works!" I always replied, "Bruce and I will work together when we are supposed to." At least 12 years passed and via serendipity, we started working together constantly. I have photographed the art of dance for 25 years and I must say, creating images with the BWDP has been the most special and sincere. My favorite place to photograph his works was from the wings, though his choreography is beautiful from any angle — you could walk in a circle on stage during a rehearsal and it always looked right. At a rehearsal recently, I was trying to describe what his movement felt like to me. I told him that it was "like creating a painting without ever lifting the brush." Draw a drawing (to music) without ever

lifting the pencil and you will understand. Our last photo-shoot — the day after Bruce died — was beyond difficult, but Bruce wanted us to press on and continue. I am honored to be a part of such a family as the BWDP.

— **Brian Guilliaux**, *photographer*

One of the reasons that working with Bruce was a more delightful experience for me than it has been with any other choreographer is that I trusted him. People talk about how good he was at finding his dancers' strengths and using them — how he made all his dancers look good. But there was something deeper than that which made it easy for me to trust him. He was far less interested in impressing people than he was interested in impacting them. In all his work, he prioritized the impact he might have on people's lives, and that made his dances tremendously rewarding for both his dancers and his audiences.

— **Kimi Nikaidoh**, *dancer with BWDC and BWDP*

Bruce has been a major part of my life for the past 16 years, and he is missed tremendously by us all. He taught me to be a passionate, graceful artist, and working with Bruce truly changed my life. As a choreographer, Bruce always asked us dancers to dig deeper with our artistry and to bring a humanness to our performance. His work calls his audience to ask questions that bring you to the heart and soul of who we are. That consistent link to humanity is why I love Bruce's work. Often his corrections in rehearsals were to not to make a specific movement simply because that was the choreography. Instead, what is the meaning behind that movement? How would a person in real life react in this particular situation? Dancing for Bruce with BWDC was



WHITE RABBIT | A performance of the piece 'White Rabbit' from 'Red,' Bruce Wood's last production at City Performance Hall. (Photo courtesy Brian Guilliaux)

an experience that I will relish forever. The entire company was bound together because of the daily inspiration from Bruce's teachings. I feel very fortunate that I was also able to work with him as rehearsal director for BWDP for two years. This was an opportunity to connect with him and to understand his choreography in a deeper way. The legacy of Bruce's choreographic work

must continue. I could not be more thankful to have known and worked with such a brilliant man. Those of us who danced for him became better artists, and I know he touched countless lives with his choreography. We are all better because we knew Bruce Wood.

— **Christie Sullivan**, *dancer, BWDC 1999–06, rehearsal director, BWDP 2011–12*

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viewpoints

You either go down on a woman or you don't

Notes on the value of cunnilingus — from someone with experience

"Sweetheart, that's all very nice. But if you're not going to eat pussy, you're not a dyke," a lesbian character on *Sex and the City* famously tells Charlotte, who, upon being asked if she's a lesbian has answered that she is not, but loves the "company" of women.

I have to agree. Anything short of that is simply being besties. And that's all well and good. But girls, listen to me — ya gotta go down.

"Why?" you ask. "Who are you to tell me what lesbian sex looks like?" you volley. And so I must reply, "Why wouldn't you?"

It's amazing the differences between the ruling stereotypes when it comes to lesbians and gay men. Undersexed for the former and oversexed for the latter, the theory goes. The club scene and Grindr for the boys, harrowing stories of lesbian bed death for girls. *Not OK*. These really are just stereotypes. Where's the truth?

Well, lesbian bed death isn't my reality and I have plenty of gay friends who spend more time watching *Dora The Explorer* with their toddlers and driving the car pool than minding Scruff and dominating the dancefloor. So, as always, the truth lies somewhere in between the cliches.

But why does sex matter? That one's easy — because it's the difference between friends and lovers. Because it's good for you. Because it's one

of the few true pleasures left in the world, no money or special equipment required.

It's become strangely chic to be a lesbian these days. I wouldn't dare argue that that's a bad thing. Anything that helps bring us out of the darkness and into the light of normalcy is fine by me. But it also has the unfortunate effect of making being a lesbian look more like a pillow-fighting, hair-brushing, giggle-inducing sleepover than the truly adult sexual relationship it is.

Yes, yes, I know. You certainly can have a sexless relationship that works in its own way. But in general, a healthy, happy, more-than-friends relationship — lesbian or otherwise — involves sex, and when it comes to great lesbian sex, you're missing out if you're leaving cunnilingus out of the equation.

But more than that, it's hard not to wonder what's fueling the decision of lesbians who choose to remain on the dock rather than dive in. My fear is that it's some level of lack of Pussy Pride. (Hey, it's Gay Pride Month — and that's all-encompassing.)

The pussy is a wondrous thing. Full of delicious nerve endings, it can be pleased in a plethora of ways. In the name of not getting too naughty here, let's just say it's a feast for the senses. The thing is, if you're not feeling so secure about your nether regions, oral sex might become a problem.

And that's a problem.



Jenney Block
Contributing Writer



THE CAT CAME BACK

There are few things in life more intimate than oral sex. There's no way to do it at a distance — not that I'm aware of any way. To eat pussy is to be enveloped in another person's body. Literally. If you don't want the woman you love ensconced in your bits, or vice versa, it might be time to explore why.

Pussy Pride is key for women, lesbian or otherwise, and we live in a world that doesn't always make it easy to love our lady parts. You can buy sprays to change the way you smell. You can pay a surgeon to change the way you look. You can learn how to wax and shave and pluck and primp every square inch to make your pussy "presentable."

All of that makes it increasingly difficult not to internalize the prevailing message — there's something inherently wrong with a woman's pussy. It's too wild, too ripe, too rich, too wet, smells too much, tastes too strong (or weird) or fill-in-the-blank. But that's about selling product or keeping women "in their place." It has nothing — *nothing* — to do with reality.

The pussy is great. The problem is with the world.

You love your girl, right? Or at least you want her in some way or you wouldn't be with her. Your rejection is more devastating than you know. It either establishes or fuels a woeful lack of pussy confidence.

So if you're not letting your partner go down because you think you're gross, it's time to regroup. The same goes if you're the one refusing to be the eater as opposed to the eatee. It's time to get some positive pussy thinking going.

It's time to read about how glorious she is. It's time to get out the old mirror and have a look at your own parts. Maybe it's even time for a sex workshop to get you back in the zone. Or get thee to a therapist (no shame in that) and get out from under that negative rhetoric that's keeping you from getting under — or on top of — your girl.

Jenney Block is an author and contributor to Dallas Voice.

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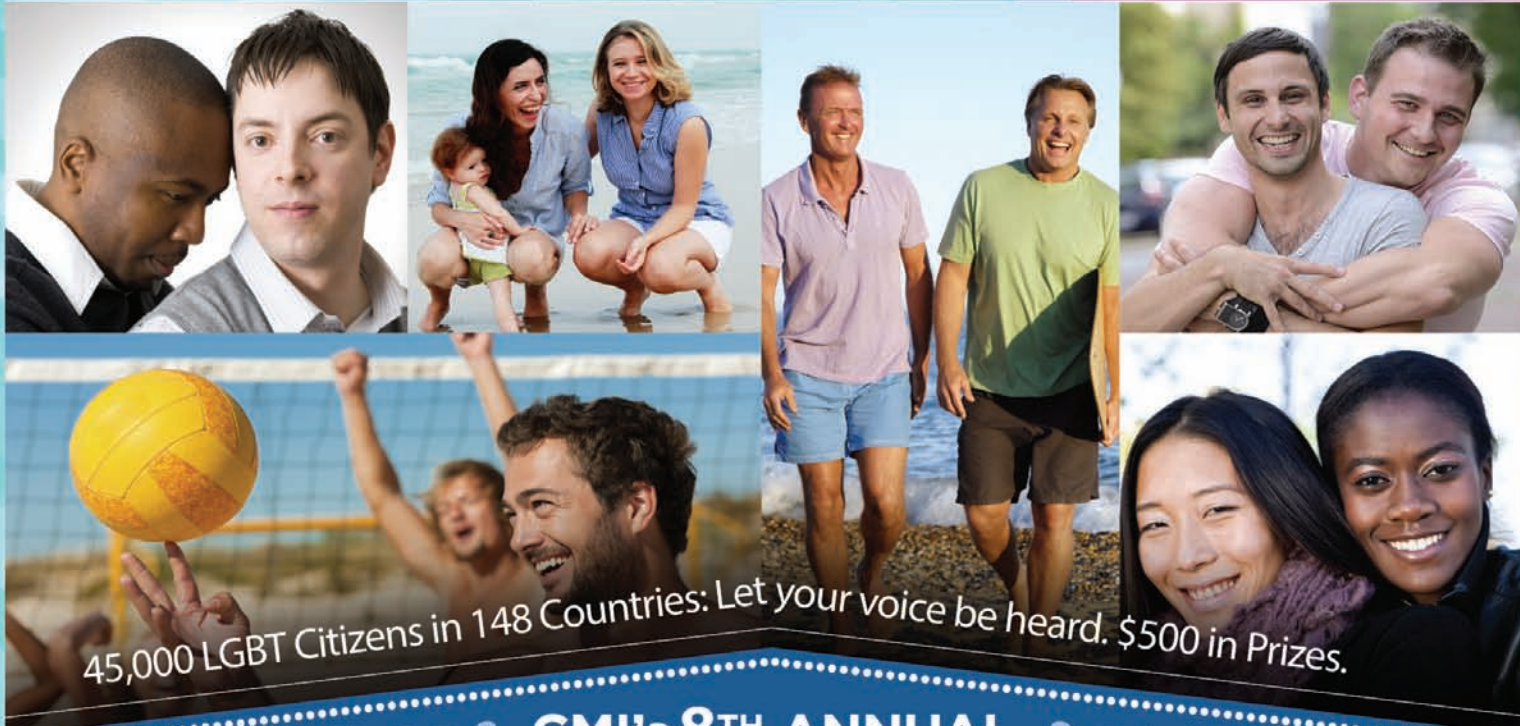
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Bell of the Ball

Erasure's Andy Bell headlines Razzle Dazzle's kick-off event, the fundraiser MetroBall

SCOTT HUFFMAN | Contributing Writer
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Even before “out” was “in,” Andy Bell dared to be honest. Best known as one half of the iconic pop duo Erasure, the gay singer and songwriter — unlike so many pop stars — never misled the public about his sexuality. Likewise, he was forthcoming later in life about his HIV-positive status. While some might have interpreted Bell’s courageous choices as political activism, Bell modestly claims to have lived openly because he is simply not fond of telling lies.

“I was always very close to my mum,” Bell, a British citizen who divides his time between London and Florida, says. “We could talk about anything, and I’ve always thought that honesty is totally the best policy. I see absolutely no reason for lying. I just wish the world was run on these terms sometimes!”

Bell, who recently turned 50, has amassed an impressive catalog of releases over the years. But he is not allowing past achievement to slow his momentum. In May, he dropped his third solo album, *iPop* — a collection of tracks he vibrantly describes as “high-quality electro-pop-euro-gay!” And alongside Erasure bandmate Vince Clarke, Bell plans a fall tour to promote *The Violet Flame*, their new album slated for September release.

At Friday’s MetroBall, Bell plans to perform a selection from his new album along with a mixture of Erasure hits, solo tracks and songs from *Torsten the Bareback Saint*, a one-man musical he



METROBALL

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RazzleDazzleDallas.net

will debut this summer at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Bell admits to having certain favorite songs, like “Blue Savannah,” to perform.

“I think the songs have to contain something magical in the melody or the words or both,” he says. “You become swept along by it so it sings itself and becomes a pleasure to perform.”

And Bell colorfully uses analogy to describe his perception of performing a few other songs that may be considered by many to be Erasure standards. “It would be like a cobbler wearing the very first pair of shoes he made forever — very comfy, but ragged around the edges.”

Commenting on his current artistic trajectory,

Bell feels that today he is freer to select projects, like *Torsten*, that offer a measure of self-satisfaction. “I think things become much more personal because they have to have meaning for you,” he says. “It is almost impossible to compete with

■ BELL, Page 20

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■ BELL, From Page 18

the young guns, so you just put everything down to experience and hope that you may capture the public's imagination."

Bell, who realized his passion and talent for singing even as a child, never expected that performing for others would become his life's work.

"I feel very lucky to have a talent and be able to use it," he reflects. "The business [today] is very strange because you don't necessarily even have to be able to sing. Everything is so commercial — about the packaging and shock value and the dresses you wear — [it's] very different from when we started out."

During the course of his remarkable career, Bell — who admits to being star struck often — has enjoyed opportunity to meet many celebrated performers. One special memory, naturally, is that of meeting gay favorite Madonna. "I was completely dumbstruck," he recalls upon meeting the Material Girl. "I could not say a word and could feel myself fainting!"

Interestingly, the best advice Bell recalls ever receiving was that from his grandmother. "I remember my nan saying to me, 'Make sure that you look after yourself first,' which seems kind of selfish," he says. "But in actual fact is very true because in the end you are only responsible for you and your own actions."

Today, Bell and his partner, Stephen Moss, are parties to a civil union — though not because "we need validation for ourselves, but the world needs to know that we are all the same. No one love is more important or less than any other!"

That progress has been made in gay equality warms his heart — but he knows the fight isn't over.

"Slowly but surely things are turning in our



GIVE A LITTLE RESPECT TO ANDY | One of the first openly gay pop singers, Andy Bell has also been an activist for HIV causes. He headlines Friday's MetroBall fundraiser.

favor," he says, "but we have to be constantly on guard. Our rights could just as easily be taken away from us within a whisper — even after years of fighting for them."

Oh, Snap! Thea Austin, Razzle Dazzle artists interviewed online!

Thea Austin, the dance-hit diva best known for the infectious "Rhythm is a Dancer" when she was lead singer for the Euro-pop group Snap!, headlines the Razzle Dazzle stages on Saturday. To read an interview with the pop goddess exclusively online, visit DallasVoice.com.

You can also read new interviews at DallasVoice.com with fellow performers who will be entertaining this weekend, including **Josh Zuckerman**, **Patrick Boyd** and **Ray Isaac**, as well as get the full scheduled of events at RazzleDazzleDallas.net

— Arnold Wayne Jones



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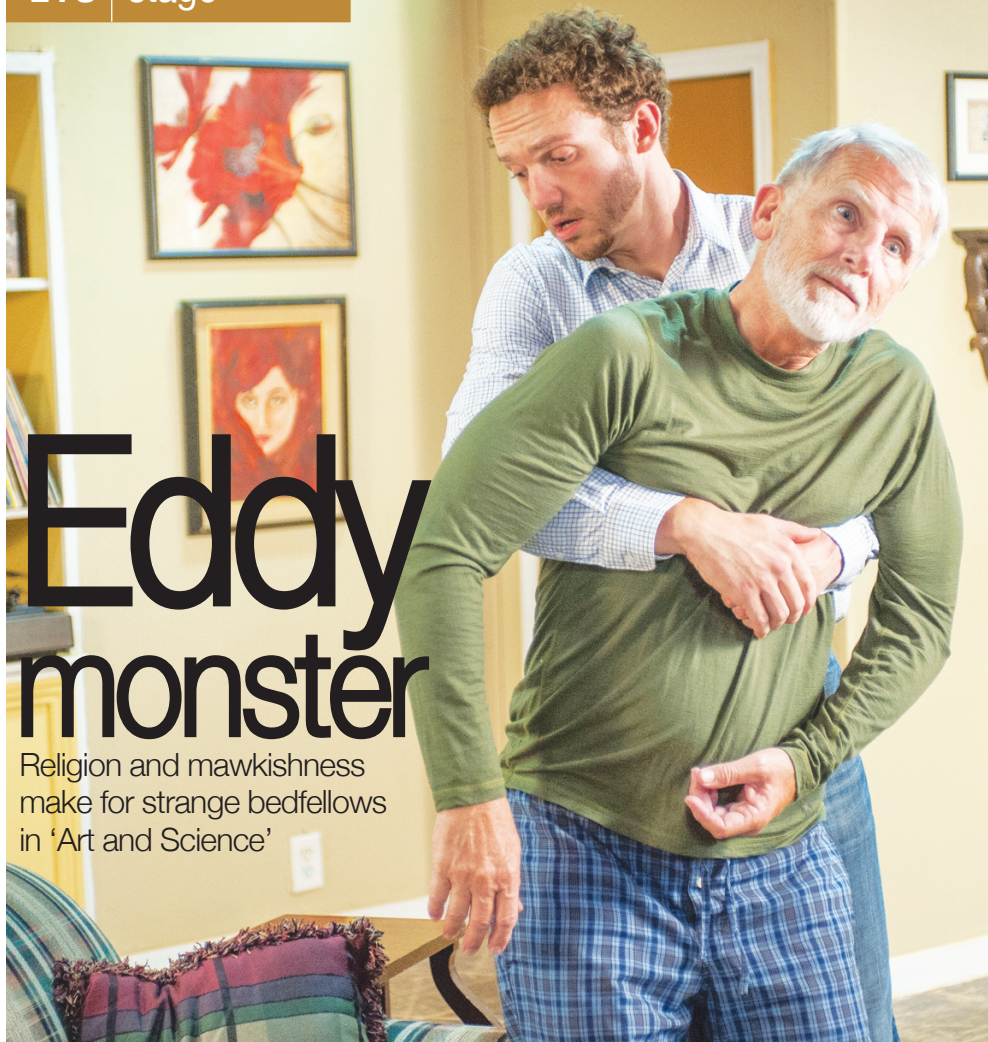
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Eddy monster

Religion and mawkishness make for strange bedfellows in 'Art and Science'

Robert (David Benn) is one of those older-generation gay men, now in his twilight, who came of age when being out was virtually unheard of — the kind who says “lover” and “homosexual” because he’s never felt totally comfortable in his own skin, and who probably has internalized his homophobia subtly. He’s never felt totally worthy.

Adam (Christopher Cassarino), a former student of Robert, has his own issues. He stayed too long in an unsupportive relationship, and now that he’s with a new man and on the brink of settling down, he’s having second thoughts.

The two haven’t seen each other in years when, in July of 1995, Adam shows up on Robert’s doorstep to patch up old wounds. But things take a turn when Robert suddenly suffers a stroke, and Adam can’t convince his mentor — who, as a follower of Mary Baker Eddy’s Christian Science, does not believe in modern medicine — to go to the hospital.

Art and Science, getting its world premiere in the upstairs Frank’s Place at the Kalita Humphreys, is as sincere as a play can get, and (sad to say) sincerity can be deathly dull onstage. It plays like a “very special episode” of a bad sitcom — in fact, I think I saw the same plot on *The Facts of Life*.

That’s probably because the author, James Wesley, is too close to the material. A note in the

program says it was based on Wesley’s relationship with his own mentor, but you could probably guess without reading that — there’s a lot of unspoken background here, which is probably meant to seem like backstory but instead plays like awkward motivations without developing true dramatic tension. Most lines of dialogue sound either like judgments or scolds, and the lame jokes and trite situations don’t help much. (When Adam spills a glass of water on Robert, he notes, “You’re all wet;” you can write the limp retort yourself.) When it’s not being catty, it comes off as merely frantic.

New plays often need work to smooth over their rough spots, and *Art and Science* is in desperate need of a dramaturg, but also could use a better director. Jason St. Little allows everything to unfold with an appalling lack of energy — Kabuki without the formalism. Preachy discussions of religion could feel more powerful with a better staging, or even some thoughtful design elements, which this lacks (the lighting design is flat, the set ugly, the props random and unconvincing).

Cassarino, in his live theater debut, is a better actor than the script permits, but Benn is a black hole of emotion; I’ve seen more interesting strokes on a children’s Putt-Putt golf course. He contributes to the overall vibe of amateurishness that taints the production.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

ART & SCIENCE

Kalita Humphreys Theater,
3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through
June 15. UptownPlayers.org.

A BITTER PILL | Adam (Christopher Cassarino) tries to convince his mentor (David Benns) to seek medical attention, with limited success, in Uptown Players’ premiere ‘Art and Science.’ (Photo by Mike Morgan)

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A Tony primer

Before Sunday's awards, we take a look at the hottest hits on Broadway

CLINT HASSELL | Contributing Writer
andrewguy@aol.com

The Tony Awards are Sunday, and that means a host of new plays and musicals will be enshrined in the gay collective consciousness for all time. But as of now, chances are you haven't seen most of them.

We can help with that. Here are our reviews of some of the new hottest tickets right now. Expect to see some of them on the podium Sunday night.

In the musical **Bullets Over Broadway** — book by Woody Allen, based on his 1994 film — a playwright (Zach Braff) secures financing for his latest play from a wealthy gangster (Vincent Pastore) on the condition that he cast the gangster's talentless girlfriend (Helene Yorke). When the girlfriend's bodyguard (Nick Cordero) begins making terrific suggestions for improving the play's script, the playwright must decide if he is willing to compromise his artistic vision in order to secure rave reviews and financial stability.

Bullets has incited the ire of Broadway's purists for not contain-



LOVE & MURDER, MOTHERS & SONS | The musical 'A Gentleman's Guide,' above, is filled with catchy songs and star-making turns, while Terrence McNally's gay drama 'Mothers and Sons,' opposite, delves into more serious issues. (Photo courtesy Joan Marcus)

ing an original score (it's set in 1929 and uses standards of the era *a la 42nd Street*), the musical numbers are incorporated well into the show with only the finale, "Yes! We Have No Bananas," being too familiar to feel organic.

Braff (of *Scrubs* fame) can sing and dance, as can Cordero. But the real star is Yorke, who manages to walk the fine line between

annoyingly dim-witted and plucky and adorable. Her bawdy, double entendre-laden "I Want a Hot Dog for My Roll" provides the show's most entertaining moments.

For a tuneful musical, *Bullets'* book offers incredible depth. A philosophical question, "Is one person's life more or less important than the entirety of Shakespeare's plays?" reenters the narrative in



Josh Zuckerman
Singer/Songwriter



Chaz Marie
"Hibilly Arabia"



Thea Austin
Lead singer of the group SNAP,
"Rhythm Is A Dancer," "I've Got The Power"



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22 dallasvoice.com ■ 06.06.14

the second act in such a poignant, unexpected way that the audience literally gasped. And brave is a show that dares to murder a main character.

Does *Bullets Over Broadway* deserve the Tony for best musical? With too many extraneous characters having little to do, and an ending that's too tidy (in three lines of dialogue, characters that have been unfaithful to one another realize that they were meant for each other), no. But it is a show you can enjoy seeing over and over.

In Terrence McNally's **Mothers and Sons**, a woman (Tyne Daly), who lost her son to AIDS 20 years earlier surprises his former lover with a visit. She has followed his life over the past two decades, hoping that he has suffered as much as she. But he hasn't seemed to — he's married to a younger man, and the couple has a child.

Mothers is more similar in tone to McNally's *Love! Valour! Compassion!* than to his musicals (*Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Ragtime*, *Catch Me If You Can*). Relatively thin on plot, it serves more as a vehicle for characters to debate topics both serious (the effect of AIDS on the gay community, gay parents) and offbeat (gay funeral etiquette, the social hierarchy in Dallas). Despite heavy subject matter, it show does entertain. The backstory of the characters is revealed masterfully through mostly polite/sometimes strained con-

versation.

The show's one misstep is in its grasp of the characters' motivations. Does the mother blame her son's ex-lover, or is she seeking reconciliation? Does he respect or condemn her? It's difficult to discern, as the dialogue takes the characters' emotional arc through several unexplained hairpin turns.

Mothers and Sons has been nominated for two awards (best play and actress in a play) and both are deserved. It's the kind of show Uptown Players will eventually jump to produce, and with the right leading lady, could do McNally as proud as Broadway has.

In **A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder**, a commoner (Bryce Pinkham) discovers that

he is actually a member of an aristocratic family, and ninth in line to inherit an earldom. Torn between his love for two women — both above his station, he decides to engineer the deaths of the eight heirs that precede him. The trick of the show? All eight heirs — including a reverend, a gay beekeeper, a theater diva, a socialite, a fatherly banker and a pompous adventurer — are played by the same actor (Jefferson Mays).

Guide is a fairly predictable lark. Even those who haven't seen *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (the 1949 film similarly adapted from *Guide's* source material) will be able to foretell the plot twists. (That being said, stay for the added scene *after*

the curtain call, which both pays off a hilarious joke established early in the first act and dispenses entirely with the film's inconclusive ending.) The show is a fun mélange of double entendre, energetic farce, physical comedy and knowing winks to the audience. Expect to hear the whimsical "Better With a Man" at Broadway Our Way next year.

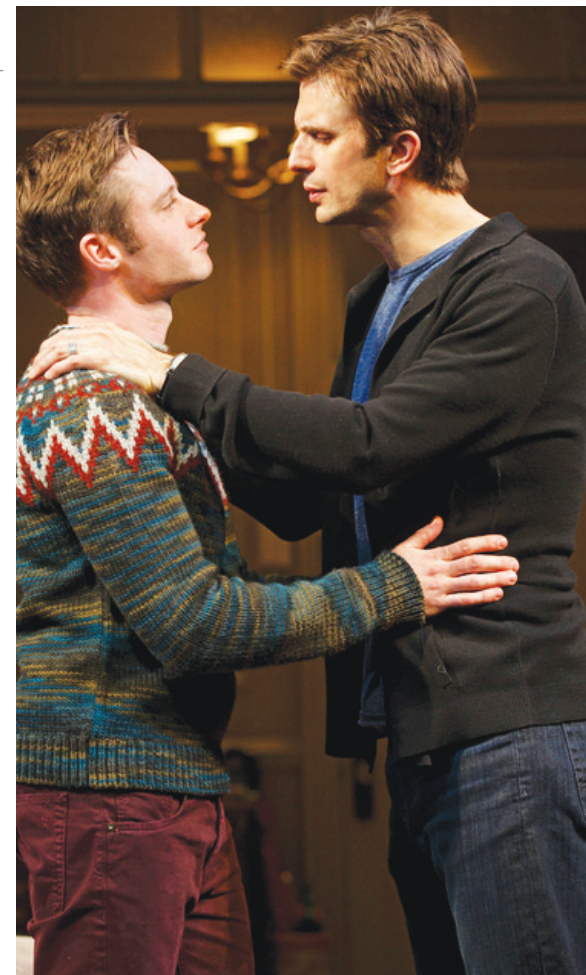
While Mays has the flashier role, the true star is Pinkham. Mays' heirs are so flatly satirical that they are barely distinguishable from one another, and the majority of his characters are barely cameos being killed off in hilariously morbid ways. Pinkham takes the stage for virtually the entire show, which is guided by his breathless narration and boundless energy.

Guide's set is fantastic — the stage-within-a-stage design allowed a curtain to be lowered and the set to change without interrupting the action — and should translate well to a touring production.

A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder at the Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. AGentlemansGuideBroadway.com.

Bullets Over Broadway at the St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. BulletsOverBroadway.com.

Mothers and Sons at the John Golden Theatre,



253 W. 45th St.

MothersAndSonsOnBroadway.com.



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L+S screen

Ground war day

Tom Cruise lives to die in sci-fi wargasm 'Edge of Tomorrow'



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

This week marks the 70th anniversary of the D-Day invasion, so I'm not quite sure the release of *Edge of Tomorrow*, a sci-fi wargasm starring Tom Cruise, is genius, fortuitous or just downright tacky. Possibly a combination. The events in the film mirror WWII in some obvious ways, from the locale (France has fallen and the allied forces are about to sortie from England for a massive invasion on the Normandy beachhead) to the naming of the operation — Downfall, it's own kind of D-Day. Of course, Eisenhower was just fighting Nazis, not multi-tentacled extraterrestrials who reproduce like a computer worm. And only Cruise can stop them.

Ummm, wait... *Tom* Cruise? Isn't he, like, 50? When did Uncle Sam raise the age of his cannon-fodder?

The fact that Cruise, as Maj. Bill Cage, is about two decades past his prime as an infantryman, is

actually handled by the script, though awkwardly: His character — a TV-friendly press agent for the Army better at selling the war than fighting it — is assigned to be a grunt for unfathomable reasons by a prick general (Brendan Gleeson, who appears to have eaten John Candy) for no reason other than to explain his inexperience and cowardice on the field of battle. He'll surely die.

Only he won't. *Edge of Tomorrow* is the *Groundhog Day* of war pictures, where one character relives his experiences over and over again, each time being the only

person to remember what happened before the *last* time he was killed. Which, necessarily, means he keeps getting better and better. ("Any enemy who knows the future can't fail," as one character summarizes it.)

If that premise — fighting, dying, fighting again, improving until you win — sounds familiar, it's not just from a Bill Murray comedy; it's the very premise of every first-person shooter video game of the last three decades. You spend a lot of time in the upper levels, not quite know-

TOM CRUISE, FLAMING | The aging action star fights time-traveling extraterrestrials in a film that owes as much to the structure of a first-person shooter video game as to 'Groundhog Day' and 'Aliens.'

ing what your goal even is, and you just get to keep on playing until you master it. (It's no coincidence that Cage's hard-nosed drill sergeant is played by Bill Paxton, whose memorable line from another grunts in space actioner, *Aliens*, was "Game over, man — game over." Only this game is never over.)

All of which makes *Edge of Tomorrow* one of the most appalling pieces of Hollywood sleight-of-hand ever created. It's bad enough that movie studios inundate us (especially during the scorching summer months) with an endless parade of sequels, remakes, pop-culture adaptations and reboots, from *X-Men* to *Godzilla* to *Jump Street* (some of which might even be entertaining, though that's hardly the point); now they must produce quite literally the most generic of actioners, a film not just inspired by a video game but which actually mimics its fundamental qualities. (The screenplay even seems to be toying with us on this point — the alien invaders are called "mimics," but for no apparent reason other than an inside joke.)

None of this makes *Edge of Tomorrow* bad, exactly; craven, yes, and exploitive, and hardly an instant classic. But this is Tom Cruise we're talking about, in many ways the one great movie star of the past 30 years (he's been making hits consistently since 1983's *Risky Business*). He plays the goofy hero with less smugness than Bruce Willis, less pomposity than Stallone, and even his flops (*Knight & Day*, *Jack Reacher*) aren't especially attributable to him. He's the approachable leading man, the one we can easily project ourselves onto. He diffuses scenes with a sense of humor that most actors not known for comedic roles could not.

Still, even he can't justify the puzzling premise, and director Doug Liman's itchy camera is dizzying in all the wrong ways — it seems like he's trying to outdo Michael Bay for sure noisy spectacle. And the whole time-travel gimmick? Please, it was lame in *X-Men: Days of Future Past*, where it just happened once (I stopped counting at 13 here, and the film suggests hundreds of time-leaps that aren't shown.)

Emily Blunt and Noah Taylor have some good moments as the only two people who (initially) believe in Cage's wild story, but this isn't a film that gives too much consideration for fine-layered performances. With nods to the *Alien* franchise, *A Few Good Men* and several others, *Edge* — like Maj. Cage himself — doesn't care too much about being its own man. It's sufficient that you walk away from it with a vague sense of affection. True love is for chick-flicks. ■

★★★★★
EDGE OF TOMORROW
Tom Cruise, Emily Blunt, Bill Paxton, Brendan Gleeson.
Rated PG-13. 110 mins.
Now playing in wide release.

more movies

To read about the gay military romance *Burning Blue*, go to Page 28, and visit DallasVoice.com for more film reviews.

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'Cherry' jubilation

Gay author's rangy book of poetry and observations is the real deal



Artificial Cherry by Billeh Nickerson (Arsenal Pulp Press, 2014) \$14.95; 96 pp.

A little of this and a little of that. It's the way conversation flows when you're with a friend. You mosey from subject to subject, you touch upon a funny story which leads to another topic you can both gnaw on before you move to something totally different. It's a glue that holds you together. It's the stuff of friendship. And in *Artificial Cherry*, it's several

points to ponder.

In his travels, poet and spoken word artist Billeh Nickerson has seen it all, give or take. He's seen interesting things done with a glass eye — an object you almost never hear about unless it has to do with a certain actress. He's seen buildings that have been gentrified, and remembers the particular reason why they resonated so well. He's been asked peculiar questions by a doctor in Montreal just before he "fell in love with the possibility of what a misplaced medical chart could offer my anatomy." And he's pondered the usefulness of thumbs (imagine hitchhiking without them).

His experiences haven't all been odd: while



apartment hunting, he noted the dirt and other objects left behind by previous tenants. He couldn't ignore something so poignantly personal, though; something that "shadowed everything in its wake." And then there was the Pacific Northwest Elvis Festival (the most impressive thing about those fans, says Nickerson, was that they actually cleaned up after themselves).

Nickerson pens poems and short essays about these and other things. He writes about poetry that he couldn't bear to read publicly in the days after 9/11 and that was uncomfortable, even years later. He wonders what would have happened if Mary had named Jesus something else (knowing, surely, that the name of a Montreal credit union would have to change, too). And he writes movingly of his grandfather's dream of running with dogs, his grandmother's dreams of dancing, and he hears the music to accompany both.

Though it's brief — a little too brief, I thought — *Artificial Cherry* contains plenty: sass, silliness, a bit of the scandalous, wry observations, "irony," laughs, absurdity, sadness, and observations that will make you stop and think. Nickerson has a great eye for what most people don't notice. There's really no theme here, just whatever Nickerson deems fit, which gives it good browseability. No matter where you jump in, though, the rest of his work will beg to be read and you'll happily oblige.

— Terri Schlichenmeyer

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Shen Wei, *Untitled* (detail), 2014. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Courtesy of the artist.

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Out musician Jeremiah Clark arrives in Dallas just in time to dazzle us

It was entirely a coincidence that Memphis-based troubadour Jeremiah Clark booked the Dallas performance of his latest tour of bluegrass and country/soul music during Razzle Dazzle weekend ... but sometimes you just luck out. A veteran of dozens of Pride celebrations nationwide, Clark will share his grassroots sound at Opening Bell Coffee for a one-man concert on Friday night.

DEETS: Opening Bell Coffee, 1409 S. Lamar St. 9 p.m. \$5 donation requested. JeremiahClarkMusic.com.

Sunday 06.08



Miss Big Thickette returns to Round-Up

It happens every spring: The voices behind the Turtle Creek Chorale take off their tuxes, put on their tiaras and show the queens how to werk it for charity. The annual Miss Big Thickette Show — benefiting TCC's AIDS fund and AIDS Arms — returns to the Round Up for its fundraising fun. Who will win? And how much will you give? It's time to find out.

DEETS: The Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road. 6–9 p.m.



Monday 06.09

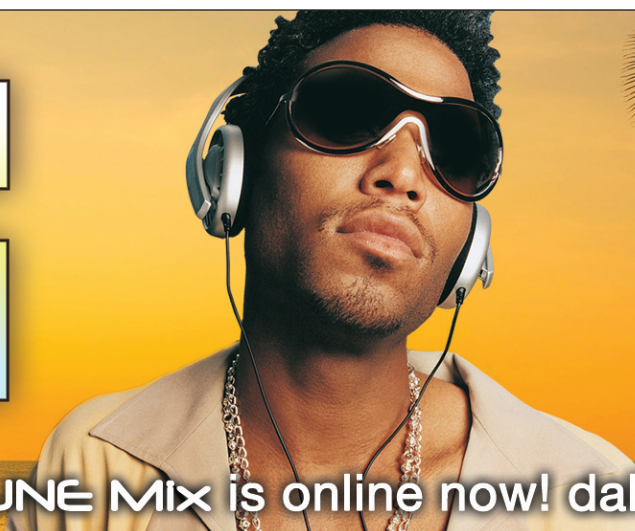
WaterTower Theatre opens 'Good People'

Margie is looking for a job, with no luck, until gal-pals suggest she approach the boyfriend she dumped years ago — now a successful doctor. Set in Boston, the comedy *Good People* from Pulitzer Prize-winner David Lindsay-Abaire starts previews on Friday, with an official opening on Monday night. It's the latest from acclaimed Dallas stage director Rene Moreno.

DEETS: Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Through June 29. WaterTowerTheatre.org.

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calendar highlights

ARTSWEEK: NOW PLAYING

THEATER

Art and Science. A “bonus” show from Uptown Players is this premiere by James Wesley, about science and religion. *Reviewed this week.* Frank’s Place. Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. May 30–June 15. UptownPlayers.org.

Barbecue Apocalypse. A world premiere comedy from Matt Lyle, part of Kitchen Dog Theater’s New Works Festival. The MAC, 3120 McKinney Ave. Through June 21. For a complete schedule of shows, visit KitchenDogTheater.org.

Booth. A world premiere from Steven Walters about the motivations behind the assassination of Lincoln. Bryant Hall on the Kalita Humphrey campus, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through June 14. 2TT.co.

Good People. A comedy by Pulitzer Prize-winner David Lindsay-Abaire and directed by Rene Moreno. Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. June 6–29 (in previews through June 8). WaterTowerTheatre.org.

John XII. Mark-Brian Sonna’s racy 2009 play about the notorious pope. Stone Cottage Theatre at the Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Through June 29. MBSProductions.net.

Mamma Mia. Dallas Summer Musicals brings back this abundantly queer hit, featuring the songs of ABBA. Music Hall at Fair Park, 901 First Ave. June 3–15. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

Noises Off. Michael Frayn’s raucous farce about a doomed production of a play. Directed by Robin Armstrong. Greenville Center for the Arts, 5601 Sears St. June 6–29. ContemporaryTheatreOfDallas.com.

Shear Madness. Comic mystery in T3’s downstairs space. Theatre 3, 2800 Routh St. (in the Quadrangle). Through July 20. Theatre3Dallas.com.

Xanadu. The campy musical set in the 1970s and with a disco score. And, like the Broadway production, they even offer onstage seating. Onstage in Bedford, 2821 Forest Ridge Drive, Bedford. Through June 15.

OnstageInBedford.com. (For a special \$3 discount exclusively for Dallas Voice readers, use the code “VOICE” when checking out.)

FINE ARTS

Carmen Menza: Equal. The local artist opens her new show of neon, fine art and sculpture as a benefit for the Human Rights Campaign. ilume Gallerie, 4123 Cedar Springs Road, suite 107. Through June 14. ilumegallerie.com.

Bottom gun: Gay military ‘Burning Blue’ too tame

Burning Blue could be called “the gay *Top Gun*,” but since Tom Cruise and Kelly McGillis were in the original, maybe “the out *Top Gun*” is more appropriate. Yes, it’s another story of love in the military. That it involves two male Navy pilots raises — but doesn’t answer — the question: Who’s top gun and who’s bottom?

Director and co-writer DMW Greer based it on his own experiences in the 1980s, before “don’t ask, don’t tell” triggered witch hunts that made things even worse for gays in the service. The movie starts in 1995 when Dan (Trent Ford) exchanges glances with Matt (Rob Mayes) at the latter’s wedding, but they don’t act on their attraction until five years later, when Matt acts as Dan’s tour guide in New York City. They wind up in a bar where women pick up the men and two shipmates, but Dan and Matt exchange more glances while having sex with their female pickups in the same bed.

Matt has a fight with his wife and Dan breaks up with his fiancée of eight years, leaving friend Will (Morgan Spector) the only happy hetero in this bromantic triangle that puts the “men” in “ménage a trois.” Will loves Dan more than Matt does, but in a nonsexual way, adding a bi-angle to the triangle.

Shaving his beard moves Dan higher on the suspicion list of a government queer hunter who’s infiltrated the unit on the pretext of investigating a series of training accidents that have cost the Navy men and machines. Of course, Washington couldn’t care less about those when there’s danger of someone getting sucked off aboard an aircraft carrier.

If *Burning Blue* ever had any credibility, it loses it when Dan is formally accused of being gay and sent before a tribunal consisting of two admirals: his own father and Will’s father!

Fortunately the repeal of DADT, after it caused the discharge of more than 14,000 LGBTs, has relegated this era to the history books, but that doesn’t mean there aren’t good movies to be made about it. But *Burning Blue* isn’t one of them.

Perhaps Greer thought discretion was needed to attract mainstream audiences, which suggests he hasn’t been to the movies since *Brokeback Mountain*. Aside from some language, the (PG-13) heterosexual scene and one kiss between two men, *Burning Blue* could be screened in a Baptist church. (They would also approve of the way one character is smote after being smitten.)

I’m not asking for porn, but early in the film there are several scenes of hugging, wrestling and even campy dancing that show what’s acceptable between men as long as they’re straight. Against this background the limited actual gay activity is easily overlooked, which will frustrate gay viewers and confuse straights.

Greer has made good use of stock footage of planes and a carrier to suggest the settings on a miniscule budget, but the script isn’t strong enough to smooth over the compromises this requires. While a lack of one kind of diversity may be the film’s point, Greer’s sailors are almost all as white as their dress uniforms.

With a 2011 copyright, it’s taken *Burning Blue* three years to reach theaters and Video on Demand. That Lionsgate decided to release it may indicate they’re looking for a new niche audience because Tyler Perry’s box office receipts have been dwindling. There are a lot of better films they could have chosen for their experiment.

— Steve Warren



FRIDAY 06.06

PRIDE

MetroBall. This AIDS fundraiser features a performance from gay icon Andy Bell. S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Doors at 7 p.m. \$25-\$30. RazzleDazzleDallas.net.

SATURDAY 06.07

PRIDE

Razzle Dazzle Dallas. Performances by an array of stars (ticketed), as well as a street fair (free) along The Strip. 7 p.m.-midnight. RazzleDazzleDallas.net.

TUESDAY 06.10

FILM

What's Up Doc. Peter Bogdanovich directed Barbra Streisand in this homage to '30s screwball comedies — one of her best. Tuesday Big Movie (sponsored by Dallas Voice) with classic. Landmark's Magnolia in the West Village. 7:30 and 10 p.m.

WEDNESDAY 06.11

PRIDE

Pride at City Hall. City counsel members join the

LGBT community to celebrate Pride month. Dallas City Hall, Sixth Floor Flag Room, 1500 Marilla St. Noon.

THURSDAY 06.12

DANCE

Touch. The final work by famed choreographer Bruce Wood, who died suddenly last week at age 53. City Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. June 12-13.8 p.m. BruceWoodDance.org.

this week's solution

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The gossip maven returns with filth on Jacko, JT and even Dallas!

Have you missed me, Dallas? It's been *eons* since I've been published in Dallas, the city where I have such fond memories: dating not one but *two* Macy's clerks at the Galleria; winning an amateur strip contest at Big Daddy's; devouring the pecan torts at La Madeleine; spending several romantic evenings with a bartender from JR.'s with an enormous appendage (one that turned into a hook when aroused); having sex with a notable porn star in a convertible in the gayborhood underneath the Tollway. Oh, I've missed you, Dallas.

You know what else I missed? My prom. Don't cry for me, dear readers. I've made up for it by meeting presidents, royalty, and even **Oprah**. But no prom for Billy. One of my closest friends promised she'd go with me, and then at the last minute changed her mind — not that I'm holding a grudge. Whether you go to them or not, proms are part of our lives. I remember years ago covering a story about a gay boy who was named prom queen by his class as a joke. We've come a long way, because last week, a 17-year-old Connecticut boy was named prom queen ... and he campaigned for the title! **Nasir Fleming** of Danbury was nominated for

both prom king *and* queen. He decided the only title he wanted was prom queen. Fleming has a long history of being bullied for being openly gay since sixth grade. He says he's not sure if his nominations in either category were meant as a compliment or a joke. Regardless, he decided being prom queen was "fabulous."

This week brought quite a bit of good news to HBO. The first night **The Normal Heart**, pictured, aired, it was watched by 1.4 million viewers, making it the fifth most watched HBO premiere since 2010. That said, it was still significantly lower than the 2.4 million people who watched *Behind the Candelabra*, the gay-themed movie HBO debuted the same weekend last year.

Let's put it in perspective — Lifetime's *Petals on the Wind* debuted last week and was seen by 3.4 million, as opposed to *Flowers in the Attic*, which was seen by 6.1 million people.

HBO is continuing its commitment to shedding light on issues concerning the gay community. The network funded **The Case Against 8**, which is a documentary about the trial to overturn California Proposition 8 ... a case which was eventually settled in the U.S. Supreme Court. This documentary will be in some theaters on June 6 (and more June 13), then debut on HBO on June 23.

Here's something I don't get to do very often — write a nice story about **Justin Bieber**. Actually, I almost never write about Bieber because, eh, why bother? But this is different. Last week, Justin was at the annual American Foundation for AIDS Research Cinema Against AIDS gala in Cannes when he found

himself eyeing a stunning aquamarine and diamond Bulgari necklace which was being modeled by the former first lady of France, **Carla Bruni-Sarkozy**. It was valued at over \$200,000. Within moments, Bieber found himself in a bidding war for the bauble with **Leonardo DiCaprio**. They went back and forth until Leo's last bid of \$476,000. Just as DiCaprio thought he'd won, Bieber bid \$545K and snagged the gem, later saying he wanted to buy it for his mom, and also felt inspired to donate to such a good cause. Way to go, Biebs.

Michael Jackson is back in the news with a new hit single ... because, like **Tupac**, he'll be putting out new records for decades. He wrote "Love Never Felt So Good" with **Paul Anka**, and Jackson recorded a demo in 1983. It's been remixed and enhanced for this current release with the assistance of **Justin Timberlake**. Surely this is a collaboration MJ would have endorsed. Did you know that Michael Jackson had a *huge* crush on Justin Timberlake? Their paths crossed a few brief times, and MJ finally summoned the courage to invite Timby to visit him. At the appointed day, the buzzer at the gate rang, and Justin asked for entry ... with his then-girlfriend **Britney Spears**. Jackson privately sobbed, "Why did he have to bring *her*?" He had hoped to have Justin all to himself. Michael had the



pair wait outside an endless amount of time while he composed himself and tried to look happy to see Britney. Like she hasn't been through that before.

For the first time in history, NBC has given a 12-episode order to a sitcom it is producing with Half-Core Entertainment and Shaw Media. That may not sound historic to you, but Half-Core and Shaw are Canadian broadcasters. So this isn't like *Once Upon a Time* being filmed up in Vancouver by a U.S. crew. This is a true collaboration between the U.S. and Canadians to make a sitcom. The show, *Working the Engels*, is about a family in crisis who must work together. But what it is really about is giving my friend **Andrea Martin**, perhaps the most talented woman on the planet, a job where she can shine for years to come. Actually, the real lead of the show is **Kacey Rohl**, who plays the most normal sibling — which is ironic since most of last season, she was a murder victim on *Hannibal*, and this season she came back missing an ear! Look, I said she was normal, I didn't say she had all her body parts! Although it has already aired in Canada, NBC is launching the show this summer. It will air Thursday nights at 9:30 and will debut on July 10. Watch!

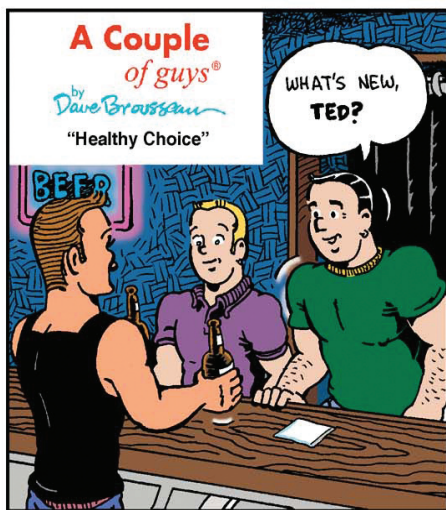
Our Ask Billy question this week comes from Victor in Pennsylvania: "Did I actually see a hot naked guy walk by in the beginning of *The Normal Heart*? Did guys walk around naked on *Fire Island*? I don't remember that in *Longtime Companion*. Could you track down who owns that gorgeous body and enormous penis?"

Well, *Longtime Companion* was made in 1989 — something that really has been overlooked when discussing how long it took for *The Normal Heart* to make it to the big screen. As a theatrical release back then, you probably weren't gonna see a penis. But, I'm loath to call it "gratuitous nudity," knowing what a stickler for authenticity and detail **Ryan Murphy** is. To find the perfect specimen, I'm certain that he bent over backwards — or, at the very least, forward. I don't know who the nude guy is, but I'm happy to post every inch of him on BillyMasters.com — the site that's versatile.

When I'm still waiting to be invited to a prom (or back to Dallas), it's definitely time to end yet another column. Leave it to my readers to find the silver lining in a film about the AIDS epidemic. Still, that's what you'll find on BillyMasters.com. If you've got a question you'd like me to tackle, send it along and I promise to get back to you before I book a trip to Fire Island!

Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

To contact Billy, email him at Billy@BillyMasters.com.





Kevin at Sue Ellen's.



Calvin and Antonio at Havana.



Adrian and Jesus at S4.



Couple on The Strip.



Tony and Kevin on The Strip.

Making the **SCENE** the week of **June 6-12**:

Alexandre's: *Girl's Might Out with Peggy Honea* on Friday at 10 p.m. **Andrea Dawson** on Saturday at 10 p.m. **Sheran Keyton** on Wednesday at 9 p.m. **Alicia Silex** on Thursday at 9 p.m.

Barbara's Pavilion: *Voice of Pride* on Thursday at 9 p.m.

Changes: *Cowtown Leathermen* meeting on Monday at 7 p.m. **Tree House** meeting on Tuesday at 7 p.m.

Club Reflection: *Trinity River Bears* meeting on Sunday at 2:30 p.m. and cookout at 4 p.m. **Texas Gay Rodeo Association** show on Sunday at 7 p.m.

Dallas Eagle: *Swap Shop*, a kinky yard sale on Saturday 2 p.m.-7 p.m. **Larry Carter** hosts **United Court of the Lone Star Empire Grand Duckie Show** on Saturday at 7 p.m. **Dallas Bears** and **Leather Knights** club night on Saturday.

Lips LaRue and **Wayne Davis** host the **Employee Turnabout Show** on Sunday at 7 p.m. **Voice of Pride** on Tuesday at 9 p.m. **Miss Wanda Comedy Show** on Thursday at 9 p.m.

Havana: *Voice of Pride* on Wednesday at 9 p.m.

Medusa: LGBT night is Wednesday at the new Downtown dance club.

Rainbow Lounge: Strip contest hosted by **Kiana Lee** on Tuesday at 11 p.m. \$100 cash prize.

Round-Up Saloon: *Miss Big Thickette* on Sunday benefits **AIDS Arms** and the **Turtle Creek Chorale** on Sunday.

S4: *MetroBall* on Friday at 8 p.m.

Sue Ellen's: *Mustache Envy* upstairs on Friday. **Coles Whalen** on Saturday. **Bad Habits** on Sunday. **Voice of Pride** on Monday at 9 p.m.

The Brick: *Pocket Rockets* poker on Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

Woody's Sports & Video Bar: *Voice of Pride* begins with first competition on Sunday at 9 p.m.

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



Kathy Jack and friends on The Strip.



Ashley, Eric and Celeste at JR.'s Bar & Grill.



Sally and Darius at Havana.

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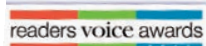
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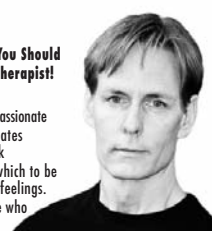
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Join us for Catholic Mass for the LGBT community First Sunday of each Month Dignity Dallas Mass held at CATHEDRAL OF HOPE Interfaith Peace Chapel, Lower Level
 dignitydallas@hotmail.com
 972-729-9572
 www.dignitydallas.net

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 Hypnosis

ENERGY HEALING, HYPNOSIS, PURIFICATION.
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 the flow center www.TheFlowCenter.com



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 214-754-8710



Grow Your Business!

Let's Talk
 Join the Dallas County District Attorney's Office as we host a Town Hall meeting to discuss our newly implemented LGBT Task Force.
 Where: Resource Center
 2701 Reagan St. Dallas, TX 75219
 When: Mon, June 30th, 5:30-7:00pm Watch online:
 live.dallasda.com

gayribbean CRUISES

877-560-8318
 www.GayribbeanCruises.com



GAYRIBBEAN HALLOWEEN CRUISE
 October 26 - November 2, 2014
 Navigator of the Seas® Galveston to Cozumel, Grand Cayman & Falmouth

It's going to be a FRIGHTFULLY good time!
 Private Parties, Shows, and Fabulous Entertainment.
 Gayribbean Night Club and Halloween Costume Party with CASH prizes.
 Starring Tasha Kohl, SoFonda St. John, and more.
 Starting at \$568



Royal Caribbean INTERNATIONAL

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Do you wanna ride?
JOIN SPECTRUM
MOTORCYCLE RIDING CLUB,
the largest GLBT motorcycle group in
the region. Please visit:
spectrum-mrc.com to learn more."

Looking for a new cuddle buddy?
Find your perfect match at the
DFW Humane Society.
Adoption is the loving option
972-721-7788
<http://www.dfwhumane.com>"

Volunteer Needed!!
Be part of an exciting team and
make a difference in someone's life.
Volunteers will be trained to conduct
HIV outreach in the
GLBT community working along
side of trained Risk Reduction Spe-
cialists. For more information con-
tact Sonny Blake @ 214-522-8600
Ext. 236

Pegasus Squares, an
LGBT North Dallas Square Dance
Club, meets the first and third
Sundays of each month,
3pm-5pm at the Resource Cen-
ter.
Lessons beginning March 9th.
Contact Rob Miller at
214-320-9598
for more information.

POKER
Freeroll Poker Tournaments
In the gayborhood
BRICK • Thursdays
Game Starts at 7:30
Nightly prizes & \$500 Grand prize!
For More info go to:
pocketrocketsdallas.com

Society for companion animals need vol-
unteers. Please contact
office@societyforcompanionanimals.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

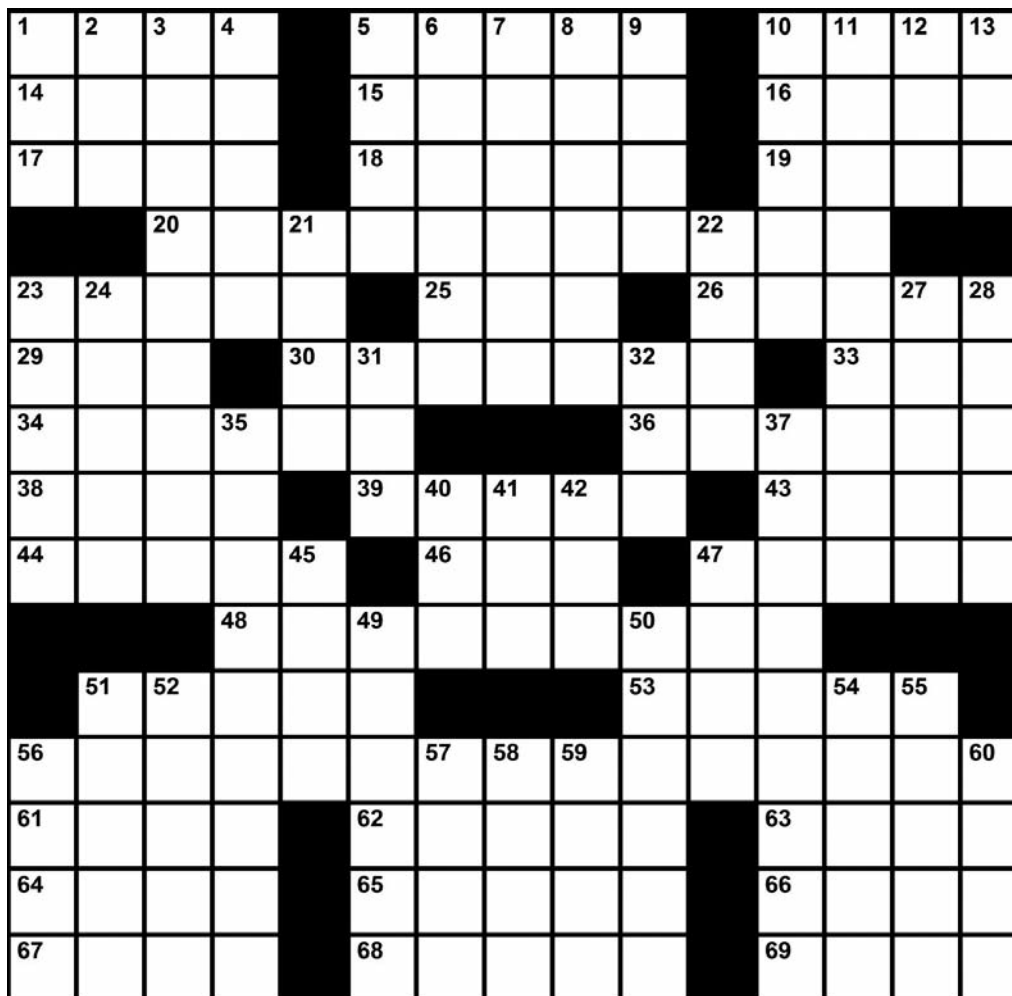
"Dallas Independent Volleyball Association"
DIVA league Come play with us?
Contact: vpmembership@divadallas.org
or visit www.divadallas.org

Conceivable Options
a family building workshop!
Presented by HRC Family Project
Saturday, May 10th from 1-3pm
Join us and learn different ways
to build your family.
Location: Jonathan's Place
6065 Duck Creek Drive
Garland, TX 75043

Co-Dependents Anonymous
(CoDA) is a Twelve Step
Fellowship of men and women
whose common purpose is
recovery from codependence and
the development and mainte-
nance of healthy relationships.
CoDA meetings in the area meet:
•St. Thomas Episcopal Church
6525 Inwood Road (Inwood at
Mockingbird)
Dallas, Texas 75209
•LAMBDA GROUP
6:30 PM, Friday; 1 hour
OAK LAWN CoDA GROUP
7:30 PM, Wed; 1 1/2 hours
Meeting Type:
Open, Sharing, Steps, Welcoming
to all, Safe for GLBT

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q-puzzle



Mayan Culture

Solution on page 29

Across

- 1 Secreted a fluid onto the face
- 5 Type of market for bears
- 10 Poet Broumas
- 14 Morales of *Resurrection Blvd.*
- 15 Wall Street term
- 16 Madonna, in a creche
- 17 Legal wrong
- 18 Bridge bid, briefly
- 19 Verb of Verlaine
- 20 Movie about Armand and Albert
- 23 One goes from here back into the closet
- 25 Ariz. neighbor
- 26 Filmmaker Nishit
- 29 Brynner of *The King and I*
- 30 Fez features
- 33 Hot temper
- 34 Murdoch with a flower?
- 36 Comes to rest
- 38 When doubled, Mork's good-bye
- 39 Start of Maya Angelou's comment about Albert?
- 43 "Queen of Country" McEntire
- 44 Close of *Serving in Silence*
- 46 Rilke's I
- 47 Reef buildup
- 48 How tops like to see their dates?

Down

- 3 Drive erratically
- 56 More of the comment
- 61 Sauteed leftovers, perhaps
- 62 Mixed-up fruits
- 63 Lysol target
- 64 Personal lubricant ingredient
- 65 Totally absurd
- 66 Margaret Mead ___ *Me Gay*
- 67 Part of YMCA
- 68 End of the comment
- 69 Pleasured orally
- 1 Astroglide alternative
- 2 Kahlo's that
- 3 "What's your sign?," for example?
- 4 Support Metropolitan Community Church, e.g.
- 5 Type of appeal
- 6 Pick-me-ups
- 7 Britten's *Billy Budd* and *Peter Grimes*
- 8 Elton's light in the wind
- 9 Fast food pioneer
- 10 Last letter for Socrates
- 11 Party guy, after a night of cruising
- 12 Warning from Toto

- 13 Always, to Shakespeare
- 21 *Ziegfeld Follies* costume designer
- 22 The A in GLARP
- 23 Like faint embers
- 24 Like Gomer's Mayberry
- 27 Caribbean vacation spot
- 28 Mt. Everest locale
- 31 Sophie B. Hawkins' "___ *Lay Me Down*"
- 32 *Ben Hur* novelist Wallace
- 35 Tans at South Beach
- 37 Shock everyone
- 40 Do-it-yourselfer's purchase
- 41 Sgt. or corp.
- 42 Bit of resistance on the circuit
- 45 Enjoy some ladyfingers, e.g.
- 47 Prompted on Broadway
- 49 Main argument
- 50 Garbo, and others
- 51 Oil source
- 52 Cicely of *Fried Green Tomatoes*
- 54 Gore in the library
- 55 Eat away at
- 56 George Michael's band
- 57 "___ *Get a Witness*" (Marvin Gaye)
- 58 *Six Feet Under* creator Ball
- 59 Type of bang
- 60 Barrymore of *Boys on the Side*

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FLOSS Dental Plan welcomes same-sex couples and their families

EXAMPLE OF NEW PATIENT SAVINGS

PROCEDURE	UCR FEE*	MEMBER PAYS	SAVINGS
Comprehensive Exam	\$114	NO CHARGE	\$114
Full Mouth X-Rays	\$157	NO CHARGE	\$157
Panoramic Radiographic Image	\$110	\$60	\$50
Prophylaxis – Adult (Cleaning)	\$111	\$70	\$41
Porcelain Crown (Includes Core Buildup)	\$1,910	\$900	\$1,010
TOTAL	\$2,402	\$1,030	\$1,372

*UCR Fee is the Usual and Customary Rate. The UCR fee can vary by location.



Clark Steffens, D.D.S.
Practice Owner

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