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Patti Fink

Evilu Prigeon

Patti Fink and Evilu 'Pridge' Pridgeon named 2015 grand marshals

Local activists Patti Fink and Evilu "Pridge" Prigeon have been named the grand marshals of the 2015 Alan Ross Freedom Parade.

Patti Fink, left, is a longtime LGBT and Democratic Party activist. She serves as president of the Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance and as co-host of Lambda Weekly on KNON 89.3-FM. She has served on numerous boards, including the Human Rights Campaign, Equality Texas, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas and Democracy For America. She has also a past co-chair of the HRC DFW National Coming Out Project.

Evilu (Pridge) Pridgeon, right, was one of the earliest healthcare and grief counseling activists and a co-founder of the Oaklawn Community Services, where she served as the Director of the Counseling program. She currently serves as president of The Dallas Way, which is dedicated to preserving the LGBT Dallas history.

— James Russell

EEOC rules federal law prohibits discrimination based on a sexual orientation

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ruled this week existing civil rights laws protect discrimination based on sexual orientation.

In the 3-2 decision, commissioners ruled the sex discrimination provisions of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act protect employees from discrimination because of their sexual orientation.

"This landmark opinion from the EEOC confirms what we have long argued in our cases: discriminating against gay, lesbian and bisexual employees violates federal law. This ruling is likely to have enormous positive effects because EEOC interpretations of Title VII are highly persuasive to the courts — they tend to be predictive," said Greg Nevins, Counsel and Employment Fairness Strategist for Lambda Legal in a statement.

The decision should serve as precedent for future court decisions, he said.

"Given the clarity and logic of this opinion, most courts are likely to stop simply referring to old, illogical rulings about Title VII coverage. A few may disagree, but most probably will be guided by the Commission's straightforward approach."

In 2012, the EEOC ruled discrimination against a transgender individual is also protected under Title VII in the case *Macy v. Department of Justice*.

"Freedom to Work applauds this historic decision by the EEOC, and we encourage gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals who face harassment or discrimination on the job to consult an attorney and file Title VII claims with the EEOC and eventually the federal courts," Tico Almeida, the group's president

said in a statement.

Currently 31 states, including Texas, lack employment and housing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity, according to a new report from the Human Rights Campaign.

Rea Carey, National LGBTQ Task Force Executive Director agreed with Almeida.

"This is another historic victory for LGBTQ people and their families. We need to further attack the scourge of discrimination in a comprehensive manner — and while LGBTQ people may file employment discrimination cases with the EEOC, we still need more. We must push for legislation that provides clear and strong protections for all LGBTQ people in every area of life — from housing to health care," she said in a statement.

— James Russell

Sweeping federal nondiscrimination bill introduced in Congress

A sweeping federal nondiscrimination bill protecting LGBT people was introduced in Congress today, earning praise from some of the nation's leading LGBT advocacy organizations and allies.

The Equality Act, sponsored by out Rep. David Cicilline, D-R.I., and Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., would amend federal laws to include protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, education, public accommodations, credit, jury service, federal funding, renting and home ownership.

"You can be married on Saturday, post your wedding pictures on Facebook on Sunday and be fired from your job or kicked out of your apartment on Monday," Cicilline said in a statement.

Currently only 19 states and the District of Columbia have clear LGBT nondiscrimination protections in employment and housing. Texas is among the states without any statewide protections.

Previous attempts to pass a narrower bill, the Employment Nondiscrimination Act barring employment nondiscrimination based on social orientation and gender identity, have failed. In 2013, a bill with sweeping religious exemptions passed before losing the support of key LGBT groups.

Following the Supreme Court's June decision constitutionalizing marriage equality, LGBT advocates announced a push for nationwide nondiscrimination laws. The Equality Act is the first attempt to address national activists' latest push for equality.

Yesterday, Ted Olson and David Boies, the legal team that represented the plaintiffs in *Hollingsworth v. Perry* case challenging California's same-sex marriage ban, voiced support for a comprehensive federal LGBT non-discrimination law.

The bill is also one of the latest pushes to include gender identity as a protected class.

"This is a historic moment for transgender people," said Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality in a statement. "This bill is especially important as it comes on the heels of unprecedented public attention on trans lives. Despite that, trans people have faced record rates of violence — just this week, we learned of the 10th trans woman of color murdered in 2015. For trans people, equality is a matter of life and death."

The bill faces an uncertain fate in an increasingly conservative Republican-controlled Congress.

— James Russell

Love and money

family life

LGBT Americans in same-sex marriages say that legal marriage changes how they think, feel and talk about money:

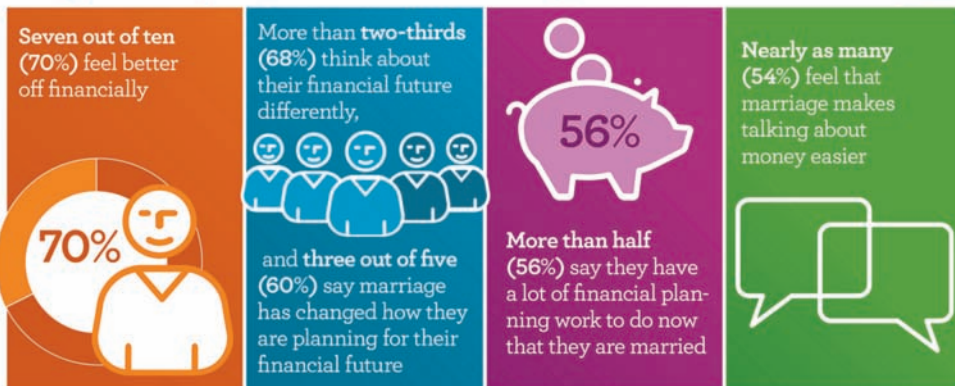


Chart courtesy of Wells Fargo

Marriage is about love but financial commitments, too

JAMES RUSSELL | Staff Writer
russell@dallasvoice.com

Good news: a new survey reveals finances are at the top of same-sex couples' minds. The survey, conducted by Wells Fargo in states where same-sex marriages were recognized before the Supreme Court's marriage equality ruling, also give financial advisors insight into the issues their clients need to know before saying, "I do."

When asked if marriage was a financial benefit, 70 percent of respondents said yes; 81 percent agreed marriage is a big financial decision; and an overwhelming 89 percent said it's important to evaluate the financial implications of getting married before doing so.

The findings didn't surprise Terry Thompkins, a local financial advisor who specializes in domestic partnerships and same-sex couples.

"There seems to be a greater awareness among same-sex couples when it comes to financial awareness," he says. "There's more clarity because we've been talking about it [even before the marriage equality ruling]."

According to the survey, 73 percent of respondents said the legalization of same-sex marriage has changed how they plan for their future.

Bad news: couples may say they understand the varying laws and financial implications of marriage, but few do. And even fewer understand how federal and state laws apply to their marriages.

"While LGBT Americans recognize that access to marriage provides certain financial benefits and obligations, there is still a significant knowledge gap around specific issues," says John Lake, Wells Fargo's LGBT segment manager. Just like their counterparts in opposite-sex marriages, a lot of education is required.

For a couple to even understand their finances, they need to understand how to use money first. Certain income levels may benefit more than others when it comes to commit-



Terry Thompkins

ment.

"It's not something you take lightly," Thompkins says.

The need for more conversations about money also resonated throughout the survey on a variety of issues LGBT Americans consider important to discuss before marriage. Less than one-third of couples surveyed, for example, have fully discussed whether to merge all of their accounts and assets; less than one-third discussed the consequences of debt.

Marriage changes a lot, especially when it comes to tax season. In Texas, long-time couples suddenly were in common law marriages. That changed everything, according to Thompkins.

Before marriage equality, couples could file their federal taxes jointly or separately. While it took a lot more paperwork, dependent upon any other variables, like children, philanthropic gifts, and tax write-offs, separate filings paid off.

The disparities before the marriage equality ruling were especially evident in retirement and philanthropic giving.

"When considering marriage, couples need

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A fenced off safe space will be created in Reverchon Park inside the gates of the main Festival in the Park. Security professionals will staff our balloon arched entrance. Entrance fees are \$5 for adults and children under 13 are free. No coolers, no alcohol and proper attire will be listed among other house rules.

The Family PRIDE Zone will include food, games, entertainment, vendor booths and much more.

For more info, visit:
dallasprideparade.com.
If you have questions, call Leo Cusimano 214.754.8710 ext. 114

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■ LOVE AND MONEY, Next Page

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LOVE AND MONEY, From Previous Page


to look at their income and deductions," Thompkins says.

Other changes simply come in the form of simple paperwork updates. While quick and easy, couples may not know they need to update their beneficiary information should one die.

Thompkins always asks his clients about their retirement plans. "In the case of 401k and pension plans, couples need to switch from 'non-spousal beneficiary' to 'spousal beneficiary,'" he says. Otherwise the federal government, especially in the case of high-income earners, will "unfairly reach into the survivor's pocket for extra money."

High-income earners faced numerous complex legal loopholes to assuring a fair tax return. A high-income, philanthropic couple would have to figure out who made the most money. "They wouldn't get the full benefit of their philanthropy," he says.

"Having conversations about financial issues like saving, investing, and preparing for retirement is critically important for same-sex couples," Lake says. "There are many unanswered questions out there, and as an industry we must keep working hard to provide useful information same-sex couples need in order to achieve their financial goals."






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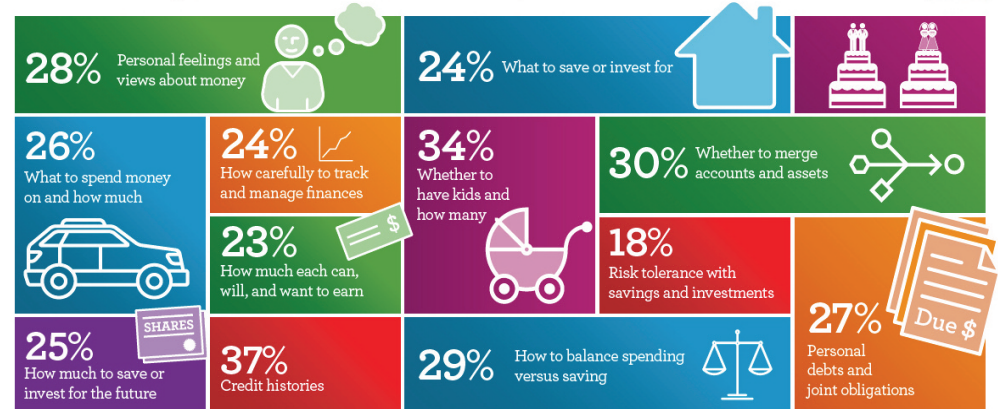





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On most topics that LGBT Americans feel are important to discuss before marriage, one-third or fewer have fully done so:





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THE GAY AGENDA

Have an event coming up? Email your information to staff writer James Russell at russell@dallasvoice.com by Thursday at 10 a.m. for that week's issue.

JULY

• **Weekly: Lambda Weekly** every Sunday at 1 p.m. on 89.3 KNON-FM. This week's guest are the **Dallas Voice Wedding Party & Expo organizers; United Black Ellument** hosts discussion on HIV / AIDS in the black community at 7 p.m. every second Tuesday of the month at 3116 Commerce St., ste. C; **Fuse game** night every Monday evening but the last of the month at 8 p.m. at the Fuse space in the ilume, 4123 Cedar Springs Road, apt. 2367; Fuse Connect every Wednesday from 7 p.m. at the Fuse Space.

• **July 24: CinéWilde Presents The Broken Hearts Club** Pre-show discussion at 8:30 p.m. followed by a summer game night at 11 p.m. at Texas Theatre, 231 W. Jefferson Ave.

• **July 25: Dallas Red Foundation's Third Annual Fashion Show** 9:30-11:30 p.m. at SISU Uptown, 2508 Maple Ave. For more information, and to purchase tickets visit Bit.ly/1RisHW2.

• **July 25: Legal Hospice of Texas Annual Heat of the Night Fundraiser** Fundraiser celebrating 25th anniversary of Legal Hospice of Texas with casino games, a raffle, silent auction, food and more 7-10:30 p.m. at the University of North Texas School of Law, 1901 Main St. For sponsorship information and tickets, call 214-521-6622 or visit Mkt.com/legal-hospice-of-texas.

• **July 26: Cathedral of Hope's Marks 45th Anniversary** 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. worship services followed by local celebrations. CoH, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. For more information, visit CathedralofHope.com.

• **July 31-Aug. 1: Seventh Annual Texas Transgender Nondiscrimination Summit** Summit addressing transgender issues in higher education with keynote speakers, workshops and panels. 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. on Friday, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on Saturday at University of Texas at Dallas, 800 West Campbell Road, Richardson. Register online at Ttxtns.org/register. For more information, contact Josephine Tittsworth at josephine@txtns.org.

AUGUST

• **Aug. 1-14: Youth First Youth Reception Art Show** Meet the artists from 6-8 p.m. on Aug. 5 at Illume Gallerie, 4123 Cedar Springs Road.

• **Aug. 1: AIDS Interfaith Network Leo Party** 8 p.m. at the Hidden Door, 5025 Bowser St. For more information, visit AIDSInterfaithNetwork.org.

• **Aug. 1: DFW Trans Ladies Monthly Meeting** Meets from 7-8:30 p.m. on the first Saturday of every month at Agape MCC, 4615 E. California Parkway, Fort Worth. For more information, email info@dfwtgladies.org or visit DFWTGLadies.org.

• **Aug. 2: Dallas Voice Wedding Party & Expo** Marriage equality expo sponsored by the Dallas Voice and the North Texas LGBT Chamber of Commerce includes wedding specialists and vendors to answer your questions and help you plan your wedding. Performances include Turtle Creek Chorale and a fashion show 12-6 p.m. at the Hilton Anatole Hotel Stemmons Ballroom, 2201 N. Stemmons Freeway. Free admission. Registration required. To register, visit Bit.ly/1HyqsB5.

• **Aug. 4: DFW Transcendence Trans/SOFFA Meeting** Trans and ally support group meets monthly on first and third Tuesdays from 7-9 p.m. at Agape MCC, 4615 East California Parkway, Fort Worth. For more information, call Finn Jones at 214-499-0378 or email at sfinn.jones@gmail.com.

• **Aug. 5: Gay and Lesbian Fund for Dallas Cocktail Party** Fundraiser for Dallas Theater Center celebrating the group's world premiere of *Moonshine: That Hee Haw Musical* 6-7:30 p.m. Pay what you can. For location and to RSVP, email Robin Rose at robin.rose@dallastheatercenter.org.

• **Aug. 5: First Annual Adult Protective Services Community Board Caregiver Awards Luncheon** Awarding excellence in professional elder care advocacy, promotion and best practices 1:30-4:30 p.m. at 5 Star Premiere Residences, 5455 La Sierra Drive. For more information, call John Dornheim at 214-341-7133.

• **Aug. 6: LGBTQ Saves Back to School** Gathering for area LGBT youth at 7 p.m. at First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth. For more information, visit LGBTQSaves.org.

• **Aug. 6: Fort Worth PFLAG meeting** Meets every first Thursday of the month

Obituaries



Mark Arthur Shekter, Dallas architect and GLBT advocate, passed away from pancreatic cancer on July 19 just before his 73rd birthday.

Mark was owner/principal broker of Surrealty real estate firm, founded in 1981. For 44 years, he was the owner of the award-winning nationwide residential design firm Graphic+Design+Group+International+Inc. Since 1971, Mark and his firm designed more than 10,000 projects in 40 states and have won more than 15 McSam Awards presented by the Home Builders Association.



Timothy Udell Thompson, 54, of Dallas, passed away June 7, 2015.

He was born Aug. 4, 1960, in White Plains, N.Y., to Henry B. Thompson, Jr. and Barbara (Young) Thompson. Tim grew up in Red Hook, N.Y., and moved to Dallas 25 years ago where he made countless, dear friends who became his Dallas family. Timmy always had a love for both gardening and animals. Over the years he was known for

Born in Toledo, Ohio, Mark attended the University of Cincinnati and received his BA in Architecture from the University of Oklahoma in 1967. Throughout his many achievements, Mark has been a past board president of the Stonewall Professional and Business Association, and he was a founding member of the North Texas GLBT Chamber of Commerce, where he received a lifetime achievement award in April. In the late '80s, Mark created MOM (Meals on the Move), the first meal program to deliver food to people with AIDS. He was an early supporter of The Dallas Way.

Mark has been a member of the Oak Lawn Committee for more than 30 years, including five terms as president and as a past member of the Oak Lawn Forum.

Mark is survived by his sister Mimi, his nephews Hank and Sam Brasch, their wives and children. He was preceded in death by his parents Ruth and Henry Shekter.

A memorial service was held on July 23 at Temple Emanu-El in Dallas and a celebration of life that evening in the Rose Room at S4.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to AIDS Services of Dallas, P.O. Box 4338, Dallas, Texas 75208 or the Great Oak Lawn Fund, Communities Foundation of Texas, 5500 Caruth Haven Lane, Dallas, Texas 75225.

his beautiful, peaceful gardens and for raising all types of animals including sheep, birds, dogs, fish and rabbits. He was instrumental in promoting Lionhead rabbits to become a recognized breed.

Tim was the retail manager at Brumley Gardens for many years and was an active volunteer for the Greg Dollgener Memorial Aids Fund (GDMAF).

A memorial service will be held at the Interfaith Peace Chapel, 5910 Cedar Springs Road from 4-7 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 1. This is an informal gathering of friends and family to celebrate his life and tell fun stories about Tim. Dress is casual — T-shirts and shorts, as this is what Tim would have wanted. There will be a light food, drinks and fun stories, with a balloon release at 6:45 p.m. in the parking lot.

In lieu of flowers, the family asked that donations be made to the Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund, an organization Tim volunteered for since 1993. You can do so by clicking the "Donate" link at GDMAF.org under Tim Thompson memorial or mail a check to GDMAF, Attn. David Hearn, Tim Thompson Memorial, 901 Mossvine Drive, Plano, Texas 75023. Cards may be sent to his family at The Thompson Family, 44 Twin Ponds Drive, Kingston, N.Y. 12401.

from 7-9 p.m. at First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth. For more information, call 817-428-2329 or visit PflagFortWorth.org.

• **Aug. 7: Youth First Art Show Young Professionals Advisory Council Reception** Learn about YPAC and ways to support Youth First from 6-8 p.m. at ilume Gallerie, 4123 Cedar Springs Road.

• **Aug. 12: Jenny Block Book Launch Party** Dallas Voice contributor Jenny Block hosts a party for her new book *O Wow! Discovering Your Ultimate Orgasm* at 7 p.m. at Komali, 4152 Cole Ave. Copies available for purchase at

Tinyurl.com/owowbook.

• **Aug. 15: Lambda Legal's Sixth Annual Landmark Dinner** 6 p.m.-2 a.m. at the Adolphus Hotel, 1321 Commerce St. For more information, call Roger Poindexter at 214-219-8585 ext. 224 or email rpoindexter@lambdalegal.org.

• **Aug. 18: DFW Transcendence Trans/SOFFA Meeting** Trans and ally support group meets monthly on first and third Tuesdays from 7-9 p.m. at Agape MCC, 4615 East California Parkway, Fort Worth. For more information, call Finn Jones at 214-499-0378 or email at sfinn.jones@gmail.com.

Physician, breed thyself

Dallas fertility doctor helped many couples before he and his husband created their own family



DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

As an obstetrician with a specialty in reproductive endocrinology and infertility, Julian Escobar has been helping others create families for years. Last year, he and his husband decided it was time to create their own family.

Since returning to Texas in 2008 for a fellowship at UT Southwestern, Escobar — the medical director of ReproMed Fertility Center in Dallas — has spent his days counseling couples about creating their families. Typically, straight couples will seek help of a fertility specialist when they've been trying to get pregnant for more than a year with no results. Couples older than 35 may seek his help after trying for just six months. Studies show couples undergoing fertility treatment exhibit the same level of stress as oncology patients.

Infertility issues can have several causes. For men, Escobar begins with a semen analysis; for women, he will make sure they are ovulating properly and that their tubes are normal. Solutions can include administering a pill or injection that promotes the ovulation of more than one egg to up the chances of conception; if the man is sterile, he'll suggest use of a sperm donor. And if that doesn't work, he might recommend in vitro fertilization — fertilize the egg in the lab and then transfer them back to the woman. (If the woman's eggs are the problem, he may fertilize donated eggs from an anonymous donor and implant them in the woman.)



Julian Escobar and Pieter Verhoeven with their 7 month old children Palomina and Valentino. They've frozen additional embryos that their surrogate has agreed to carry, if they decide to have more children.



After discussing all these options — including their goals, deciding whether to buy eggs or freezing eggs for future conceptions so that the children will be biologically related — Escobar began to realize something: That he wanted to be a parent himself.

"I talked to couples about building families," Escobar said. "I lived it everyday."

He approached his husband, Pieter Verhoeven, about the possibility: "What about us?" he said.

Although he hadn't worked with gay male couples before, Escobar knew it was being done — and all they needed was an egg and a uterus.

For legal reasons, they used an anonymous egg donor. Implanting

someone else's egg in a surrogate gives the surrogate less of a parental claim on the child, he said.

They decided to fertilize the donated eggs with semen from each of them, then did pre-genetic screening. Each fertilized egg was checked for a number of things, such as genes that predispose someone to certain types of cancers and for other abnormalities. A number of fertilized eggs remained.

"We each had normal male and female [fertilized egg] and wanted one of each," he said.

The couple selected a male inseminated by one of them and a female by the other so they'd know when the children were born whose was biologically whose child. Through his practice, they found a surrogate and the two eggs were implanted successfully.

Now 7 months old, Escobar and Verhoeven

Marriage and adoption are separate issues

familyLife



Austin attorney Suzanne Bryant, second from right, with her wife Sarah Goodfriend, second from left, and their daughters. Because they filed second-parent adoptions, Bryant and Goodfriend are both legally their daughters' parents. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

Attorney Suzanne Bryant warns that just because marriage laws have changes doesn't mean a second parent has additional rights

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

With marriage equality now established law, LGBT couples might expect that parental rights are automatically granted. But that simply isn't the case.

"Being married and being a parent are totally separate issues," says Austin attorney Suzanne Bryant.

Bryant has experience with both. She and her wife, Sarah Goodfriend, have two adopted children, and she's made second-parent adoptions the specialty of her practice.

When she and Goodfriend sued Texas for the right to marry and won on medical grounds in February, they became the first same-sex couple to marry in the state — before the Supreme Court officially weighed in on the issue. Now that marriage law has changed to allow any couple to marry, Bryant cautions that adoption law hasn't changed — yet. And she warns that when dealing with your kids, you don't want to be the test case.

While second-parent adoptions are legal in Texas, the second parent's name still won't go on

the birth certificate if the parents are a same-sex couple. The adoption by the second parent must still be filed separately from the original adoption.

"Anyone who thinks marriage makes them a legal parent is wrong, wrong, wrong," Bryant says.

When a married opposite-sex couple has a baby, the husband is presumed to be the father, and his name is placed on the birth certificate. That's called a "rebuttable presumption," but the burden of proof is on the father to disprove his relationship. But there's nothing in Texas law that presumes the second parent if a woman who gives birth is married to another woman.

In 1996, the Texas legislature changed a law regarding birth certificates. That document allows only one man's name and one woman's name to appear as the parents. Bryant said before that, a same-sex couple's name could be included. Rep. Rafael Anchia has been trying to change the law, but his bill has languished in committee each session.

Bryant is optimistic that the Texas birth certificate could change. Since the marriage-equality ruling, vital statistics has been looking at all the state's forms to recommend changes.

While marriage does afford a couple a number of rights that aren't offered to unmarried couples, rights and responsibilities regarding a spouse's children aren't among them unless formal legal

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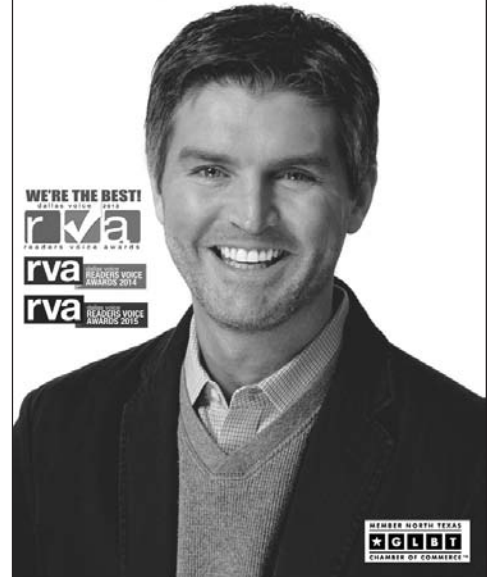
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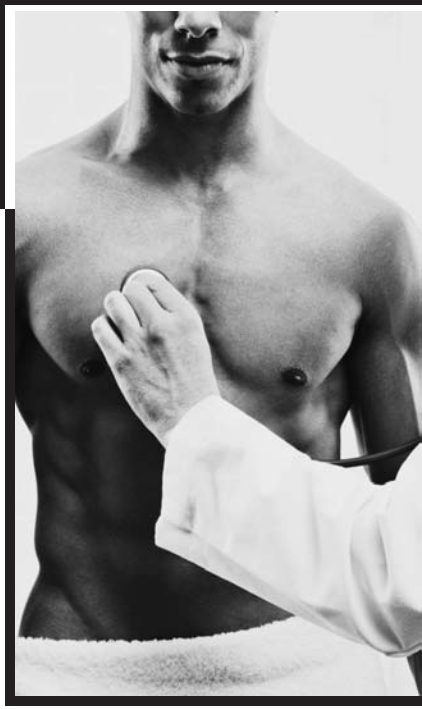
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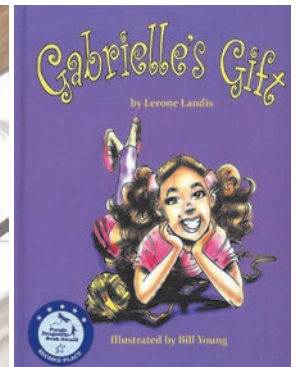
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The 'Gift' of family

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Illustrator Bill Young used photos of Landis' family as the basis for the book's illustrations.

Lerone Landis wrote 'Gabrielle's Gift' so his daughter could see herself and a family that looked like theirs

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Lerone Landis wanted a children's book for his daughter that reflected his family's diversity. It was harder than he expected. In fact, impossible.

Landis and his husband, Danny Valle, had daughter Gabrielle, now 6, through surrogacy. Landis is black and the biological father; Valle is Hispanic; their egg donor and surrogate was white. And the media hasn't seemed to catch on to that kind of situation.

"There are very few children of color in animated movies or cartoons," Landis said. "Gabrielle never said anything about it, but Danny and I were aware of it." Even fewer or those stories with racial diversity portrayed a family with two dads.

It was important to Landis and Valle that their daughter see someone like herself in print. When Landis didn't see what he was looking for in the children's books available, he did something about it. The result was *Gabrielle's Gift*, published by IngramSpark.

The reaction to the book has been favorable; since its publication last November, it has been honored with a Purple Dragonfly Book Award for cultural diversity. But it's the reaction from other parents that Landis finds most satisfying.

"Finally, a book my kid can relate to," he said other parents have told him.

In the story, Landis makes no direct reference to the racial diversity in his the family. Gabrielle wants a kitten for her birthday. Both dads approve of the idea, but only after she understands the responsibility involved. While *Gabrielle's Gift* is the story of a girl in a diverse family receiving a birthday present, the title also refers to Landis' gift to his daughter.

Landis said he wasn't trying to rewrite Leslea Newman's *Heather Has Two Mommies* or Michael Willhoite's *Daddy's Roommate*, two trailblazing books that introduced same-sex parents into children's literature. He even calls Newman an inspiration. Landis has co-hosted *Lambda Weekly* for more than 15 years, and Newman has appeared as a guest. He counts her books among Gabrielle's favorites. *Donovan's Day*, about a boy preparing for his moms' wedding day, is one Gabrielle rereads regularly.

"Leslea did it already," he said. "She paved the way."

Instead, Landis wanted to tell the story of a family who does regular family things.

He said in his family, they're not talking about same-sex marriage every day with a 6-year-old.

"We're doing family stuff," he said. "We're doing homework or going to grandma's." Or planning for her birthday and getting a kitten.

They're not always talking about the interracial make-up of their family, either, though at one point, Gabrielle thought she was adopted; as a family, they discussed that he was her biological dad and "a very nice woman carried her for us."

After writing the story, Landis hired Bill Young to illustrate it. Using photos of the family, Young showed the diverse family Landis had in mind.

After it was printed, Gabrielle wanted to take the book to school to prove to her friend that a book had actually be written about her. Her dads were hesitant, but she was insistent. Landis imagines it was blown out of proportion to the point of her talking about who would play her in the screen version.

Finally they relented, and she brought *Gabrielle's Gift* to school. One of her teachers saw it and liked it.

"Well, let's read it in front of the class," her teacher said, and later asked Landis for a copy for the school library to help others in the school understand kids in their school come from all types of families. ■



PHYSICIAN, From Page 8

are the proud daddies to fraternal twins — daughter Paloma and son Valentino. But even before they were born, the couple worked to secure their legal rights.

During the pregnancy, their attorney established parental rights for each biological parent. Then working with a judge who was amenable to the idea, they set up second-parent rights for each of them. Escobar called his surrogate “a little angel for us,” and said she’s remained a friend who said she’s carry another set of twins for them if they decided to have more children.

They’ve frozen additional embryos, but haven’t made a decision about more children. With two 7-month-olds, having more children isn’t on the agenda right now.

Since the birth of his own children, Escobar has been anxious to help other gays and lesbians who want to start their own families. He took his current position with ReproMed earlier this year in part because the clinic welcomes all prospective parents — couples or singles, gay or straight — seeking help with fertility. “There are fabulous clinics that will shut the door in your face,” he warned.



Don’t waste time and money and get disillusioned, he said. Find a doctor or a surrogacy or adoption agency eager to work with the community. He said lots of obstacles can be overcome.

Escobar has worked with HIV-positive and sero-discordant couples as well, and notes that if the HIV-positive member has an undetectable viral load count, his sperm can be inseminated in the woman without infecting her or the child with the virus. He’s also helped HIV-positive women become pregnant. When their viral load count remained undetectable throughout the pregnancy, the virus wasn’t transmitted to the child.

After years of helping others create families, Escobar believes that becoming a dad himself is “the best thing I’ve ever done.” ■

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MARRIAGE AND ADOPTION, From Page 9

steps have been taken. Bryant says family court judges understand that children are better off with two parents.

Two parents give children access to insurance through either parent. The death of one parent doesn't leave the child an orphan. Survivor benefits are available if either parent dies and child support may be ordered if the couple splits.

Those are just some of the concrete benefits. The emotional support, balance and stability gained from having two parents are immeasurable, Bryant says.

Although judges understand the benefits of second-parent adoptions, judges in just three Texas

counties — Dallas, Bexar and Travis — regularly grant second-parent petitions to same-sex couples.

Bryant thinks judges in counties like Tarrant and Harris clearly understand the benefits of children having a second parent. She believes some judges in more conservative areas are simply more worried about their re-election chances and questioned the integrity of judges who put their re-election above what's best for a child. Public opinion should impact these cases since adoption proceedings are held privately and court records are sealed.

Adoption cases are private because many involve a pregnant teen, an abusive father or birth

parents who don't want their identities known. The circumstances of most adoptions are not something anyone would normally want the media to have access to report.

Last summer, Dallas Voice reported the story of a Plano couple whose adoption was denied by a Tarrant County family court judge, because the couple went to the media after their petition was denied. Bryant called them lucky, because they were able to refile elsewhere, and the adoption was completed.

She handled a case after a Harris County judge not only denied a second-parent adoption by a gay couple, but refused to dismiss the case. The child's



Goodfriend and Bryant celebrate their marriage on a float in the Houston Pride Parade. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

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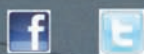
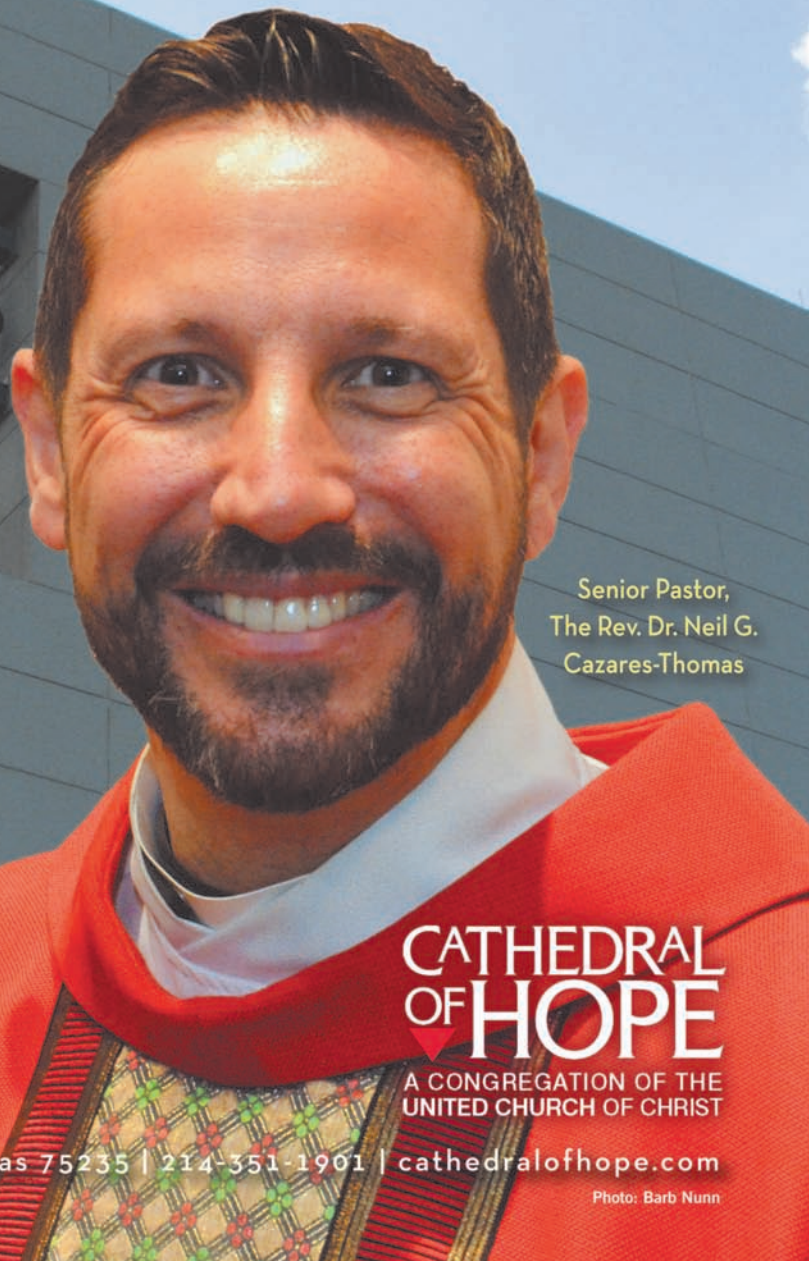


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status was left in limbo.

"The judge retired, and they came to me with a 5-year-old," she says.

After the Harris County judge left the bench, the case was finally dismissed, and Bryant refiled it in Travis County, where it was promptly approved.

While Houston and Fort Worth judges are terrible about approving second-parent adoptions, Bryant has heard of couples having luck in suburbs and small towns around Texas. Local attorneys report luck in some courts in Kaufman and McKinney, for example.

"Sometimes in small towns where judges and attorneys know each other, it's done quietly," she says.

She suggests going to an attorney who may be LGBT-friendly and is well connected in town.

"Talk to people in your community and don't be a test case," Bryant says. Anyone trying to test the limits in their community should work with a national organization like Lambda Legal or the National Center for Lesbian Rights who have experienced attorneys who can consult on the case.

Bryant recommends attorneys continue to file their second-parent adoptions in courts friendly to same-sex parents. Judges will usually waive jurisdiction to take cases from anywhere in the state.

But she'd like to expand the number of judges who will hear those cases impartially. She's invited judges to lunch to chat about the subject and plans to continue to do that.

"If there's no pending case in that court, I can make an appointment to address the issue," she says.

While the marriage-equality ruling doesn't directly change adoption law, judges know they're rulings against same-sex couples are more likely to be overturned on appeal. Bryant thinks this is the perfect opportunity for attorneys like her to address second-parent adoptions with family court judges across the state. ■

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Rape and good times!

I was heartened when Baylor University recently dropped its policy prohibiting “homosexual activity.” So nice the school is moving slowly into the 20th century as the rest of us fly through the 21st. But that announcement that gave me pause to reflect on my brief academic career in Waco.

Looking back on my college days I used to think, “Good times!” In reality they were a mix of good and bad, but the truth is during my freshman year, I was raped.

I enrolled in Baylor right after high school. It wasn't because I was keen on any of their programs, though they have some great ones. It was because of two things. First, my grades sucked. Now, Baylor is not an institution that one would call a “low achievers” safety school, but I had a way in, as my father had directed the graduate studies program at Baylor Dental School, and with that position came automatic admission for his son. (Those were the days!) Second, because my dad has just died and we were not wealthy, a discounted scholarship and Social Security survivor benefits made Baylor an affordable choice.

I was going through a lot of soul searching when I was 19, and part of that was the realization that I liked men ... a lot! I was still interested in women, but it was masculine energy I sought out. It was 1969, and Stonewall was in the news. The word “gay” had come into use and somehow I found it fit me pretty well. In essence, I came out to my school counselor the end of my second semester, thinking he was there to help with both career guidance and personal issues. I was wrong.

After I explained my attraction to men, his discussion turned from what major or minor I should declare to a frank statement, “I think you would be happier at a different school.” My departure at the time seemed like “good advice,” today, I realize it was a gentle way of kicking me out.

I left after that semester and enrolled in community college in Dallas. I was much happier, so the “advice” was on target, though the motive, I now suspect, was not one based on my best interests.

That news about my one-time alma mater triggered a lot of memories — one of which I long suppressd. Baylor prides itself on its embrace of virtue. Accordingly, when I attended, there was a curfew for all female students to protect their virtues; no such restriction, however, applied to men. And the men were a randy bunch. All that repressed sex drive and lack of available females led to lots of hijinks. (It also led to the highest rate of unwed pregnancies in the Southwest Conference at that time.)

All of which led to that memory — that I was raped by several male students in my dorm room. They were people I thought were friends, and a couple even attended high school with me.

It started as some bad-natured teasing, since a couple of them found out about my attraction to



Hardy Haberman
Flagging Left

men. I thought at the time they were just playing around, something which happened a lot in a dorm full of testosterone-infused freshmen. They cornered me in my room after a shower, and began joking about how clean I got. Then a

couple of them held me down even as we were all laughing. At least until one of my “friends” picked up a bar of soap and told me I needed to be clean everywhere.

With that remark, two guys spread my legs as I was held face down on the bed while my friend began shoving that bar of soap into my ass.

It went from funny to frightening in seconds; his voice changed to a husky growl as he tried to fuck my ass with the soap, telling me how I liked having “something up there.”

The dialogue was right out of a bad porn movie, but was far from erotic. After a few minutes of ramming the bar of soap into me, he gave up. Obviously, it wasn't going in and they got tired of the game. They left me face down, as I gasped and sobbed on my bed with the door open for anyone

who came by to see the queer with his legs spread and bruises on his soap-covered behind.

Good times, indeed!

Funny how a little distance — in this case almost 46 years — gives you perspective. I held that pain and humiliation in all this time until it finally came out. Luckily, I am OK. I am angry that the virtuous institution had no protections in place for a guy like me, but that was a long time ago. It was the start of the real struggle for LGBT rights, and such incidents were so common it was just part of the culture. A weekend spent “rolling queers” was considered big fun and potentially profitable as you could shake down fags in the park for whatever cash they had to avoid being turned in to the police. Good times!

And now ... now, my partner and I can legally marry in Texas for gawd's sake! Times change, and, as they do, old memories are bound to resurface. Baylor lifts its ban on homosexual activity, a ban that sent me off to another school and a happier life, yet a ban that did nothing to prevent me from being raped by my “pals” in the safety of my own dorm room.

Times indeed are changing, but perhaps not fast enough. Good times!

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



“HQ WANTS US TO KEEP AN EXTRA EYE OUT IN CASE THE ARMY TRIES TO SNEAK IN ANY OF THEM GENDER REASSIGNMENT DRONES.”

Valentine's day

Actress Whitney Hennen plays the girl unlucky in love in 'Sweet Charity,' but in real life she and wife Sara Bollinger are a storybook couple

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

Charity Hope Valentine is the girl who never finds love. That's the plot of the musical *Sweet Charity*. But for Whitney Hennen, who takes on that role in WaterTower Theatre's new production of the show, that's just a character she plays onstage. In real life, she's happily married to her partner, Sara Bollinger.

Hennen has impressed critics and audiences in supporting roles before, but being the lead in *Charity* is a huge production for her ... perhaps only upstaged by her marriage. She and Bollinger had their 15 minutes of fame late last month when they became the first same-sex couple to obtain a marriage license in Denton County. (More on that later.)

This summer has been a turning point for Hennen personally. She's appeared in numerous shows around the Metroplex, including *Victor/Victoria* (for which she won a DFW Theater Critics Forum award) and *The Producers* for Uptown Players and *Nine* for Lyric Stage ... usually playing a kind of particular character.

"I don't mind playing a dumb blonde," Hennen slyly declares. "I do not get upset when people typecast me. I've done Mel Brooks, and I love comedies. I think they're fun and light. But it's exciting to stretch my wings



here, which I've never done before."

Getting cast in the role was huge, and reunited her with *The Producers* director Michael Serrecchia. It's also required a lot out of her.

"Playing [Charity] is more challenging than I'd realized — she gets hurt a lot, but she's self-deprecating in a funny way, a kind of 'Here I go again' attitude. She has to keep going."

Hennen knows something about that can-do attitude. When marriage equality became legal nationwide on June 26, many local clerks offices throughout the country resisted complying initially. Hennen and Bollinger, who live in Denton County, knew their local clerk wouldn't be issuing licenses on Day One, and frankly, they were more concerned with celebrating the decision together, not waiting in line at a government building.

"The county clerk was turning people away [that Friday]," Hennen says. "We were watching it on Twitter."

They decided to hold off applying until Monday, June 29. They had no idea what would happen. That's when it became a matter of "right place, right time."

"We went up there and we weren't sure how many people would be there. But we were the first ones," Hennen says.

Their license was officially issued at 8 a.m., making them Den-

IF THEY COULD SEE THEM NOW | Whitney Hennen, front, and Sara Bollinger made history as the first same-sex couple issued a marriage license in Denton County. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

ton's first legally-licensed same-sex couple. And the media descended on them.

"We kept thinking, 'Why do people care about us?' I was more excited for the couples who had been together for decades," Hennen says. "But it was really nice. We have been together for five years, but this was really our chance to start our lives together."

Bollinger was most gratified by how normal it was. "It felt like it should feel," she says. "We could walk in there like anybody else and get married like anybody else. We got married, we went on our honeymoon, we got our license, we made it official. It was

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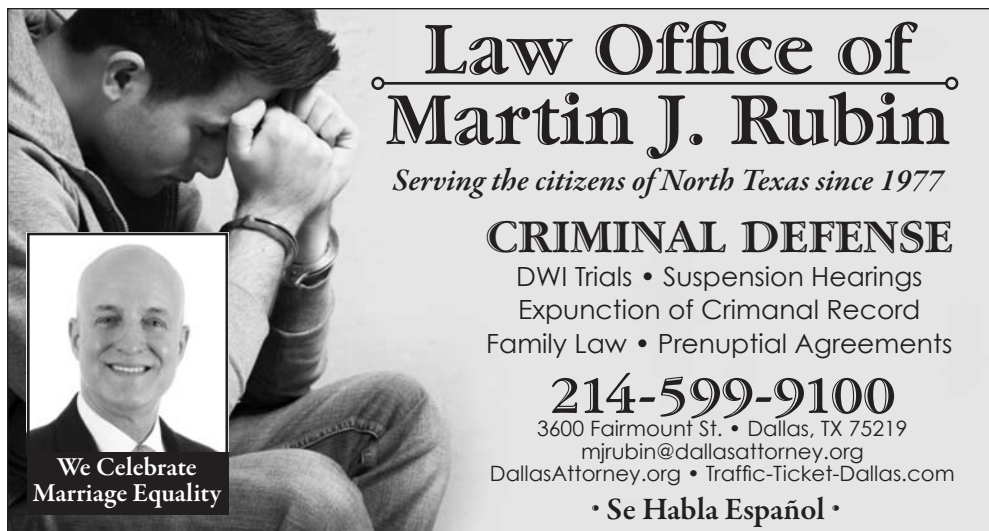
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Smokin' hot

At 57, newly-engaged actress-singer Lea DeLaria is at the top of her game

Since the '90s, Lea DeLaria has established herself as a standup comic, actress and jazz singer, but the past year has certainly been a banner one for the self-identified butch. Starting in January, when she shared a Screen Actors Guild award for outstanding performance by an ensemble in a comedy series for the Netflix's women's-prison dramedy *Orange Is the New Black*; earlier this summer, she reprised her fan-favorite character Big Boo on the third season of that show; and earlier this month, she dropped *House of David* (Ghostlight Records), her fifth jazz vocal album in which she covers a dozen David Bowie songs including "Space Oddity," "Starman," "Fame" and "Modern Love" (the cover photo is a recreation of Bowie's *Changes One*).

Yet one of DeLaria's biggest upcoming projects will be the icing on the (wedding) cake: she will wed her fiancée, fashion editor Chelsea Fairless; Sandra Bernhard will officiate, although DeLaria is keeping mum about the specific date for now.

While taking a break from shooting the next season *OITNB*, DeLaria chatted about her album, new transgender icons Laverne Cox and Caitlyn Jenner, and losing her bachelor status.

— Lawrence Ferber



Dallas Voice: You're shooting season four of *OITNB*. Can you share a tease of what to expect? Lea DeLaria: This is what I can tell you: I'm in it and it comes out sometime next year. I can't tell you anything! What the fuck! Jesus!

When you first auditioned it was for another character, but they never called you back for it. I auditioned for Anita, the role Lin Tucci got. The casting director goes, "Oh my god, we love you Lea, you're exactly what we're looking for." Then when I got to my manager's office he was on the phone with the casting director and they said basically none of the parts were right for me but they would find something. I've been told that so many fucking times in my career! I'm still waiting for that part they were going to create for me on *Law & Order* and it's been off the air since 2009! So I went ballistic and had a hissy fit. They're making a show that takes place in a woman's prison and there isn't a part for me?!? Fuck show business, fuck Broadway, fuck all of it. I flew over to London where I have a standup and singing career and got off the plane and there were a thousand calls from my manager, like this time it came through and they did create a part for you and now you have to come back. [Creator] Jenji Kohan took a part that was really tiny for a couple of episodes and expanded it and gave it to me. This was that magical showbiz thing that only happens now and then.

You had your first sex scene in Season 3. Is *Orange Is the Warmest Color*, as it were? Instead

of *Blue*? Blue isn't the warmest color. You don't even want me to go off on that movie. What a piece of shit. When are we gonna stop letting men have anything to do with lesbian movies, with all due respect? There are plenty of lesbian writers, actors, directors out there. So is *Orange* the warmest color? Fuck yeah. Because *Orange* has actual lesbians involved in their lesbian stories.

What is the most interesting thing you've learned about life in prison for women while making the show? I've learned that it's really bad for transgender women in prison. I guess I always assumed that, but now I know it for a fact. I have also learned that butches are treated especially badly in American prisons. There is literally a prison where they separate the butch dykes from the rest of the population. I intend to do something about that. Once I get the facts and specifics, I'm going to start talking more heavily about this prison.

Laverne Cox is one of the show's breakout stars. Any memorable experiences working with her? Especially when they take us on press junkets, Laverne and I adore each other. We will end up at the bar together and we tend to have better stamina than the rest. We will sit around and talk. On our first red carpet, I kind of photobombed her when she was being interviewed [you can see the clip on YouTube]. She says something rude to me and I say, "Don't make me tell the subway story" and she breaks out laughing. Laverne's a doll, I love her, what else can I say?

Did you watch Caitlyn Jenner's speech when she won the Arthur Ashe Courage Award at the ESPYs? If you look at my latest Instagram post it's a picture of the whole thing and me going and then this happened at a major sporting event. I absolutely cried. I burst into tears. How emotionally draining it must have been to be the picture of masculinity in America, when in actuality it all felt false to you. In the 17 years I forced out who I was as a lesbian it sucked my soul. So imagine what Caitlyn had to go through for all these years.

I think Jenner should take advantage of her newfound pedestal to remind people she was in *Can't Stop the Music* and get a new audience for that film. She's squandering the opportunity! Yeah! I think because she hasn't been a



member of our community, actively involved like Laverne has been her entire career and life, it's gonna take time for her to get to that sarcastic funny queer community way of dealing with things. Although I have to say she started out with that fabulous joke about the nerve-wracking experience of trying to pick out a gown. Brilliant.

Let's talk about the album. Was it difficult to whittle down the song selections for *House of David*? Oh, so fucking hard! There are so many Bowie songs that are awesome. The guy's oeuvre spans four decades. We thought we had it all figured out and the producer came at me with a couple more! Jesus. That was the hardest part. Only doing 12 songs. I might have to do *Changes 2*!

So where does one go after Bowie? A Madonna covers album? No. I've already done pop covers. My second album, *Double Standards*, was alternative and college rock tunes that I swung. My versions of Blondie's "Call Me" and Springsteen's "Streets of Philadelphia" were really huge hits on jazz radio and still are played all the time. Now maybe I would do Mingus or Monk. Something really holy and totally jazz.

You're getting married! Let's imagine you could have anyone you want attend your wedding — not just people you have a direct connection with. Who would you like there? If you're saying in fantasyland who would I like to have come to my wedding? Meryl Streep. Eleanor Roosevelt. I want Ella Fitzgerald to sing. Anita Bryant so I can pelt her to death with oranges.

You've been reluctant to talk about the specifics of the real-life wedding so far, and won't divulge the date. The reality is, I have a lot of friends, a good amount who are in the industry and well known, so that's why I am being terrible about the wedding and how we approach it. And let me say this. It's also really difficult for me to talk about because I've been such a bachelor for so long I'm used to getting that pussy wherever I go! You know, I love Dan Savage, the man's a genius, and he says he has been invited to many poly weddings but never a three-year poly wedding anniversary. [Laughs] We are queer people and do have a different way of running our lives, so I don't think there's anything wrong with an open mar-

■ LEA Page 20

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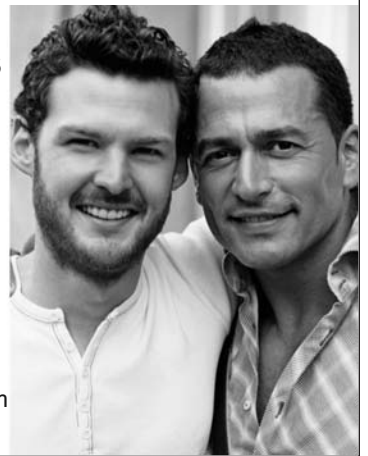


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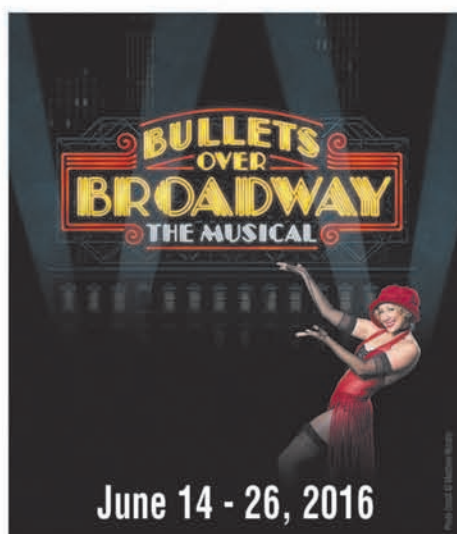
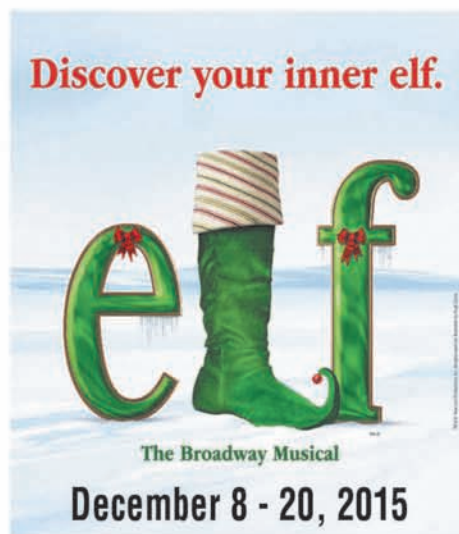
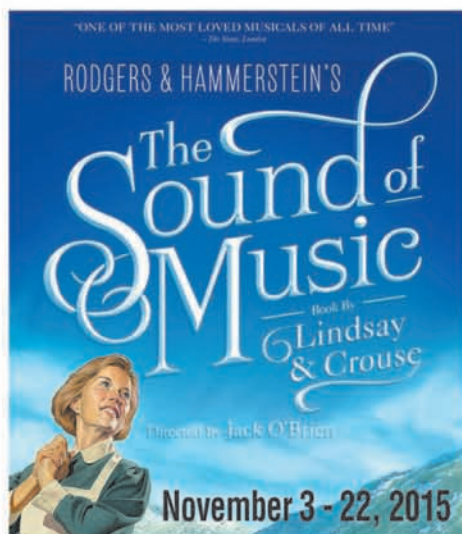
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Before or synth

Brit trio Years and Years' 'Communion' shows unrealized potential

The opening track of **Communion** begins faintly, as if you forgot to turn up the volume on your MP3 player: A low, rhythmic pulsing. Then the first words arrive with crystal clarity, almost disconnected



from the music undergirding it. As it grows, it expands its complexities of time signature and tone. The song, "Foundation" is a dreamy mixture of R&B and electronica with an ethereal otherworldliness, all wrapped up in boy-band sincerity, complete with vocal runs and romantic sincerity. Then it ends, almost too soon — a prologue of sorts, a taste (you hope) of what is to come.

Alas, the road of synthpop is paved with broken promises. Years and Years — the British trio of out frontman/keyboardist Olly Alexander, synth player Emre Turkmen and bassist Mikey Goldsworthy — clearly have the talent to create a catchy sound and dancefloor potential. But the

album feels like 13 opportunities to explore an electropop catalogue that keeps coming back to the same clichés. Eventually, each song seems to fade into each other.

Following "Foundation," the single "Shine" is the next track to perk your ears up. Alexander's breathy lead vocals recall '80s-era a capella groups like Boyz II Men filtered through Michael Buble with a dose of Enigma added, but to minimal effect: "Take Shelter" leaves no impression, and "Worship" gets cheesy quicker than curd in hot barn.

The first track to employ a sound that stands apart is "Eyes Shut," which begins with a solo piano and vocal that suggests Macklemore and Ryan Lewis (who themselves owe a debt to Bruce Hornsby). Lyrically, it's the same stale sentiments we've come to expect from corporatized pop, but at least the rhythm makes it distinguishable from the pack.

Debut albums, as *Communion* is, can be hit or miss: A trial run for greater things, or the best

shot at stardom that lays it all out there. It feels as if Years and Years has potential unrealized on this album. They just need to mix it up more. Let's hope it doesn't take years and years for them to achieve it.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Communion (Polydor)
Two-and-a-half stars.



LEA, From Page 17

riage or what happens with two individuals and how they view their marriage. So don't be surprised if I have an open marriage, I guess is what I'm saying!

I recently re-watched a clip of you performing **standup at the 1993 March on Washington. Now, here you are the star of an internationally known, award-winning series. Do you have any moments where you say, "Look at where I am now?"** I'm having it right now! I'm looking at a fucking SAG award! It's sitting on my mantle next to my TV! It's a SAG award! Are you kidding?? That's what the last two years have been to me. I went to some NYC deli recently and these tourists walk over — they're from Colombia — and it's a father and two teen daughters. They want a picture taken with me! Here's this man pushing his two teenage daughters next to me to get a picture! At that moment I asked myself, "Is this actually fucking happening?" The next thing, a grandmother with granddaughters, pushing them next to me to get a picture taken. Five years ago, if I went anywhere near those girls, grandma would have slapped me! "Get away from my granddaughters, you big butch dyke." Because I'm going to recruit or take advantage of them. Did I think any of this would happen in my lifetime? Fuck no! I thought the next generation would get to see what we worked so hard for, like the SCOTUS decision, yet here it is now. In my lifetime. And take away all the queer stuff, and make me a 57-year-old woman and this isn't supposed to happen to you either! To suddenly become a TV star at 57! A monster butch dyke! So all I do is go, "What the fuck!"

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■ CHARITY, From Page 14

mundane.”

“I didn’t feel like it was mundane!” Hennen corrects. Well, not mundane, Bollinger agrees — but “normal.” Not special rights — equal rights.

Marriage did not sneak up on them, but its legality sort of did. They had been planning their wedding for a year; then they learned earlier this spring that the Supreme Court would decide its constitutionality. They didn’t let that fact change their plans, though: They proceeded with the exchange of vows on June 6 in the garden area on the campus of Texas Woman’s University surrounded by 120 guests. Local stage director Cheryl Denson officiated. Even though the ceremony wasn’t legally binding at the time, they never considered traveling to a jurisdiction where same-sex marriage was already legal.

“We had already decided we weren’t going to go out of state — if we had, we would have come back to Texas and it wouldn’t have mattered anyway,” Hennen says.

But when SCOTUS ruled in their favor, they welcomed the opportunity to make it official. And for the same reason they didn’t wed in, say, New Hampshire, they were equally determined to obtain their license in Denton.

Their roots as a couple and a family are there. They met when Hennen was in the acting en-

semble and Bollinger was playing bass in the band for Music Theatre of Denton’s production of *Chicago* in 2009. Hennen’s entire family lives there; her father even plays in an acoustic band with Bollinger.

“As we started to date, Whitney’s family sort of became my family,” Bollinger says. “That was a big reason we decided to put down roots there.”

“We love Denton a lot — it’s really fun and up-and-coming with lots to do, and we live right off the square,” Hennen says.

“It’s fun for us to come into Dallas when I am doing a show. We sometimes talk about moving here, but then we drive back and say, ‘I’m so glad we live in Den-

ton.’”

Though their license is dated June 29 and was officially sanctioned on July 3, Bollinger and Hennen still insist their wedding anniversary is June 6 — “the day we paid all the money for,” they joke. Just a few weeks later, in fact, they can’t even remember the other dates.

“I had no idea the date we got the license. I would forget the 29th; I planned for the 6th for a year,” Bollinger says. Hennen echoes that.

“I was so happy to be surrounded by so many friends,” she says. “It’s such a cliché, but it really was the best day of my life.”

Charity Hope Valentine would never be so lucky. ■

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DENISE LEE CLOSES CABARET SERIES WITH SALUTE TO BROADWAY

Denise Lee knows she is no spring chicken — she ain’t happy about it, but she knows it. “I’m too old to be a Dreamgirl,” she grimaces.

She’s also not a Size 2, not a perky blonde and isn’t waiting to be tapped as Sutton Foster’s stand-by. Simply put, she’s too old, too fat and too black to be singing songs on Broadway.

Hey ... that could be the makings of a show! And it is.

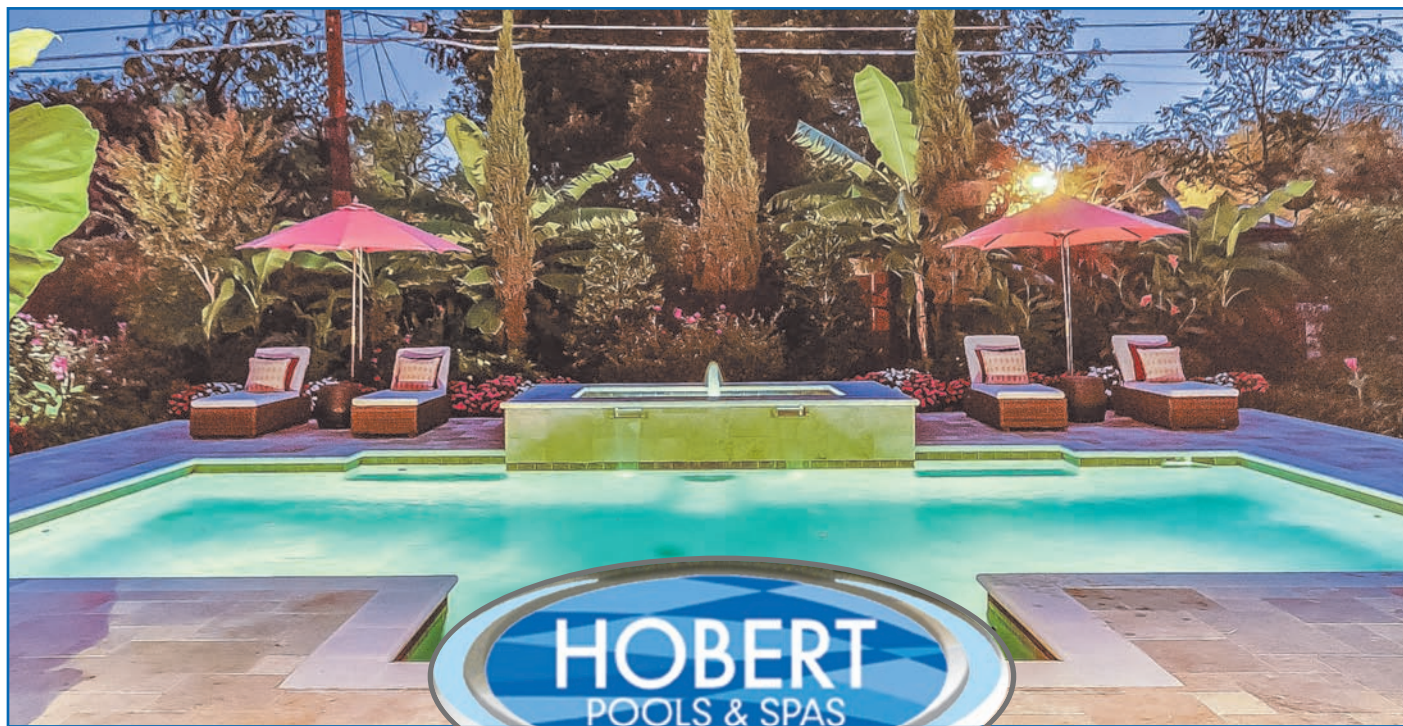
Since March, Lee has been the driving force organizing a series of monthly cabarets at the former Women’s Museum in Fair Park. She’s booked talents from Sara Shelby-Martin (in her debut solo cabaret) to Gary Lynn Floyd to a night of jazz. (The series has been a fast hit, and has already been greenlit for a second season, starting in November.) But now it’s her turn to take on the songs she loves but doesn’t get asked to do.

She’ll get to be a Dreamgirl for one night at least on Tuesday, singing one of the memorable numbers from that show at her solo cabaret **Too Old, Too Fat, Too Black: Songs I’ll Never Sing on Broadway**.

“I’m trying to get people to follow the art, so I want to make sure I bring a wide variety of entertainment,” Lee says. But this week is her turn, closing the series with song from *Dreamgirls*, *Ragtime* and many other musicals. “You will hear some version of ‘Tomorrow’ from *Annie*,” Lee promises, “and all of the songs there will be a reason why I won’t get to do them on Broadway.” New York’s loss is Dallas’ gain.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

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L+S screen

Tangerine dream



Indie filmmaker Sean Baker took 2 trans actresses and an iPhone to the streets of L.A. and created the must-see movie at this year's Sundance

Filmmaker Sean Baker hit it big in 2012 with *Starlet*, his sexually graphic, acclaimed film about the unlikely friendship between a crotchety old woman and the young, porn actress who befriends her. In his new movie, *Tangerine* (opening today), he takes the audience on an odyssey with Sin-Dee (Kitana Kiki Rodriguez), a fast-talking trans hooker, newly out of jail and looking to reunite with her man/pimp Chester (James Ransone). During a Christmas Eve lunch in a doughnut shop with bestie and aspiring singer Alexandra (Mya Taylor), Sin-Dee learns that Chester has been unfaithful to her with some "fish" (read: biological woman) named Dinah (Mickey O'Hagan). So begins Sin-Dee's insane quest to track them down. In addition to the voyage of Sin-Dee, we also witness some scenes of cabdriver Razmik's life, including his various passengers, his meddling mother-in-law and his attraction to both Alexandra and Sin-Dee, resulting in an ugly showdown at Donut Time.

We spoke with Baker about his method, his stars and why he likes to makes movies about sex workers.

— Gregg Shapiro

Dallas Voice: What was it about the subject of transgender streetwalkers in Hollywood that was of interest to you in terms of co-writing and directing *Tangerine*? Sean Baker: The film I made before *Tangerine* also explored the subject of sex work, although that time it was a focus on the adult film industry. Perhaps the interest never left my system. I live approximately half of a mile from the intersection of Santa Monica and Highland which has been known as a red light district for transgender sex workers. I think this film is yet another exploration of the subject of sex work. Maybe a trilogy? [Laughs]

shared stories and anecdotes of her friends who worked the streets. About two weeks in, she introduced us to Kitana Kiki Rodriguez. The moment I saw the two of them together, I knew we would be creating two characters that these two actresses would play. They were a dynamic duo.

Tangerine is an odyssey that begins as a comedy and becomes more serious as it progresses. Why did you choose to follow that arc? That's one way of looking at it. Besides a very few very serious moments, it could also be seen the other way around. Some of the characters actually get "bigger" and the film becomes more "screwball comedy" as



Sin-Dee and Alexandra are both played by trans actresses. What was involved in the process of casting these roles? Basically, [*Tangerine* co-writer] Chris Bergoch and I met Mya Taylor at the local LGBT center. I noticed her across a courtyard and knew I had to approach her. She had a quality about her that drew me in. When I told her about the project, she expressed the enthusiasm I was looking for. We exchanged contact information and soon began meeting regularly to discuss the project. She

it moves along. But no matter how one views it, the choice to lean toward comedy with this film comes directly from a request by Mya. She asked that I make a funny film as well as trying to capture the reality of the streets. I wanted to deliver on this request so throughout the entire film, I was conscious of riding that line, telling a story that was at one moment funny and the next moment dramatic, and sometimes a combination of both at the same time.

TICKED-OFF TRANNIES WITH LIVES | Two prostitutes (Mya Taylor, above, and Kitana Kiki Rodriguez, far opposite) navigate the streets of L.A. on Christmas Eve in the vibrant modern comedy 'Tangerine.'



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Los Angeles has a large Armenian population and you made Razmik, the cabdriver, Armenian. I've worked with Karren Karagulian five times now. He's an amazing actor and I always want to find a role for him in all of my films. I approached him about *Tangerine* and told him that I wasn't sure how we could include him being that the film was about two transgender sex workers in L.A. He came back to me and said, "Sean, there is a huge Armenian population in L.A. and every other cab driver is Armenian-American. Just make me a cab driver with a [sexual] preference that he has to hide from his family." I loved the idea. The entire Armenian cast members are superstars in Armenia. Alla Tu-

munyan, Luiza Nersisyan and Arsen Gregorian are very seasoned actors and celebrities from Yerevan. I am honored to have worked with them.

The title of the movie seems to come from the air freshener hanging from Razmik's rearview mirror. Was *Tangerine* always the film's title and if not, what were some of the others under consideration? The air freshener is just one of a few nods to the title. But honestly, "tangerine" is just a word that we kept coming back to. It's not supposed to be literal, but simply referencing the feeling and sense one gets when thinking of the fruit and color. It is also the dominant hue of the film. There were several other titles that we considered. The one that came the closest was *Tinseltown Follies*. However, there are a couple of

definitions of "folly." We were referring to a "theatrical revue consisting of music, dance, and skits." The other definition is "an act or instance of foolishness." With the trans movement gaining awareness and visibility at this moment, this could be interpreted as extremely insensitive and bigoted.

You worked with Bergoch on *Starlet*. What makes your writing relationship such a success? We have very different influences. Chris Bergoch leans towards mainstream Hollywood — Spielberg, Lucas and Disney; Structured three act structures, etc. I lean towards foreign cinema — story doesn't concern me as much. We meet somewhere in the middle. Fortunately, we have a similar sense of humor and ultimately that's what matters.

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817-640-4650
safy.org

SURROGACY ABROAD, INC

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875 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 3100,
Chicago, IL
Dr. Samson Benhur
877-483-4634
SurrogacyAbroad.com

SURROGATE SOLUTIONS, LLC

Surrogacy Services
P.O. Box 923 Hewitt, Texas
SurrogateSolutions.net

VIVERE-DALLAS

Donor sperm insemination, ovulation induction, IVF with donor sperm and/or eggs, surrogacy assistance.
Derek Haas, MD
972-566-6868; haveboygirl.com

RESOURCES FOR LGBT PARENTS

2 DADDIES, 1 LOVE

2 MOMMIES, 1 LOVE

Website network for LGBT Parents
Cooper Smith Koch
214-329-9191 ext. 104
TwoDaddiesOneLove.com

COLAGE

Support organization for people with LGBT parents.
855-4-COLAGE; Colage.org

FAMILY EQUALITY COUNCIL

Represents children with parents who are LGBT, ensuring their social and legal equality.
1050 17th St., NW, Suite 600,
Washington, DC 20036
617-502-8700
FamilyEquality.org

GAY PARENT MAGAZINE

Distributed Bi-Monthly.
718-380-1780
GayParentMag.com

GAYSWITHKIDS.COM

Website for gay men with kids

GRADE POWER LEARNING

Strives towards helping your child achieve their highest potential using an individualized program based on the results of dynamic diagnostic assessment and research based curriculum.
4152 W. Spring Creek Parkway,
Suite 160, Plano
972-599-1850
gradepowerlearning.com

HRC FAMILY PROJECT

Resources for LGBT parents, workshops, family-friendly events, Welcoming Schools Project.
Carolina Azevedo
Freddy Obregon
Leo Cusimano
214-754-8710 ext. 114
hrc.org/issues/parenting

RAINBOW ROUNDUP

Facebook group for DFW LGBT families.
Over 600 family members
Kimberly M. Kantor
info@rainbowroundup-dfw.org

SHANNON D. RHODES

Author of *My Kind of Family*
A series of children's books available on Amazon
mykindoffamily.com

SMU'S CENTER FOR FAMILY COUNSELING

at the Resource Center Dallas
2701 Reagan St. Dallas, TX
214-393-3680

TEEN PRIDE

A safe space for LGBT Teens to educate, develop and connect held in September; Amanda Robinson, Antionett Thomas;
469-666-7325
amanda@realconnect.org
antionett@realconnect.org
RealConnect.org

TWO DADS AND A BABY

Carolina Azevedo
214-796-9332
twodadsandababy.com

RESOURCES FOR YOUTH CITY SQUARE TRAC

Resources for youth transitioning out of foster care.
214-370-9300, 817-882-9162
866-466-8722

LEGAL RESOURCES

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AdoptionAttorneys.com

BUSCH, RUOTOLO & SIMPSON, LLP

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Chris Albert
214-855-2880
buschllp.com

FEARS NACHAWATI LAW

Family Law
866-897-8188
fnlawfirm.com

LORIE BURCH, PC

Wills | Estate Planning
7920 Beltline Road, Suite 750
972-385-0558
burch-law.com

REBECCA S. COVELL, PC

Wills | Estate Planning | Trusts | Probate
3710 Rawlins St., Suite 950,
214-443-0300
CovellPC.com

LAUREN GAYDOS DUFFER, P.C.

Adoption | Family Law | Collaborative Law | Surrogacy
690 E. Lamar Blvd., Suite 560,
Arlington
817-548-5643
TXFamilyLawAtty.com

O'NEIL WYSOCKI FAMILY LAW

Family Law
972-852-8000
owlawyers.com

QUAID FARISH, LLC

Family Law
2144-373-9100
quaidfarish.com

RICHARDSONSON KOUDELKA, LLP

Family Law
214-217-7575
rklawtexas.com

STEPHANIE HALL, PC

Adoption | Family Law | Custody
Wills | Probate | Estate Planning
4514 Cole, Suite 600, Dallas
214-522-3343

JOHN P. McCALL JR, PC

Family Law | Wills | Probate
214-942-1100
AttorneyMcCall.com

JODI MCSHAN, PLLC

Family Law
214-800-2091
jodimcschanlaw.com

MICHELLE MAY O'NEIL, PC

Adoption | Family Law | Custody
5420 Lyndon B. Johnson Frwy,
Suite 500, Dallas
972-852-8000 or 866-959-4330
TheMayFirm.com

PETER SCHULTE, PC

Family Law | Wills | Estate Planning | Probate
4131 N. Central Expressway,
Suite 680 Dallas
214-521-2200
PeteSchulte.com

LYNN OLINGER,

Immigration Attorneys
8204 Elmbrook, # 234, Dallas
214-688-7080
TurinLaw.com

CHAD WEST, PLLC

Wills | Estate Planning
900 W. Davis Street,
Dallas & Ft. Worth
214-509-7555
ChadWestLaw.com

WITHERS & WITHERS, PC

Family Law | Adoption | Wills | Same-Sex Planning | Custody
6116 N. Central Expressway,
Suite 1090, Dallas
214-363-2059
Witherslaw.com

JENNY WOMACK, P.C.

Adoption | Family Law
Mediation | Surrogacy
5050 Quorum Drive, Suite 225,
214-935-3310

SUSAN VRANA FAMILY LAW

2208 Routh Street, Dallas
214-369-8596
susanvrana.com

RESOURCES FOR COUPLES

COLLABORATIVE PROFESSIONALS OF DALLAS

Dispute Resolutions | Adoption
Custody
Nonprofit organization
CPOfDallas.com

CONTEMPORARY COUPLES CONFERENCE - AUSTIN

Annual conference held in Austin
Jeff Lutes, LPC
512-419-0600
jefflutespsychotherapy.com

COUPLES COMMUNICATION WORKSHOPS

3500 Oak Lawn Ave., Suite 260,
Candy Marcum | Jimmy Owen
214-521-1278

COUPLES METRO DALLAS

Social organization for LGBT couples in committed relationships
CouplesMetroDallas.com

HOPE'S DOOR

Offers intervention and prevention services to individuals and families affected by domestic violence and to provide

education programs that enhance the community's capacity to respond.
972-422-7233
hopesdoorinc.org

LGBT LUXURY WEDDINGS MAGAZINE

LGBT-wed.com
323-739-8917

PARTNERS IN CONFLICT

Dispute Resolution Services
214-769-3000

The Wedding Party & EXPO

LGBT Wedding Expo, August 2, 2015
214.754.8710 ext. 126
TheWeddingPartyExpo.com

RESOURCES FOR LGBT SENIORS

AUTUMN JOURNEY HOSPICE

Providing in-home healthcare
5347 Spring Valley Road
972-233-0525
AutumnJourneyHospice.com

CLICK WHEELCHAIR SERVICES

Wheelchair retail and repair
866-670-6805

GAIN at RESOURCE CENTER

GLBT Aging Interest Network, educational and social organization for GLBT seniors
2701 Reagan St.
214-528-0144
RCDallas.org

KIND COMPANIONS

Providing in-home healthcare
214-924-9302
KindCompanions.com

PARKGATE DALLAS RETIREMENT LIVING

Luxury retirement community for LGBT seniors.
2801 Wycliff Ave.
214-219-1091
ParkGateDallas.com

PRIME TIMERS DALLAS/FT. WORTH

Social, educational and recreational organization for gay and bisexual men
P.O. Box 191101, Dallas
972-504-8866
PrimeTimers-DFW.org

SAGE

National organization, services and advocacy for LGBT seniors
305 Seventh Avenue, Sixth Floor,
New York, 10001
212-741-2247SageUSA.org

LIFE+STYLE

best bets



Saturday 07.25

Settle by the pool Saturday for two big-and-wet events

The best way to stay cool in Texas, we all know, is by the pool, and you get two chances on Saturday. Best of all, they don't overlap! In the afternoon, the DFW Sisters — those fundraising scamps — host their annual pool party, this year benefiting LifeWalk. For \$20, you get all the sun, Stoli drinks and snacks you want. When that's over, head on the Sisu Uptown for a late-night poolside fashion show, itself a fundraiser for the Red Party Foundation. Equality Vodka is the beverage host, and fashions from ES Collection and more.

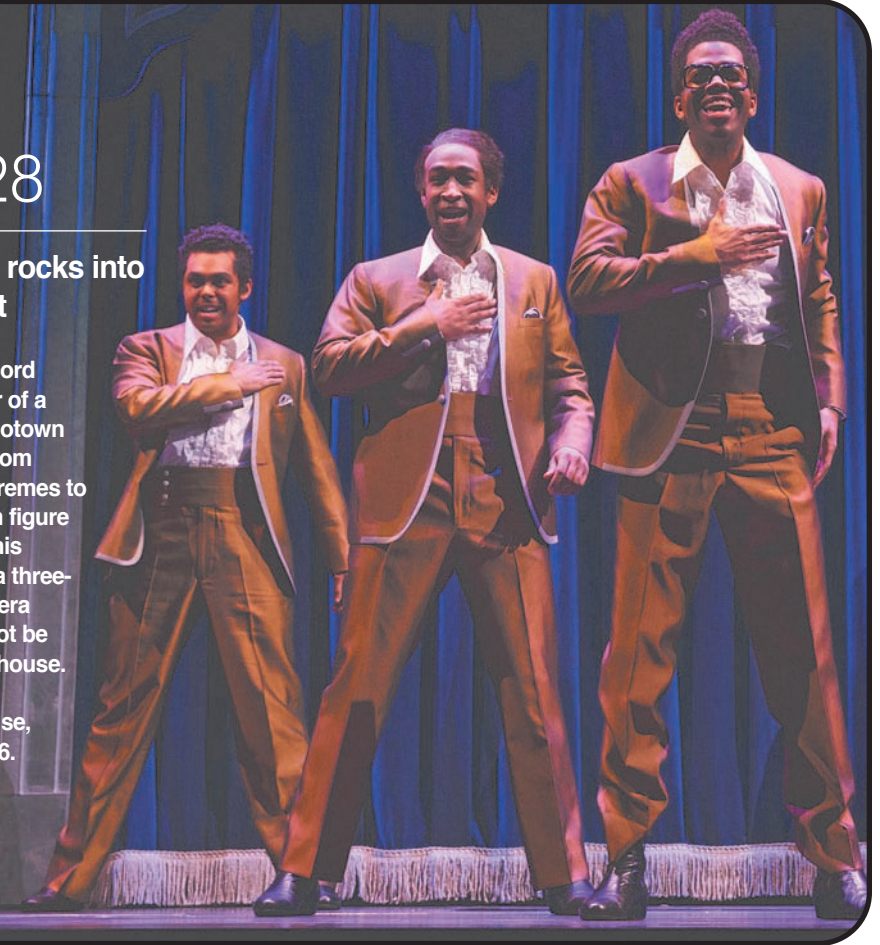
DEETS: DFW Sisters, 927 N. Clinton St. 1–7 p.m. \$20 suggested donation. Red on the Runway, Sisu Uptown, 2508 Maple Ave. 9:30 p.m.–midnight. Tickets from \$65. DallasRedFoundation.org.

Tuesday 07.28

'Motown The Musical' rocks into the Dallas Arts District

Berry Gordy wasn't just a record producer, he was the founder of a virtual genre of music: The Motown Sound. He nurtured talents from Smoky Robinson to The Supremes to Michael Jackson, all of whom figure in the hit musical that bears his label's name. It settles in for a three-week run at the Winspear Opera House this week ... it might not be opera, but it should rock the house.

DEETS: Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. July 28–Aug. 16. ATPAC.org.



Friday 07.24

Catch Anthony Fortino ... if you can

Frank Abagnale Jr. was the classic con man, who wheeled his way across 1960s America with a wink and a smile, constantly hounded by FBI Agent Hanratty. So why do we love the scamp? That's what Mark Shaiman and Scott Wittman — they of Hairspray — pursue in their swingin' Sinatra-rhythmed musical Catch Me If You Can, which Uptown Players gives its local premiere. Anthony Fortino, the sexy Lt. Cable in Lyric's recent South Pacific, plays Frank. We already forgive him.

DEETS: Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. July 24–Aug. 9. UptownPlayers.org.



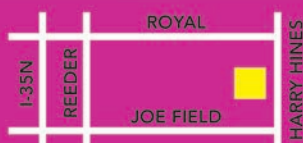
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ARTSWEEK

THEATER

Catch Me if You Can. Uptown Players presents the Tony-winning musical, based on the Steven Spielberg film, and written by the team that created *Hairspray*. Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. July 24–Aug. 9. UptownPlayers.org.

Festival of Independent Theatres. Multiple theater companies present their one-act plays and stage projects. Bath House Cultural Center, 521 E. Lawther Drive. Through Aug. 1. For a complete schedule, visit FestivalOfIndependentTheatres.com.

The Beulaville Baptist Book Club Presents: Macbeth. A follow-up to the hilarious spoof of *The Nutcracker*, this time with the dim-witted conservatives mounting Shakespeare's shortest, bloodiest tragedy. Stone Cottage Theatre, 15650 Addison Road. Through Aug. 9. MBSProductions.net.

Othello. The final show of Second Thought Theatre's season is Shakespeare's classic tragedy of jealousy and revenge; directed by Joel Ferrell. Bryant Hall on the Kalita Humphreys campus, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through Aug. 8. SecondThoughtTheatre.com.

Pippin. National tour of the recent Tony Award-winning revival of the Stephen Schwartz musical. Stars John Rubinstein and Adrienne Barbeau. Bass Performance Hall, 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth. Through Sunday. BassHall.com.

The Quixotic Days and Errant Nights of the Knight Errant Don Quixote. A world premiere, commissioned for Amphibian Stage Productions, about the comic escapades of Cervantes' timeless hero. 120 S. Main St., Fort Worth. Through Aug. 2. \$18–\$33.

Motown The Musical. Musical about the early days of

the record label that defined a genre of music. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. July 28–Aug. 16. ATTPAC.org.

Menopause The Musical: The Survivor Tour. A benefit show for the Susan G. Komen Foundation, based on the hit musical. Fair Park Music Hall, 901 First Ave. Friday–Sunday. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

Sweet Charity. The buoyant musical with book by Neil Simon and score by Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields; starring Whitney Hennen as Charity Hope Valentine (see interview on Page 14). This production concludes WTT's 2014–15 season. Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. July 24–Aug. 16 (in previews through July 26). WaterTowerTheatre.org.

FINE ART

Digital Photography. The ilume Gallerie opens a group exhibit of digital photos from five artists. The opening night artists' reception is a benefit for a fund set up in honor of one of the artists, who was murdered in 2013 during a robbery. ilume Gallerie, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. Through Aug. 11. ilumeGallerie.com.

Modern Opulence in Vienna: The Wittgenstein Vitrine. The DMA's conservationists restore this century-old display case of silver, lapis and glass — an amazing example of Viennese craftsmanship. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through Oct. 18. Free. DMA.org.

FRIDAY 07.24

FILM

The Broken Hearts Club. CineWilde presents this sweet-natured gay comic romance, set on a softball team. Stars Timothy Olyphant. 8 p.m. doors, 8:30 p.m.

pre-show discussion with members of the Pegasus Slowpitch Softball Association, 9 p.m. screening, 11 p.m. summer game night! Texas Theatre, 231 W. Jefferson Blvd. \$10.50.

DANCE

Dallas Hip Hop Dance Fest. 4th annual event includes industry seminar, dance-offs, workshops and a competition and showcase. Venues include Holiday Inn Park Cities, 6070 N. Central Expressway, and the Majestic Theater, 1925 Elm St. June 24–25. For complete schedule and information, visit DallasHipHopDanceFest.com.

SATURDAY 07.25

SPORTS

FrontRunners. Gay jogging group meets at 8:30 a.m. at the statue in Lee Park for a run along the Katy Trail.

POOL PARTY

DFW Sisters Annual Pool Party. This pool party is a fundraiser for AIDS Arms' LifeWalk. Your \$20 suggested donation gets you an afternoon of sun, fun and refreshments, with vodka drinks by Stoli. 927 N. Clinton Ave. 1–7 p.m.


FASHION SHOW

Red on the Runway. The Dallas Red Party presents its third annual poolside fashion show and fundraiser, this



DRAG YOURSELF TO HOB | The My Oh My Drag Show begins Aug. 31 at House of Blues, but you can audition for a spot— or just watch other hopefuls — Monday night.


time at Sisu Uptown. Designs from ES Collection, Edo Popken, AussieBum and more. Drinks by Equality Vodka. 2508 Maple Ave. 9:30 p.m.–midnight. Tickets from \$65. DallasRedFoundation.org.



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MONDAY 07.27

AUDITIONS

My Oh My Drag Show. In August, a new drag show will launch every Monday night, but before that happens, there's cast to be done! Local drag performers (and hopefuls) are invited to audition this Monday, but as they are open auditions, members of the public are free to attend as well! House of Blues, 2222 N. Lamar St. 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY 07.28

FILM

Blade Runner: The Final Cut. One of the most talked about and influential sci-fi films of all time, with Harrison Ford a beleaguered hunter of anarchist androids. Several versions exist; this is supposed to be the final cut. Screens as part of the Tuesday Big Movie new Classic Series at Landmark's Magnolia in the West Village, 3699 McKinney Ave. Sponsored by Dallas Voice. Screens at 7:30 p.m. only. and 10 p.m.

CABARET

Denise Lee: Too Old Too Fat Too Black — Songs I'll Never Sing on Broadway. The final show of the inaugural cabaret season at Fair Park. Women's Museum Building at Fair Park. 7 p.m. doors, 7:30 p.m. show. Free.

WEDNESDAY 07.29

CIRCUS

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey: Legends. The world-famous Greatest Show on Earth settles into North Texas for several weeks in Dallas before heading to Fort Worth for a few more shows. American Airlines Center, 2500 Victory Ave., July 29–Aug. 9; Fort Worth Convention Center, 1201 Houston St. Fort Worth, Aug. 12–16. Ringling.com.

this week's solution



SATURDAY JULY 25
FOAM PARTY
 Marking the official beginning of summer
12am-4am
 with DJ. Dark Angel Spinning

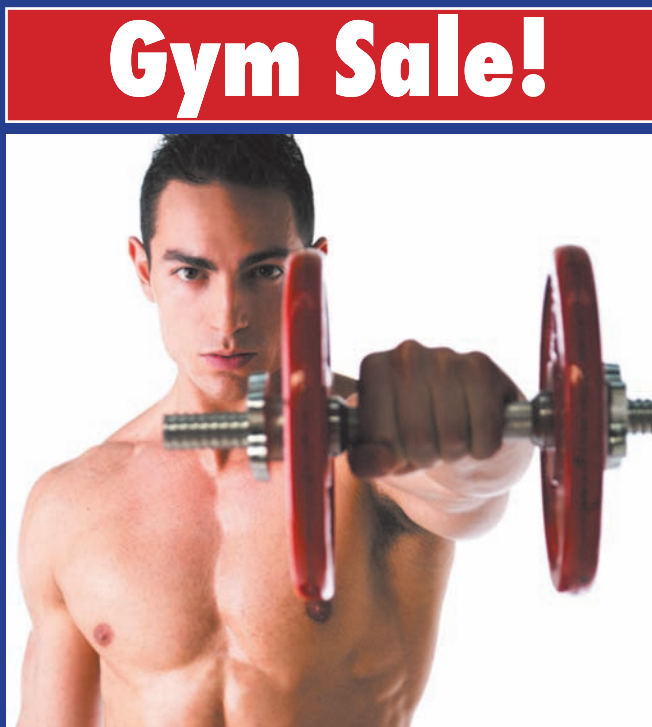
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Cassie Nova

Cassie nearly abducted by aliens!!!!

Hey everyone, did I ever tell you about the time I thought I was being abducted by aliens? No? Well, here's the tea. The year was 1999 and I had a show in Longview, so I borrowed my good girlfriend **Celeste Martinez's** car. It was going to be a cute little trip all by myself to perform at one of my favorite places to go, **Decisions**. **Grandma Porkey**, the show director there, was one of the first people to book me outside of DFW. It was a road trip, party of one.

The show went great and I got out of drag, and loaded up the car to head home. Now, I don't know if you have ever seen someone fresh out of drag, but I probably looked like one of those creepy underground creatures from that movie *The Descent*. I worked nights, rarely went out into daylight and had

little to no eyebrows... *creepy*. And of course, I had used waterproof mascara. That stuff is a bitch to get off, so I probably had dark-ringed eyes. (This took place before I found Albolene, the best make up remover ever; back then, I just used baby oil so I was a greasy mess.) Add to all this the fact I never wear any of my nice clothes after I get out of drag because leftover make up gets on everything. Needless to say, I probably looked homeless, too, but it was 2:30 in the morning, I was tired and I didn't care.

Right outside Longview on Interstate 20, I am bopping along, singing show tunes at the top of my lungs when this sinister looking fog rolls in. Suddenly, I was enveloped in this thick-as-semen haze. I could not see but a few feet in front of the car. I slowed down, white knuckling the steering wheel — it was intense. I drove for what seemed like forever but might have been just a few miles; I had no real concept of distance or time. The only thing I could see besides my headlights reflecting off the water droplets in the fog was the occasional red taillights of other cars whipping past me on the left.



Then it happened. The radio, all the lights in the dashboard and my headlights, all started to dim. The song that was playing sounded like a record player slowing down, lower and lower, to silence. I am a huge *X Files* fan and just knew I was about to be abducted by aliens. I had seen it happen a hundred times on TV — a lonely road then the car loses power. I was just waiting for the blinding white light from above. That's when I realized I was coasting; the car was completely without power, but I was still rolling along and slowing down. I thought, "Bitch, I am still on the highway!" I could hear 18 wheelers whizzing past me, but the fog had gotten so thick I could not even see their lights. I was scared to death. All I could think was I am about to get rear-ended to death, and not in a good way.

I coasted to the side of the road and took the first exit, then turned off the frontage road at the first place I could. The car rolled to a stop at some kind of big gate. It was hard to make out anything it was so dark. I knew I wasn't too far from the highway because I could still hear cars going by in the distance. This was before I had a cellphone so I was on my own. Clueless as to where I was or what to do, I figured I would walk up to the gate to see if I could find a place with a payphone. See kids, back in the day we had these things called payphones. You put coins inside to make calls. It was very primitive and barbaric.

Anyway, I opened the car door and I heard something rustling out in the fog ... and it was close. I slammed the door and thought, nope! I ain't going nowhere. It was getting cold without the heater, so I decided to climb in the backseat with my drag and try to get some sleep. I took out a couple of costumes and covered up with them. I had a pair of bellbottoms covering one arm and a beaded dress over the other. I used a wig head for a pillow and believe it or not I slept for a little while.

When I woke up a little while later, I could see a pair of headlights off to my left. I figured I would go ask that person for some help. It was still darkish, the sun wasn't up yet but the sky had lightened up a bit and there was less fog. As I got closer to the car I could see it was a cop. I was so relieved, I was about to be rescued! I walked up waving my arms saying, "Excuse me, hello, I need some help!" He was looking down at something and was not hearing me. So I

got closer, closer still, all the while yelling, "Pardon me, sir!" and "Hello!" Nothing. I finally was close enough to tap on his hood. *Tap-tap-tap!* I apparently scared the shit out of him. He looked up terrified, looked like he was reaching for his gun so I threw my hands in the air. He screamed at me to back up away from his car so I complied. He got out of the car and said, "G'dammit boy! You can't walk up on someone like dat from a cemetery. You gonna git yerself kilt!"

Cemetery? Of course I was parked in front of a freakin' cemetery. I apologized and said my car broke down and I didn't know where I was. He said he could take me to a phone but that's all he could do. I said that would be plenty and thanked the jumpy little chub.

He dropped me off at the Taste Freeze in Canton where I called my friend Robbie to come help me out. I sat there for hours looking like a young Nosferatu and watching buses full of people fill the restaurant for breakfast. I felt very... noticed. The looks I received from all these God-fearing blue-haired old ladies still makes me laugh. I think I actually hissed at one who stared a little too long.

Robbie came to the rescue and gave the car a jump. Apparently the alternator thing was going out. I know more about vaginas than I do about cars and I just recently learned vaginas are not a portal to Narnia. So I am a clueless mechanic.

That whole trip was a real trip. I entertained some folks, I scared some folks. I nearly pissed myself when I thought I was being abducted in the fog and never would have been able to sleep if I knew how close I was to a garden of the dead. In the end, I learned one thing: Never travel alone. Crazy shit happens when you are all alone. Crazy shit can happen when you are with friends, but it's scurry when you are all by your lonesome.

Wow, were you as scared by that as I was reliving it? ... Only the parts about how I looked out of drag, huh? Bitches, please!

No room this week for questions, kittens, but if you have any things you'd like to hear about let me know. Before I am... taken! (Cue *X Files* theme.)

Remember to love more, bitch less and be fabulous. XOXO, Cassie Nova.

If you have a question or comment, email it to AskCassieNova@gmail.com.



LIFE+STYLE

scen



Girls' night out at Woody's Sports & Video Bar.



Guys' night out at S4.

Making the SCENE the week of July 24-30:

- **Alexandre's:** *Filter Kings* on Friday. *Bad Habits* on Saturday. *Chris Chism* on Wednesday. *Alicia Silex* on Thursday.
- **Best Friends Club:** *Imperial Court* show at 8 p.m. on Thursday.
- **BJ's NXSI:** DJ *Deeno* spinning every Friday.
- **Brick/Joe's:** *Dannee Phann* presents DJ *Kidd Madonny* and *Super Party* from 4 p.m.-midnight on Sunday.
- **Club Reflection:** *Trinity River Bears* meeting at 2:30 p.m. and cookout at 4 p.m. on Sunday. *International Gay Rodeo Association* candidate show at 7 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Dallas Eagle:** *Heroes & Villains* costume party from 10 p.m.-2 a.m. on Saturday. *National Leather Association* presents *Leather Perspectives* at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday. *United Court of the Lone star Empire* presents *Christmas in July* benefiting *AIDS Interfaith Network* at 7 p.m. on Saturday and *Summer Revival & Fried Chicken* at 7 p.m. on Sunday.
- **JR.'s Bar & Grill:** *Cassie's Freak Show* with *Fantasha, Stefani, Bianca* and *Kim K* on Monday.
- **Pekers:** *2X2-Happening In Country* benefits *The Miniature Schnauzer Rescue of North Texas* and *The Miss Gay Texas Pageant System* at 8:30 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Rainbow Lounge:** *Drag Show Latin Style* at 10:30 on Wednesday.
- **Sue Ellen's:** *What's Up Band* on Friday. *Chix* on Saturday. *Kathy and Bella, Tyla Taylor Trio* and *Diane Michelle* on Sunday. *Red Cross Blood Drive* from 1-5 p.m. on Saturday.
- **The Rose Room:** *Miss LifeWalk* on Sunday. ■

To view more Scene photos, go to DallasVoice.com/category/photos. Scene Photographer: *Kat Haygood*.



Cazwell performing at the Impulse Down to Float pool party.



DJ Mike Evans and host Thomas at the Summer Pool Party.

LIFE+STYLE

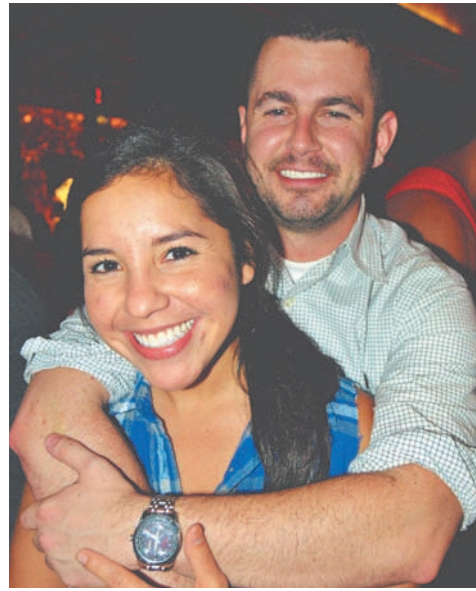
scene



Guys' night out at TMC: The Mining Company.



Dannee and friends at The Brick.



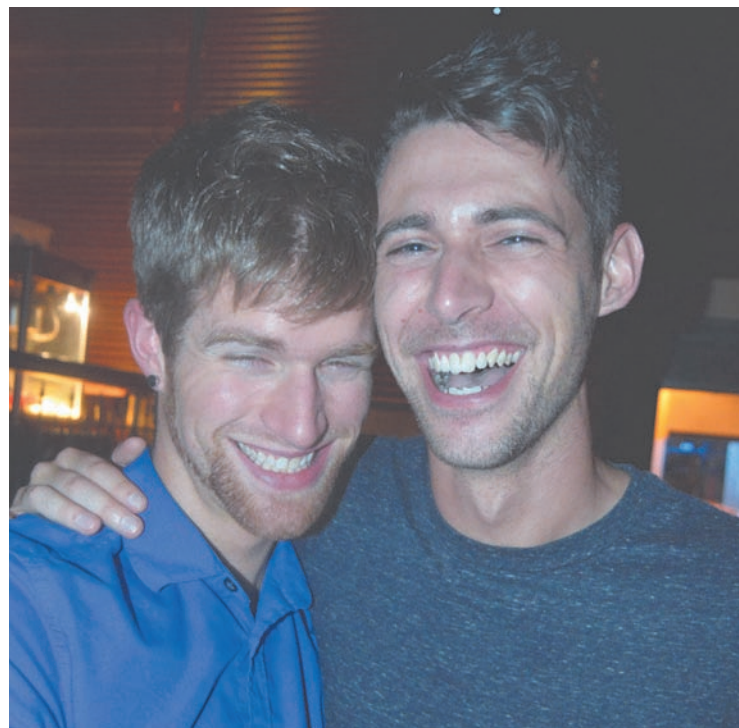
Kellie and Joe at JR.'s Bar & Grill.



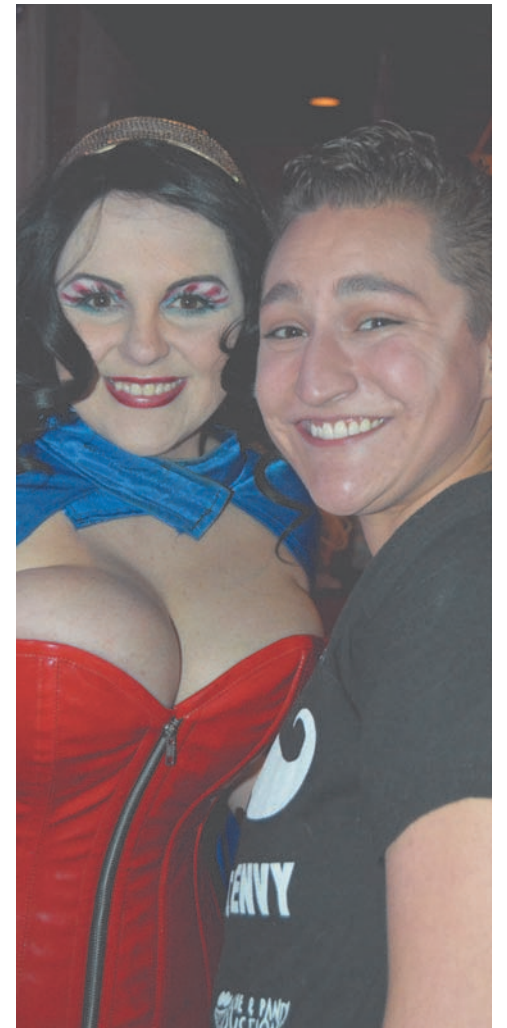
Being buff at JR.'s Bar & Grill..



Michael at the Round-Up Saloon.



Todd and Michael on The Strip.



Tuesday Tease at Sue Ellen's.

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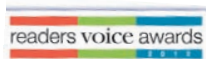
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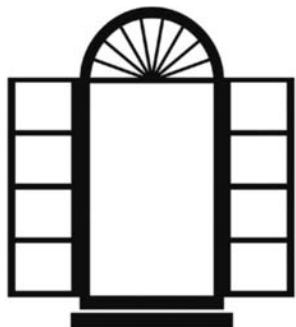
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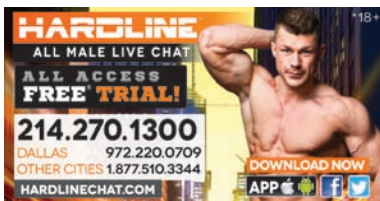
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q-puzzle

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
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50	51	52				53	54	55				56	57	58
59						60					61			
62						63					64			
65						66					67			

Top-sy Turvy

Solution on page 27

Across

- 1 Sitcom with a cross-dressing corporal
- 5 Wonder Woman weapon
- 10 Moved one's ass
- 14 Food on the floor, maybe
- 15 Waters of the sound?
- 16 Where pirates moor
- 17 Web info source
- 18 Friend of Ricky Martin
- 19 Fleecy females
- 20 Where do you find a gay man who is an ___ ...
- 23 Wilde country
- 24 Go-getter
- 25 Philip Johnson contemporary
- 27 Doubtfire's title
- 30 Do-___ (desperate)
- 33 Chicken hawk and falcon
- 34 Old nuclear power org.
- 35 Alpine Austrian region
- 36 *The Name of the Rose* writer
- 37 ___ *Ghost* (Mailer novel)
- 40 It changes a señor's gender
- 41 Kaplan of Kotter fame
- 43 "Candle in the Wind" subject
- 44 David Bowie genre
- 45 ... who wants to seduce desperate ___?

Down

- 48 Yokohama yes
- 49 Mail order abbr.
- 50 Answer to the riddle
- 59 Fashion designer Jacobs
- 60 "In your dreams!"
- 61 Shared coin
- 62 On an Olivia cruise
- 63 Like Baldwin in Paris
- 64 Amsterdam transport
- 65 Two-master
- 66 Penetrate
- 67 It may get pussy

- 22 Traffic noise
- 25 Self-description from one's knees?
- 26 Book after Jonah
- 27 Racer Andreotti
- 28 Hang loose
- 29 Triangular treat
- 31 Vowels of Sappho
- 32 Jack of old oaters
- 38 That's Rich!
- 39 John Q. Public
- 42 Morally upright
- 44 Inspector's gizmos in a Rupert Everett flick
- 46 Copland capability
- 47 AP rival
- 50 Noncommittal words
- 51 Gemini org.
- 52 Barrymore of *Boys on the Side*
- 53 Shakespeare's "anon" updated
- 54 Boob, to a Brit
- 55 Way to have one's meat
- 56 *Kiss of the Spider Woman's* William
- 57 Carhop's carrier
- 58 ___ *Like it Hot*

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