

dallas voice

The Premier Media Source for LGBT Texas | Established 1984 | DallasVoice.com | Volume 36, Number 1 | Friday, February 7, 2020



Unicorn LOVE

Jenny Block's new book teaches the power of self-realizing your inner unicorn

by Arnold Wayne Jones
Page 16



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Author Jenny Block. Photo by Arnold Wayne Jones. Design by Kevin Thomas. Special thanks to Rainbow Vomit for hosting the photo shoot.

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LGBT Chamber holds awards luncheon

The North Texas LGBT Chamber of Commerce, which is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year, presented its annual Business and Community Excellence Awards during a luncheon at the Renaissance Dallas Hotel on Friday, Jan. 31.

Chris J. Schlarb, college coordinator for Eastfield College in the Dallas County Community College District and advisor for Eastfield College's LGBTQ student group Prism, won the Community Excellence Award. Also nominated for the Community Excellence Award were Ahmad Goree, who volunteers with Dallas Southern Pride and for Abounding Prosperity Inc., and Judy Sherman, co-founder and current vice president of Texas Pride Impact Fund.

Dr. David Lee and the Uptown Physicians Group won the Business Excellent Award. Dr. Steven Pounders and his practice, Steve Pounders M.D., and Douglas Roark's Staff Perm were also nominated.

The Employee Group Excellence Award went to the TI Pride Network at Texas Instruments. Also nominated were LEAGUE at AT&T and LGBTQ & Allies at Ericsson.

— Tammye Nash

Texas Equity PAC issues endorsements

The Texas Equity PAC, the political action committee of Equality Texas, this week issued endorsements for 29 members of the Texas House of Representatives and five Texas senators who received at least an A on the Equality Texas Legislative Scorecard for the 2019 Legislative Session.

State representatives receiving the endorsement in this round after scoring an A+ on the Equality Texas Scorecard in the 2019 Legislature are Alma Allen, Raphael Anchia, Michelle Beckley, Diego Bernal, John Bucy, Gina Calanni, Sheryl Cole, Garnet Coleman, Nicole Collier, Gina Hinojosa, Donna Howard, Joe Moody, Ana Maria Ramos, Richard Raymond, Ron Reynolds, Eddie Rodriguez, James Talarico, Senfronia Thompson, Chris Turner and Gene Wu.

State representatives being endorsed after scoring an A are Cesar Blanco, Vikki Goodwin, Barbara Gervin Hawkins, Ana Hernandez, Mando Martinez, Terry Meza,

Christina Morales, Jon Rosenthal and Armando Walle.

Sen. Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa and Jose Menéndez of San Antonio were endorsed by the PAC after scoring an A+ in the 2019 legislative session. Senators who scored an A and have been endorsed are Carol Alvarado and Borris Miles of Houston and Judith Zaffirini of Laredo.

In December, the Texas Equity PAC endorsed its first round of legislators with the endorsement of Rep. Sarah Davis of Houston and the founding members of the LGBTQ Caucus: Reps. Mary González of El Paso, Celia Israel of Austin, Julie Johnson of Carrollton, Jessica González of Dallas and Rep. Zwiener of Driftwood.

— Tammye Nash

AP Inc. opening new HOPE Health and Wellness Center

Abounding Prosperity Inc. will celebrate National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day at noon on Friday, Feb. 7, with the grand opening of the HOPE Health and Wellness Center at 1619 Martin Luther King Blvd.

Helping Our People Equally Inc. (HOPE) Health and Wellness Center is a non-profit organization in South Dallas with a mission to increase the accessibility of affordable, comprehensive and culturally-competent healthcare services for minority communities, regardless of socioeconomic status, in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. HOPE provides quality, confidential, professional health screenings and treatments for sexually transmitted infections, access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and non-occupational post-exposure prophylaxis (nPEP), Hep C confirmatory testing and referrals to Hep C treatment, rapid initiation of HIV medical care and linkage to long term HIV medical care.

HOPE also promotes sexual health to decrease the rate of HIV and STIs through education, prevention and treatment of HIV and STIs.

Tamara Stephney, executive director of HOPE, said, "AP Inc. and HOPE Health and Wellness Center are taking a giant leap forward and moving into facilities that will accommodate access to world class medical care, for optimal health outcomes for the community."

— Tammye Nash

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THE GAY AGENDA



Have an event coming up? Email your information to Managing Editor Tammye Nash at nash@dallasvoice.com or Senior Staff Writer David Taffet at taffet@dallasvoice.com by Wednesday at 5 p.m. for that week's issue.

FEBRUARY

Feb. 7: Naming the Leper
Christopher Lee Manes, president of Congregation Beth El Binah, reads from his new book of poetry Naming the Leper at 7 p.m. at Half Price Books, 5803 E. Northwest Highway. Free.

Feb. 8: Dallas Bears monthly meeting
Monthly membership meeting begins at noon at Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road.

Feb. 8: PrimeTimers
Brunch and the Perot Museum at 11 a.m. at Mama's Daughter's Diner, 2014 Irving Blvd. 214-218-0912.

Feb. 8: The Main Event
Teen Pride presents Kennedy Davenport at the Peacock Theater in Frisco. An evening of magic, drag and mystery raising money for Teen Pride. \$40. tinyurl.com/tqevffc.

Feb. 8: Lost Souls Sock collection
Lost Souls Rugby is collecting new socks for the Austin Street Shelter serving men 45 and older and women 18 and older from 1-4 p.m. at the Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road.

Feb. 8: DFW Gaymers
Game night for LGBTQ gaymers from 7:30-10:50 p.m. at Common Ground Games, 1328 Inwood Road.

Feb. 11: Same-sex partner grief group
Grief group for those who have lost a same-sex partner through death from 6:45-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road.

Feb. 11: Simply Fondue with the Dallas Bears
A four-course classic from 7-10 p.m. at Simply Fondue, 2108 Greenville Ave.

Feb. 12: Cedar Springs Wine Walk
The Cedar Springs Wine Walk, usually held on the first Monday of each

month, was rescheduled to Feb. 12 due to weather. The tent is located in front of Round-Up-Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road, and the hours are 6-9 p.m. For information visit TheStripOnCedarSprings.com.

Feb. 12: TWU Drag Show
Texas Women's University drag show with performers including Mustache Envy, Draconis and emcee Landon Cider at 7 p.m. at TWU Student Union at Hubbard Hall, Southwest Ballroom, 1600 N. Bell Ave., Denton. \$5. TWU.edu.

Feb. 13: Business Connections Mixer
The LGBT Chamber hosts its monthly Business Connections Mixer with light bites and drinks from 5:30-7 p.m. at Eating Disorder Solutions, 3300 Oak Lawn Ave., Suite 102. LGBTChamber.com.

Feb. 15: Heart On Gaybingo
From 5-9 p.m. at The Rose Room, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. MyResourceCenter.org.

Feb. 15: Love Equality
An event benefitting Equality Texas is a night of celebration and dancing with drinks and light food from 8-11 p.m. at Seven for Parties, 150 Turtle Creek Blvd., Suite 107. Tickets at Secure.Everyaction.com.

Feb. 15: Impulse Group
An Impulse Group five year celebration with cocktails, music and dancing, dinner and presentation at 7 p.m. at Sixty Five Hundred, 6500 Cedar Springs Road #200. Impulsegrp.org.

Feb. 16: Dallas Bears Teddy Bear Auction
Auction benefits AIDS Services Dallas. Item drop off begins at 3 p.m. and auction starts at 7 p.m. at the Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road.

Feb. 17: President's Day
Honoring our presidents who haven't been impeached.

Feb. 19: PrimeTimers
Lunch at 12:30 p.m. at the Charco Broiler, 413 W. Jefferson Blvd. Info at 214-218-0912.

Feb. 20: THRIVE Movie Night
Movie night with dinner from 6-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road.

Feb. 21: Toast to Life Sponsor Party
MyResourceCenter.org.

Feb. 21: LGBTQ Global Symposium on Equality and Human Rights
A coalition of Dallas-based organizations presents a symposium on equality and human rights. A diverse group of LGBTQ and ally presenters will highlight Dallas' rich history of moving from openly opposing to vocally championing human rights and equality from 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. at Southern Methodist University, Tickets at DFWWorld.org.

Feb. 22: Turtle Creek Chorale Gala
Idina Menzel performs at a gala benefiting the Turtle Creek Chorale at 7:30 p.m. at The Statler, 1914 Commerce St. TurtleCreekChorale.com.

Feb. 22: AOC Benefit Dance Concert
AIDS Outreach Center presents Dance TCU, DBDT:Encore, Jordan Fuchs Company, Texas Ballet Theater and more at 7:30 p.m. at Studio Theatre in Erma Lowe Hall. \$20, students \$5. 817-257-4255 for reservations.

Feb. 23: PrimeTimers
Games in Plano at 2 p.m. For address and directions call 214-218-0912.

Feb. 23: Tasha Kohl Icon Show
Tasha Kohl hosts the Icons drag show featuring Evah Destruction, Porter Bella Graves, Mulan Alexander and emcee Cassie Nova, from 7-9 p.m. in the Rose Room at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. S4Dallas.com.

Feb. 25: Get Centered tour
Tour Resource Center and learn about its programs from 5-6:30 p.m. at 5750 Cedar Springs Road. MyResourceCenter.org.

Feb. 25: Steve Grand
Steve Grand performs benefiting the Suicide and Crisis Center at 7:30 p.m. at the Bob Hope Theatre, Owen Arts Center, 6101 Bishop St. \$75-150. Tickets at SteveGrandDallas.com.

Feb. 25: Same-sex partner grief group
Grief group for those who have lost a same-sex partner through death from 6:45-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road.

Feb. 25: PrimeTimers
Dinner at 7 p.m. at Alfonso's Italian, 718 N. Buckner Blvd. #222. Info at 214-218-0912.

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Dental health in pets

Brushing teeth daily as important for pets as for people

Hello Dallas Voice reader, and welcome to my first column! I want to introduce myself first and share something about me: I am Dr.

Josh, and I am a veterinarian in Addison. I am originally from Puerto Rico, but I have lived in Texas since 2017.

Ever since I was a kid, I knew I would become a veterinarian. I come from a low-income family, and I worked very hard my whole life to achieve my lifelong goal, because I am passionate about animals and their well-being.

I also want to influence people like me, who come from challenging environments but have the determination and passion they need to achieve their goals in helping society.

Now that you know a bit about me, I am very excited and honored to write about medicine and animals through such an important magazine like Dallas Voice.

The topic I have chosen for this first column is dental disease in dogs and cats. February is National Pet Dental Health Month, and many people do not know that dental disease is one of the two most common diseases found in our fur babies. (The other most common disease is obesity, but we will pretend for now that obesity is just more to love — until one of my future columns.)

Dental disease includes multiple symptoms, but the most common ones that you may notice are inflammation of the gums (gingivitis), bad breath (halitosis) and tartar. Keep in mind that bad breath can be caused by certain diseases and also by eating and licking things that we shall not name here, as I am trying to keep it professional (hahaha).

That being said, the most common cause of bad breath is dental disease.

How do we prevent or delay dental disease? The gold standard is, like with us humans, brushing their teeth. The reality is that most people do not brush their fur babies' teeth, but it is actually not that difficult. You will need toothpaste and a toothbrush for dogs/cats. These toothpastes have enzymes that help break down the plaque, so even if you cannot brush their teeth well, the toothpaste itself will still help.

I think the most common complication people find is when trying to open their baby's mouth to brush the inside of their



WOOF

Dr. Josh Talks Animals

Dental treats help as well, and you can use them, along with teeth brushing. But go to VOHC's website (vohc.org) and see their accepted products. VOHC is the dog and cat counterpart of ADA in human dental products.

Whenever tartar has accumulated on their teeth, the only thing that can help — again, as with us humans — is a dental cleaning. But unlike with humans, dental cleanings for dogs and cats have to be done under anesthesia, as dogs and cats will not stay still for the procedure.

Dental cleanings are usually performed yearly. But each fur baby is different, and some may need them more or less frequently. Needless to say, the vet performs an oral exam first, and I make sure I have a detailed conversation with my clients, setting expectations and talking about ideal versus conservative options.

Our more mature babies can be fragile, and we definitely should be cautious about these procedures. So it is important for you to know that we do not practice cookie cutter medicine. All of this having been said, it starts with just a simple dental exam, and we veterinarians can perform those for you.

If you have a preferred veterinary hospital, ask them for a dental exam. And if they end up recommending a dental cleaning, ask them if they have any discount for the month of February. If you do not have a veterinarian or want to visit me in Addison, I will perform a thorough exam of your baby and share those details with you. We also take our time with our clients to make sure all questions are addressed during this dental quest. During the month of February, we are offering a \$100 discount from the dental cleaning fee.

I hope this space has allowed you to learn something interesting, and I am looking forward to sharing some animal related facts with you every first Friday of the month! Abrazos!

Dr. Josh owns Isla Veterinary Boutique Hospital in 14380 Marsh Ln. Ste. 110 in Addison (next to Tom Thumb). 972-738-1111. IslaVet.com

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Friends with chocolate

Stephanie Peacock has found her dream as kitchen manager/chocolatier for Yelibelly Chocolates

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

This is my 12-year-old self's dream job come true," Stephanie Peacock declared with

a grin, indicating with a wide sweep of her arm the kitchen of Yelibelly Chocolates' new location in Addison. And it's hard sometimes, she admitted, not letting that inner 12-year-old take control and plunge her face into the batch of melted chocolate just waiting to be turned into a delicious Yelibelly treat.

But at the same time, being kitchen manager for the growing chocolate company is serious business. And Stephanie's serious adult side is there to take care of business.

Stephanie was raised in Houston, the daughter of a doctor and a nurse. She said she spent her childhood and teen years struggling with an undiagnosed learning disorder. And by the time it was finally diagnosed in college, she had decided to leave school and go to work.

Stephanie spent 15 years as sales and marketing manager for a manufacturer in the natural products industry. When she met her future wife and moved to North Texas about 12 years ago, she began working in retail sales for The Vitamin Shoppe chain.

Then about two years ago, when she was starting to feel "pretty burned out" by the retail side of the nutrition industry, Stephanie had the chance to start working part-time for Yeli Marshall and

her burgeoning chocolate business.

"I started out part-time, working events and then doing a little of the kitchen work," Stephanie said. But as the business grew, so did Yeli's need for a full-time employee, and Stephanie was happy to step into that role.

Moving to North Texas

Stephanie was living in Houston, at the end of a failing relationship, when her friend Angela invited her to go to a belly dance show. One of the featured dancers was a woman from the DFW area named Tracey, who used the stage name Obsidia.

"The minute I saw her, I knew," Stephanie recalled. "It was just one of those 'hammer over the head' moments" — and it's a moment that has lasted some 12 years now.

The two met after the show that night, but because of circumstances — Stephanie had not officially ended her relationship and Tracey lived in DFW — the two did not talk again for several months.

That show was in July. By October, Stephanie's relationship had ended, and she was renting a room from her friend Angela. "Then one night, Angela comes in and says, 'Tracey's coming to town. Do you want to have dinner with her?' I immediately said yes," Stephanie said.

After that dinner, Stephanie and Tracey stayed in touch, talking online and taking turns making weekend visits. One of the things she liked most about Tracey, Stephanie said, was how up front and matter-of-fact about what she wanted and what she didn't want.

"She told me first thing, 'I don't play games, and my son comes first,'" Stephanie said.

"We did the long-distance thing for about a year, and then I moved to DFW," Stephanie said. Now, they have been a couple for more than 12 years, and they have been legally married since the summer of 2015 when the U.S. Supreme



Sabrina Ganzzermiller, Stephanie Peacock and Yeli Marshall.

Court issued its ruling on marriage equality.

Stephanie said she and Tracey moved slowly when it came to introducing Stephanie to Tracey's son, Kendal. But like Stephanie, Kendal deals with his own learning disorder, and the two of them quickly began to connect with each other.

"We realized that we both like Star Wars and math, and we just hit it off," Stephanie said. "We would talk over Skype, and I helped him with his homework."

Once Stephanie moved to DFW with Tracey and Kendal, she said she and Tracey went to Kendal's elementary school — they live in the HEB Mid-Cities area and Kendal attended HEB school district schools — to speak to the administrators, counselors and his teachers and make sure they understood their family dynamics.

"The HEB Independent School District has been wonderful to us as the same-sex parents of a special needs student," Stephanie said.

When Kendal joined the high school band and then drum corps, it gave him and Stephanie yet another connection. "I was a band kid, too!" she noted, adding that she and Tracey often volunteered to help with band and drum corps events and trips — and still do so now, even though their son has graduated from high school.

With Kendal out of high school and enrolled in college now, and with Tracey having recently finished her master's degree, Stephanie said she had contemplated returning to college herself to fin-

ish her degree in food science. "But," she added, "with my dyslexia and the differences in the way I process information, school can be a real challenge for me. So I decided not to do that now.

"I may go back later, but my learning style is a lot more conducive to what I am doing now here at Yelibelly," she added. "Besides, I love being part of growing a business!"

Making her way to Yelibelly

During her years in the natural foods industry, Stephanie said she often found herself in group chats online "trying to dispel misinformation" and "trying to talk people out of buying things that were supposed to be good for them just because [the product] was 'natural.' 'Natural' does not necessarily mean 'healthy.'"

On occasion in those online groups, Stephanie said she would come across Yeli Marshall, a registered dietitian with a master's degree in nutrition and food science, who preached the same message about learning the difference between "natural" and "healthy."

Eventually, Stephanie said, she started running into Yeli at events around the area — and not just those related to nutrition and food science. As it turns out, Yeli is also a belly dancer like Tracey (well, not actually "like" Tracey; the two women have very different styles of dancing).

At first, Stephanie was a part-time employee for Yelibelly Chocolates, helping out at pop-up shops and special events

Yelibelly Chocolates

where she would serve chocolate treats and make ice cream with liquid nitrogen — another Yelibelly specialty.

But as Stephanie's retail burnout grew and Tracey was finishing up her master's degree, Yelibelly was also growing by leaps and bounds. So when Yeli offered her the chance to come on full time as kitchen manager and lead chocolatier, Stephanie jumped at the opportunity. And now, even though going to work means making the trip from Bedford to Addison and back, Stephanie said her job is "an absolute joy! I get up in the morning feeling great because I know that I'm going to go to work and I'm going to make chocolate or ice cream!"

Dream job

Yelibelly Chocolates is "an award-winning, artisan chocolate company" that

has "been making amazing, flavor-infused truffles since 2009," according to the company's website. Each and every one of Yelibelly's "chocolates and flavor-infused ganaches are hand-crafted in small batches using natural ingredients. No preservatives are used in our ethically-sourced chocolate. We use real cream and butter in each batch of ganache, and you will be able to taste the difference," the website notes. "We work hard to develop new flavors all the time. Check back regularly for new inspirations, from beer-infused truffles at St. Patrick's Day to floral flavors leading up to Valentine's Day, and maybe even something hot and spicy for the summer!"

The company also specializes in custom-decorated chocolate treats for special events like weddings and other parties as well as branded items bearing company logos or other custom graphic designs. Yelibelly is especially known for its

CHOCOLATE, Page 14



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— *The Boston Herald*

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Safeguarding the stories

Dallas gay couple's fight for marriage equality included in Holocaust and Human Rights Museum's records

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

On Aug. 2, 2012, Dallas gay couple Beau Aragon and Major Jiminez had had enough. Their friends in other states were getting married; it was time for them to get married too,

right here in Texas. So, they went to the marriage license bureau in the Dallas County Records Building and applied for their license.

After a woman called them into a side room to explain she couldn't issue the license, the couple sat down at the front of the line and handcuffed themselves to the stanchion. They sat there for the entire afternoon, until the building closed.

County Clerk John Warren explained to them there was nothing he could do. LGBT police liaison Laura Martin told them they could stay there for the afternoon, but they'd be arrested for trespassing after closing hours. At 5:30 p.m., police gave the couple the option of leaving on their own. Beau did. Major was arrested.

At the jail, lesbian Sheriff Lupe Valdez



Felicia Williamson

checked on Major, who was released in the middle of the night. Charges were later dismissed, but protesters accompanied the couple to court appearance.

The couple finally married legally in Texas in January 2017, a year and a half after the U.S. Supreme Court's Obergefell ruling instituted marriage equality nationwide.

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The Dallas couple's story has now been filmed and transcribed and is part of the research material — along with about 300 photos taken by Dallas Voice — documenting their struggle for marriage equality housed at the new Holo-

caust and Human Rights Museum.

Felicia Williamson, director of library and archives for the museum, said this was the first of the LGBT stories she's documented.

For its first 35 years, the museum

concentrated on recording the stories of Holocaust survivors who live in North Texas. Since opening its new building in September, the library has expanded its mission to include documenting human rights issues more broadly, with an emphasis on the North Texas area.

LGBTQ rights are among those areas of interest, but also included are the Jim Crow South, gender equality, disability rights, immigration and refugee rights, prison reform, voting rights and economic justice.

After recording his testimony, Jiminez said he was honored to be included in the museum's records. "But," he noted, "we are in a museum which documented true suffering. It's impossible to compare one to the other."

Williamson disagreed. She said all human rights should be recognized and honored and that when tyrants strip away rights, they start with one group and continue until conditions exist to allow another genocide. That's why she's looking to preserve the oral histories of those who stepped out to become Upstanders in the fight for human rights for the underserved and under-document-

"A lot of people think their story is not significant," she said. But every story matters. As an example, she cited stories of those who spent the Holocaust in hiding rather than having survived life in a concentration camp. Those stories are compelling as well, Williamson said.

In addition to Beau and Major's story, Williamson said she's filmed oral histories of a local Cambodian refugee as well as a local Bosnian War survivor.

From the LGBT community, Williamson said the museum is interested in hearing stories where people were faced with bigotry for being LGBT or discriminatory consequences. She said she wants to hear stories from people "whose actions moved the needle," and "the headline moments that were game changing."

The testimonies will be used by researchers and in classroom programs. They may later be used in special exhibits like an upcoming Stonewall exhibit scheduled for the museum in June 2021.

She said stories are used "to inspire the next generation to step up and fight for [their] fellow man."

If you have a story you think the museum may want to document, contact Felicia Williamson at fwilliamson@dhhrm.org.

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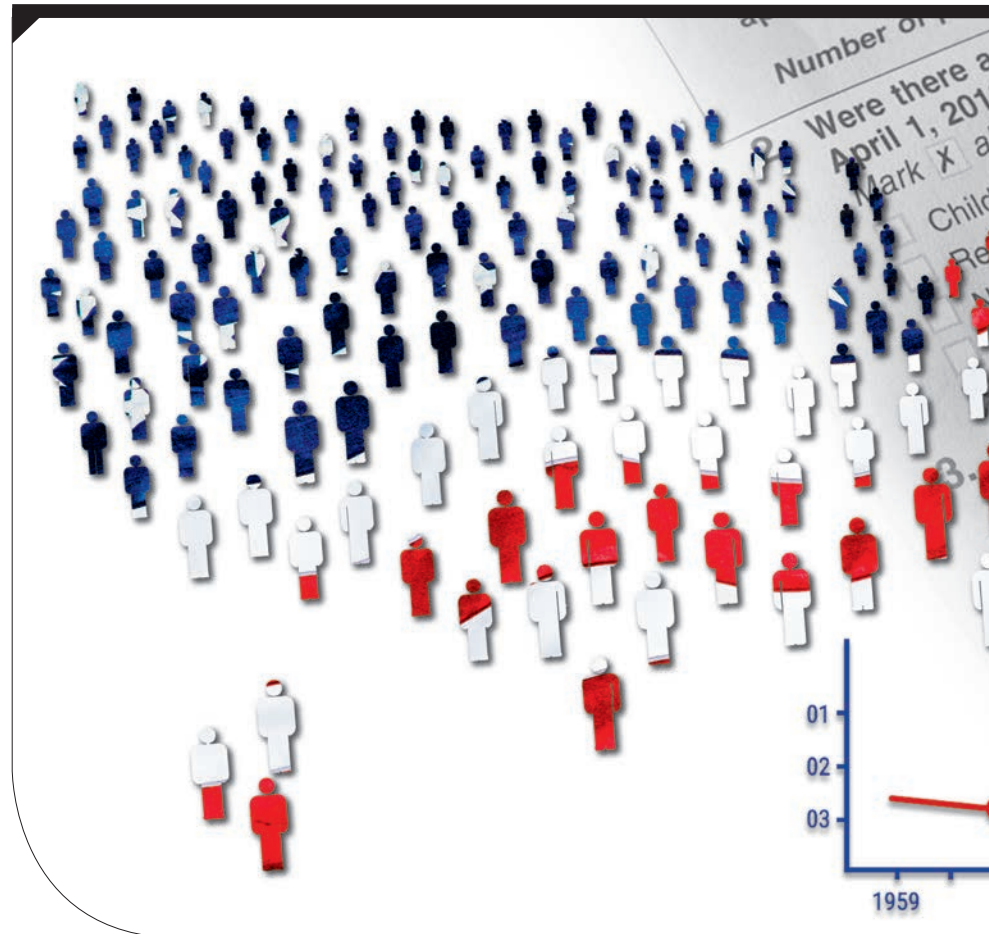
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April 1 is Census Day



This year's count is the first that may be answered on the internet

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

April 1 is census day, and for the first time, you can respond to the survey on the internet.

In March, the first census mailing will go out to every household in the country with instructions on how to fill out the census online. Up to five reminder mailings will go out before those who haven't responded are visited by an enumerator.

Unlike voting, responding to the census is mandatory. Everyone who resides in the U.S. or any of its territories must answer. Non-citizens are counted, whether they are in the country on a valid visa or not.

The information given in responding to the census is confidential. No other government agency can see specific information on any individual's answers. Information collected is not used for immigration purposes, officials said. In fact, census employees take an oath for life and are subject to fine or imprisonment if they release information about any individual.

The Census Bureau is encouraging as many people as possible to respond online, because doing so could save the government half a billion dollars. Those who don't answer online may return the questionnaire by mail or reply by phone.

Each card that is sent to a household will have a unique identifier. To respond, you'll need that code. If two people in the same household each answer, the software collecting the information will catch any duplications.

The information given should be correct for April 1, 2020. If you're moving between the time you receive the card and April 1, give the information as of April 1.

LGBT youth who are couch-surfing are a group that could be undercounted. If someone is staying at your home, count that person if he or she will be there on April 1.



College students living in a dorm should fill out their own census form. Parents shouldn't include a child living away from home. Even if the student uses a home address to vote, the college dorm address should be used for the census.

The census is used for three main purposes:

First, the count determines apportionment of seats in Congress. Because of population growth since the 2010 census, Texas is expected to pick up multiple seats.

Determining how federal funding is apportioned is a second way census figures are used. Money that is distributed proportionally, such as Medicaid, school lunch programs and Section 8 housing vouchers, is determined by census figures. And the statistics are used for planning purposes, as well. Local governments make decisions on where schools should be built and what an area's transportation needs are. Businesses use data from the census to

find areas with available labor pools, to determine what salaries should be expected in certain areas and to find areas where markets for their products are growing. Nonprofits use the information to determine where their services are needed.

The census is constitutionally mandated and has been taken every 10 years since 1790. Residents in the original 13 states, the districts of Kentucky, Maine and Vermont and the Southwest Territory (Tennessee) were counted in that first census. Today we count residents of 50 states, the District of Columbia and five territories.

Thomas Jefferson, who was the first secretary of state, headed the 1790 census count. The original number of congressmen serving in the U.S. House of Representatives was 65. That increased to 105 after the first census. The number is now capped at 435.


The combined population of the five largest cities in the U.S. — New York City, Philadelphia, Boston, Charleston and Baltimore — was 109,826 in 1790. That's just a few thousand more people than can fit in AT&T Stadium.

The census bureau is still accepting applications for enumerators and more. In Dallas, the pay is about \$22 an hour, and these temporary jobs should last through July. Apply online at 2020census.gov/en/jobs. They are looking for census takers who can work with residents in Spanish and a variety of other languages as well as English.


To encourage people to complete the census, they are also looking for census ally partners — religious organizations, community groups and employers.

While there's no general question on this year's census about sexual orientation or gender identity, there's a question about marital status that specifically asks if you are in a same-sex or opposite-sex marriage.

In 2010, there were two questions that respondents had to answer in a specific manner to be counted as a married couple. This time, the question of whether a couple is married is more clear, but specific information on specific individuals included in the 2020 Census won't be released publicly for another 72 years, according to law. So until April 1, 2092, the only information available publicly will be general statistics. ■



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Directed by Joseph Bologna



In **MY LIFE ON A DIET**, Academy Award nominee and Emmy Award winner **Renée Taylor** looks back on a life full of memorable roles in Hollywood and on Broadway... and just as many fad diets.



A self-described "Hollywood diet junkie," Taylor dishes out juicy anecdotes about – and surprising weight loss tips from – screen legends including Joan Crawford, Marilyn Monroe, Marlon Brando & Cary Grant (she used to think that if she ate like a star, she just might live like one).



By sharing her many highs and lows – both on and off the scale – as only she can, the always-hilarious Renée Taylor proves that *laughter* will get you through it all!



Photos: Jeremy Daniel

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CHOCOLATES, From Page 9



and sampling events, with Yeli leading participants in sampling different kinds of chocolate to develop their palate and learn to differentiate in chocolate made from cacao grown in different parts of the world.

"If someone tells me they don't like dark chocolate, I know they just haven't eaten enough dark chocolate," Stephanie declared. "We can give you three separate chocolate bars with each one being 70 percent dark chocolate. You can taste each of them, and you'll see that every one of them has a completely different flavor profile. Cacao from Madagascar, for instance, has some

chocolate covered Oreo-style cookies, and Yeli herself recently auditioned for a chance to pitch her Cocoacinos — a patented treat consisting on a thin disk of gluten-free, vegan and keto-friendly chocolate made from "fair trade and sustainably sourced chocolate," made to float on top of a cup of coffee, infusing each sip with just the right amount of delicious chocolatey sweetness. The Cocoacinos, like Yelibelly's other confections, can also be decorated with company logos and other custom designs.

Oh, but there's more — so much, much more. The company's slogan is "Let's get chocolate wasted," and they give you plenty of options to do just that.

If you are looking for a way to "elevate" your next event, Yeli and Stephanie say call them up. Take your coffee bar to the next level with Cocoacinos, and up the "taste" factor at your next party with a truffle rolling desert bar or a liquid nitrogen ice cream station.

Yelibelly also offers chocolate demos

distinct notes of vanilla, where chocolate made from cacao grown near tobacco fields will have an earthier flavor."

Being part of a company that pays so much attention to quality and creates "such fantastic products makes it a real joy to come to work every day," Stephanie said. "And working for Yeli, who is such a fantastic ally [to the LGBTQ community], first and foremost, and just an all-around great person, makes it even better.

"I have a job that makes me happy and makes other people happy. I mean, nobody is sad when you hand them good chocolate or ice cream!" Stephanie added. "What else could I ask for? It's a lot more fun than working retail, for sure!" ■

Yelibelly Chocolates is now open in its new location at 4500 Ratliff Lane, #102 in Addison. You can also learn more about the company, plan an event and order chocolates online at Yelibelly.com. Contact them by email at hello@yelibelly.com or by phone at 817-789-5563.

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Subscriptions via First Class Mail are available: Three months (13 consecutive issues), \$65. Six months (26 consecutive issues), \$85. One year (52 consecutive issues), \$130. Contact Dallas Voice at 214-754-8710 x123.

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■ commUNITYvoices

GOP's primary pandering could cost young trans lives

Nothing flushes the wackos from the weeds like primary election season. Fasten your seatbelts folks: we are just beginning.

Iowa and South Dakota are taking the first few swings. Fortunately, the bill in Iowa which would have stripped transgender Iowans of any discrimination protections has been withdrawn. But HB 1057 just passed the House in South Dakota.

This bill — being described by Republicans as “compassionate” or “protecting children” — is pure South Dakota bullshit. The bill as originally proposed would have made it a FELONY for a doctor to provide affirming care for a transgender child under the age of 16.

I can't begin to explain how silly this is. For starters, it would outlaw the use of puberty blockers until after age 16. Maybe the GOP should learn when puberty begins: around age 10-14 in girls and a little later in boys. The average age is 12.

By age 16, the puberty train has generally left the station.

Idiots.

The idea of allowing the medical treatment of children to be dictated by legislators instead of leaving it between doctors, patients and parents is sheer lunacy and arrogance. I suppose if you were to combine the two words it would be “Assholery.”

HB 1057 passed the South Dakota House last week, but was amended a little to reduce the penalty for affirming children with potentially life-saving care from a felony to a Class 1 misdemeanor. Still — who is being protected here?

No one! Not the state, not the children. It's just a dick move by those with no medical or ethical interest in protecting children, just a political interest in pandering to a small base of GOP primary voters.

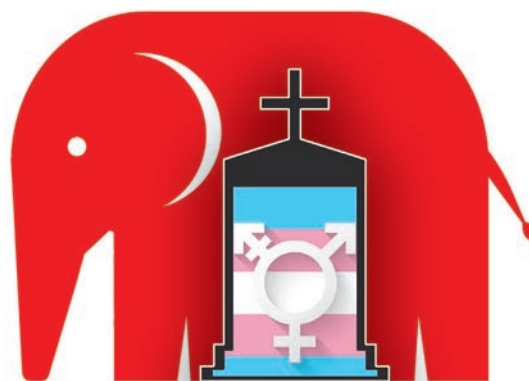
Looks like come 2021 when the Texas Legislature convenes, we will have an identical bill, considering that lawmakers in Colorado, Florida, Oklahoma and Missouri have filed similar bills already, while Kentucky and Georgia lawmakers have joined Texas in promising to join the parade of stupid.



Leslie McMurray
Accidental Activist

take the decision away from pediatricians that have tons of medical evidence that vaccinating children can prevent horrible diseases like polio, measles and small pox (just for starters.) The legislature has heard that some children are allergic to vaccines; they might get hives!

Goodness! We can prevent hives by



making children wait until they are over 16 to get vaccinated.

Ignorant and false “logic” like this will “protect kids to death.”

Chances are, these legislators have never met or spoken with a transgender person. Blocking puberty for a trans kid is a compassionate and life-changing act. Puberty blockers, if administered properly, are reversible. The effects of puberty are not.

I wish puberty blockers would have been available when I was a kid. Here are just a few things I could have avoided:

- It took me nearly two years and more than \$10,000 to have the hair removed from my face. It was also one of the most painful things I've ever experienced.

Here is a nice example of how these bills will “protect” kids:

Let's propose a bill that would punish doctors for vaccinating children. Let's

• The hair on my arms and legs is much more stubborn than it otherwise would have been. (I'm blessed with never having much hair on my chest and back; some aren't so lucky).

• I wish I weren't six feet tall, and I wouldn't be had blockers been available.

• I can hardly find shoes in a size 12. My hands are huge. Both my hands and feet would have been within female norms had I taken blockers. My height, hand size and shoe size are irreversible, by the way.

My life would be easier in a slew of ways had blockers been available when I was growing up. But they weren't. Young trans kids know they exist. For those who wish to stall off the wrong puberty, this can be a life-saving solution.

Puberty blockers are safe, reversible and life altering in profoundly important ways. So, tell me again how denying this option “protects” kids.

For God's sake, read a book!

I know there is no legal requirement for legislators to read or even understand what they are voting on. But in this case, they need to do some investigating. The science is out there.

Some conservative blow-hards will spread lies that surgery like mastectomies and castration occur on young children. No, they don't. Saying they do is just blatantly lying.

To legislators, let me say: Voting in favor of these dangerous and cruel bills will unquestionably do more harm than good. You are protecting no one. The American Medical Association, WPATH and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy agree.

Fort Worth Rep. Matt Krause has pledged to submit one of these ridiculous bills in the next session. Let's not forget that. But be aware, this won't be the only damaging piece of legislation proposed. There will be more.

We must remain vigilant: 2020 is a critical year with so much at stake. Our voices MUST be heard.

Leslie McMurray, a transgender woman, is a former radio DJ who lives and works in Dallas. Read more of her blogs at lesliemichelle44.wordpress.com.

The greatest love of all



Jenny Block's obsession with unicorns led to her latest book, a self-help manual for love, life and personal fulfillment

Jenny Block believes in unicorns, and she doesn't care who knows it. In fact, she wants *more* people to believe in unicorns. And she makes a compelling case for it in her just-published new book *Be That Unicorn: Find Your Music, Live Your Truth and Share Your Shine*.

"I have always liked unicorns," Block, a regular columnist for Dallas Voice, admits. "I feel strangely drawn to them. Yes, because I'm a girly girl, and they are sparkly and magical. But also because they have long represented what I have long wanted to be — equal part sweet and powerful and alluring and special and fun, all the things that we love the most about the people we love and admire the most."

Unicorns represent "a silly sort of 'perfection' within their own unique weirdness," Block opines. "That has always resonated with me. I knew I

would never be that 'perfect' girl, whatever that really means. But I knew that I could be the 'perfect' version of me, and that's what would really make me, well, perfect."

Her preoccupation impelled Block, already an award-winning writer (she snagged a Lambda Literary Award for her advice memoir *Open*) to turn her concept into a self-help book. Although she first put pen to paper to write *Be That Unicorn* about a year ago, "in many ways, I've been writing it in my head for years. Suddenly I had the urge to start writing it down. Like, literally, one day, I just *had* to. Nothing I've written has ever come so easily and naturally. That's how I know it had to be written, and I had to write it. Not to sound too out there, but it was almost as if I were channeling it from, well, my inner unicorn."

Which only reinforces what the message is. The book "is about allowing yourself to be you," says Block. "It's about standing up for yourself, being true to yourself. It's also about keeping yourself in check. Everyone has the right and the opportunity to be 'That Unicorn,' and we owe it to ourselves and to others to commit to that pursuit.

Self-care is all about giving your body, mind and spirit what they need; it's not about being more special than anyone else. It's about being yourself — *that's* what's special."

Which might just make Block "the unicorn whisperer."

"I like to think of myself as the little unicorn who keeps whispering to herself, 'I think I can. I think I can. I think I can.' Not everyone has a little unicorn pre-wired in their heads. This book is for those who don't. Or for those who do but who need a jumpstart for the little guy. Or for those who have no idea what I'm talking about but who know they want the happiest, fullest, unicorniest life possible. Life is full of good stuff and bad stuff and all the in between stuff, and the only way to get the most out of it all is by being That Unicorn."

With the book just now available in print and e-book formats at BeThatUnicorn.net and other booksellers, Block is preparing to embark on a promotional tour, starting in Houston on Feb. 27. Before that, she granted us exclusive permission to reprint an excerpt. Enjoy. And hook 'em, 'corns!

— Arnold Wayne Jones

EXCERPT from *BE THAT UNICORN* by Jenny Block (Mango Publishing 2020)

I've always wanted to be that "It Girl." The one people were drawn to. The one who could garner the attention of everyone at a dinner party. The one who was so captivating that, no matter where she was or who she was talking to, everyone around her just glowed. The "It Girl" has some sort of magic force about her, and just being around her allowed you to become enveloped in it.

I used to think you became an "It Girl" through clothes or beauty or money. Maybe it was her travel or her experiences or her access to the world. The messaging from that world is confusing. "Be rich. Be young. Be beautiful. Then everyone will love you, and you'll have the world at your feet." But some of the most banal people I have ever met get top marks in all three of those categories. So it sent me out on a journey pondering, "If that wasn't what made the girl—or the guy— what was it?"

It wasn't until I truly listened to the words my father had been saying to me since I was a little girl that I real-

ized what the magic quotient of the It Girl truly was: authenticity.

She feels so comfortable in her skin that she can't help but let it spring out from her like so many sparkly strands that surround and delight everyone around her.

Because she feels good about herself, she makes others feel the same way. There's no one easier to adore than someone who reflects back to you the image of yourself that you long to see: the smart, funny, clever, enchanting, kind, calm, inviting version of yourself that knows just what to do and how to do it in every situation.

That girl (or guy) is That Unicorn. I used to get angry when my dad would tell me to be myself. That plan had gotten me rejected in the most grandiose of ways, including when I went to Camp Louise the summer between eighth and ninth grades. Everyone else had grown up and arrived at camp with luggage packed with Bloomies underwear and magazine pages to hang in their lockers of the latest hunky movie stars. I showed up with my monkey puppet: "Hi! I'm Jenny and this is my monkey, Henry."

■ UNICORN Page 24

Rocketman



Just as he hopes to again score Oscar gold for his biopic, Elton John recounts his crazy life in print

Me by Elton John (Henry Holt 2019)
\$30; 375 pp.

On and off through most of his life, Elton John had a tumultuous relationship with his mother. She was sometimes angry, sometimes abusive, rarely loving. But she did one important thing for him: she introduced him to the music of Elvis Presley.

Though John — heck, we *have* to call him Elton — says he'd wanted to be a musician since he was very small, the 78 RPM his mum brought home opened a window for a huge record collection, a passion for seeing live music and a dream of playing in a band onstage. Soon, he was gigging with regional bands and accidentally meeting people who would help his career.

At 19, he was still a virgin, still naïve about being gay and rather blithe about his natural ability to write music. That was OK, though: He'd met Bernie Taupin, who wrote lyrics over breakfast and together, they'd pen hits by lunchtime.

At 22, Elton had fallen in love with a man, was no longer a virgin, and "things [professionally] were starting to move, very gradually."

Just one year later, he performed for the first time in America.

Through his early career, stardom gave Elton a delightful platter of surprises, and he seized most everything that came his way: Singers he admired praised *him*; famous people he'd watched wanted to meet *him*. He later hobnobbed with royalty, both the music kind and the Buckingham Palace kind. He fell in love, married, divorced, fell into an obsession over something that made his life so, so much harder...

There is a certain aura surrounding the first third of *Me*, and it'll charm the socks off you: Elton writes about his childhood (quickly) before leaping into the bits about his early career with a sense of wide-eyed awe at what life had just handed him. If he'd said "Gee whiz!" even *once*, you'd understand.

Alas, after the kid-in-a-candy-store naiveté evaporates and his career takes off, John's account of his young-manhood seems jaded; he says he was "exhausted" by constant work and pressures, and the second third of his book shows that in the voice readers see. Here — in the stories of parties, recording sessions and industry goings-on — the tale starts to slip into that which plagues so many star biographies: name-dropping and seemingly unnecessary sameness. It would mar the book, were it not for the sense of droll humor that John continues to pack around his anecdotes.

By the final third of this book, we get a settled Elton who's clean, happier, less frenetic but still funny. Here's where readers reach what is likely familiar, as though we've read this book before. But, of course, you haven't because *Me* is John's first and only autobiography, and enjoying it is easy.

— Terri Schlichenmeyer

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2 bees, a T and a brunch

How a Texas cis woman and a transman found love in person... courtesy of a dating app

Some people swear by online dating options, others insist they will only meet in person. But two social media influencers found a way to unite those worlds.

About a year ago, Shelby Sorrel, a straight cis woman who works as a social media strategist and is an avid food Instagrammer, attended a brunch in a restaurant inside the W Hotel in Austin. The meet-up was at the invitation of Bumble, the dating app famed for requiring the woman to make the first move. On the menu: Pride foods such as rainbow pancakes.

Attending the same event was Chris Rhodes, a transman, who showed up with his twin sister and her girlfriend to celebrate Pride. Until then, each was unaware the other would be there, though they followed each others' social media posts.

Sorrel and Rhodes sat with other attendees at three long tables inside W Austin's posh restaurant, sitting close enough to mingle. And something special happened. Instead of using digital clicks to spark interest in another, they clicked ... face to face.

"It was funny, because I've been on dating apps for like seven years," Sorrel says. "And I had miscellaneous, random relationships through them, but never anything that was lasting. And so it was funny to actually meet someone in real life at a Bumble event and have that work better than any of the other times before."

Rhodes felt a bit shy, so Sorrel made



the first move.

"I kind of counted myself out early on," Rhodes says. "I think that to her, she was very confused when I wasn't really making moves, and I was just kind of timid at the beginning."

Soon after the event, the two started a back-and-forth through Instagram messages. After a couple of months chatting online, Sorrel asked Rhodes to meet up for drinks. And after hanging out in the real world, their connection grew stronger. By January 2019, they each officially changed their single status on Facebook to "in a relationship."

Before they met, Rhodes had always dated queer women; he's the first trans individual Shelby ever dated. But despite dating someone different than before, their affection for one another

felt right.

"For me, some people don't understand how I identify as straight but am dating a transman," Sorrel says. "I think a lot of people like to focus on genitals that people do or don't have or misunderstand what it looks like to date a transgender male, and I think that a lot of people are stuck in their own ways of thinking that makes somebody identify differently than they actually do."

When they first started dating, Sorrel and Rhodes discussed how different a trans relationship might be. They say communication helped them navigate through unfamiliarity and uncertainty to come.

Sorrel, who comes from a conservative household, worried a little what her family and friends might think of

her relationship with Rhodes. But her friends and family were pleased to see her happy.

And since they discovered a new type of courtship, each say they've melded more into the other's community and learned love can wire any two together when a mutual respect is met.

"My advice is to be confident and read the person that you're interacting with," Rhodes says. "Don't just necessarily make assumptions about their attraction or their openness to dating someone that might not be their usual type. I mean, I think that really applies to any person you might date, whether you're in a queer relationship, or trans or just stepping out of your comfort zone in general while dating."

— John Carder McClanahan



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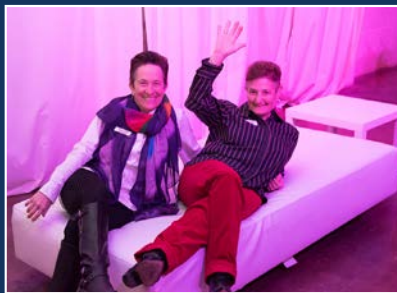
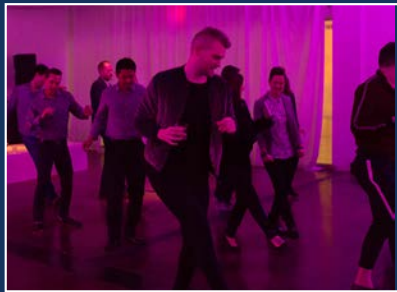
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Utah jazz

Out singer Spencer Day
unites his passion for
showtunes and jazz



Ten years ago, pop crooner Spencer Day came out publicly. Following his Mormon upbringing in a small Utah town, his big move away from home in his 20s imbued his creative process. Growing up, he fell in love with both Broadway musicals and the glamour associated with jazz life. After he moved to California — which he did with only \$300 in his pocket — Day carved out as a career musician, recently fusing his passions in his new collection of reimagined theater works titled *Broadway By Day*. We chatted with the singer prior to his North Texas debut at a series of concerts at Casa Manana about how he discovered jazz, his love of glamour and the unique loneliness of being the only gay person you know. ■

— John Carder McClanahan

being niche. How important is it for you to make jazz appeal more widely to audiences?

Spencer Day: That's actually my musical mission and goal. I think jazz needs a few things: It needs to get a sense of humor about itself and not be viewed as elitist. Like cabaret — cabaret really should be provocative and very contemporary, but both can kind of get trapped in this museum piece of what good music is and when it stopped being created in 1960, or something like that. To keep it relevant, you have to find

a way to relate jazz to what's going on in the world in 2020.

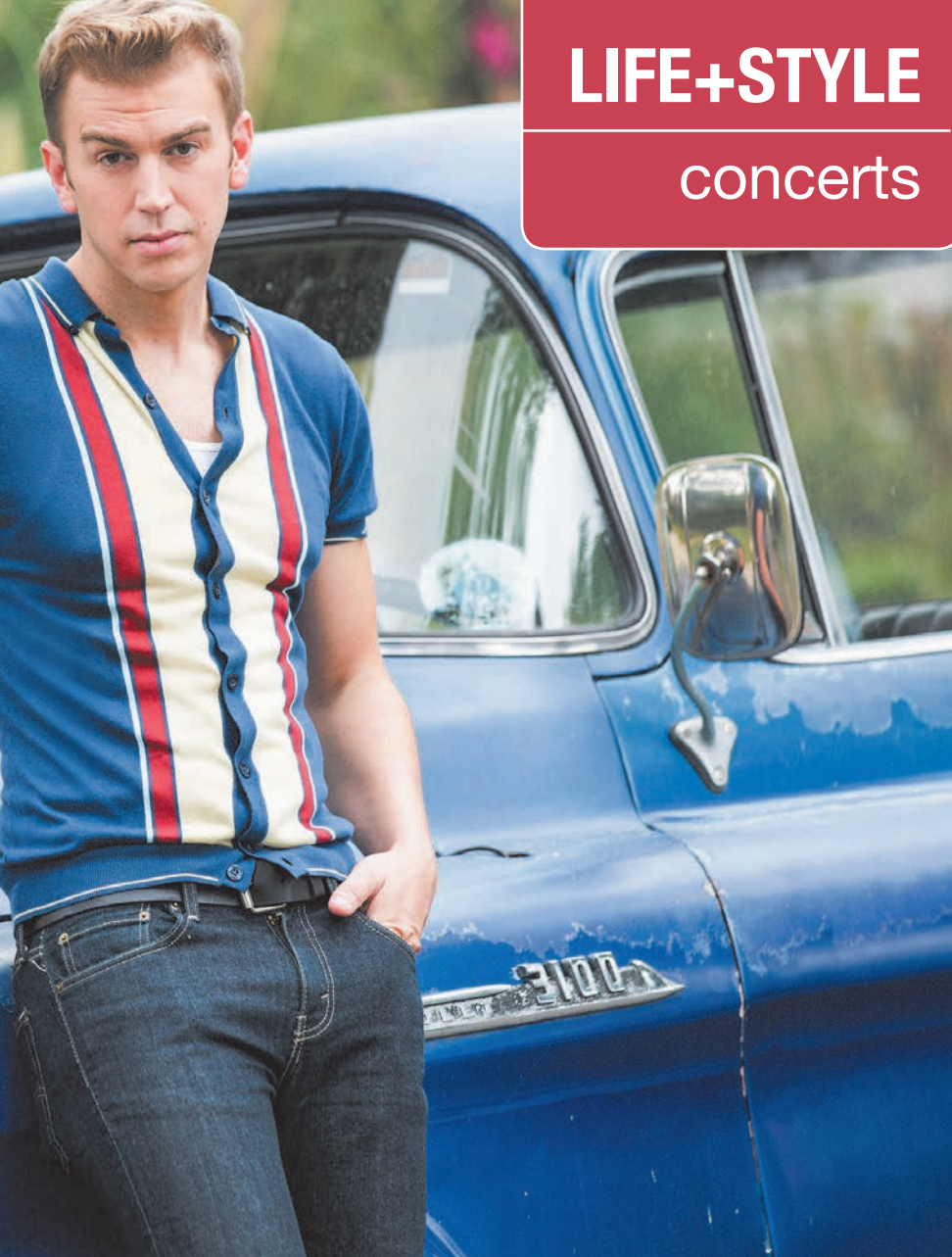
How do you determine what you want to present to a new audience?

We just wrapped up a new project, which is all Broadway songs done in a very unusual way. We selected works not typically done in a jazz singer-songwriter context. I feel like a lot of times, when people in the jazz world do Broadway, they tend to do songs people are already doing. But we're doing stuff from *Annie* and *A*

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Chorus Line, going full-Broadway, despite me not being a Broadway singer. We've found [that] so far that it makes for an interesting pairing. I'll still incorporate some of my original songs to talk about how my process was inspired by my upbringing. I grew up in a pretty religious town, and we didn't really have access to anything but G-rated movies — Disney movies and MGM musicals and whatever musicals I could watch on VHS. That kind of informed my songwriting sensibilities [which have] always been informed by musicals. So I think that there's a real thread.

The name of the basketball team aside, how did a kid growing up gay and Mormon in a small Utah town become interested in jazz music? I was into anything that felt exotic and deep. Like a scene from a movie, I wanted to be anywhere other than Utah in the '80s. Now I go back and appreciate how beautiful it is, but at the time, I didn't fit in. As a kid, I loved flamenco guitar, and the first tape that I bought was the *Joy of Klezmer*. For me, jazz was just another interesting thing. I would draw pictures of the Chry-

ler Building and martinis. I didn't know what martinis *were*, but I knew they symbolized this dark, urbane world that was so far removed from the alfalfa farms that were around our place. It just symbolized the world and became my whole career. But when I moved to California and then New York City, I wasn't attracted to fame or money. I was attracted to glamour. I had this desperate need to be around color and anything that dazzled you. And to me, that's what jazz represented.

Did you always want to be a professional jazz singer? What was your plan after high school? I thought about going to school, like BYU or something. But I was clinically depressed and had been for a lot of my childhood. One day, I just packed everything in my car and headed to California. I didn't know where I was going or what I was going to do, but my mom was very supportive. When I drove off, she just kind of waved, because she knew I was suffocating in this environment and that it wasn't the path for me.

■ DAY Page 24

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Love starts on a downbeat

Heartfelt and low-key, 'The Band's Visit' is a minor miracle of Broadway musicals

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

The "fish out of water" trope is a familiar one, even in Broadway musicals, and yet the very existence of *The Band's Visit* still feels like a minor miracle. The water-less fish here are the members of a ceremonial police orchestra from Alexandria, Egypt — gussied up like a Salvation Army band — who,

due to the absence of a "P" sound in Arabic, get bus tickets to the wrong destination and end up in a sleepy Israeli town in the Negev Desert. Despite the cultural clash — buttoned-down Muslim musicians amid uber-caz Jews — the presence of the band enlivens the dull lives of the locals. Hearts are touched. Minds are changed.

But similar musicals, like *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, have flashy costumes, lively dancing, ebullient celebration. *The Band's Visit*, at the Winspear through Feb. 23 (co-presented by Dallas Summer Musicals and AT&T Performing Arts Center) is a minor-key musical

THE BAND'S VISIT
Winspear Opera House,
2403 Flora St. Through Feb. 23.
DallasSummerMusicals.
ATTPAC.org.



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An Egyptian policeman's ceremonial orchestra is stranded in a small town in Israel to magical results in 'The Band's Visit.'

with sounds created from instruments like an oud and goblet drum. It's a mystical, exotic but not fantastical cultural pearl of a show. And in the age of *Hamilton*, Webber and the gazillionth Disney adaptation, such restraint is amazing.

The entire show plays out over the course of one evening. Tewfiq (Sasson Gabay), the bandleader, accepts an offer by cafe owner Dina (Janet Dacal) for his musicians to sleep over at her and her friends' homes. Haled (Joe Joseph), on the eve of an arranged marriage, is just hoping to explore new experiences. And, before you can say "*Smiles of a Summer Night*," they all get what they want... or at least, what they need.

No musical in memory is as much about music as a form of communication as *The Band's Visit* is. In fact, everything revolves around ideas of connection. The Israelis and Egyptians speak mostly English, because that's one language they all understand... more or less. But their accents and word choices compel everyone in the audience to

lean in. There is never a discussion of politics or religion, of differences. But those themes linger over every moment of the show, demonstrating how, if we pay attention to each other, we can overcome them.

And we do so through a Middle Eastern-tinged score by David Yazbek that's head and shoulders above anything he has previously produced (including *The Full Monty* and *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*). With unusual time signatures and complex orchestrations, you can practically taste the dust and boredom of the town on songs like "Waiting" and "Welcome to Nowhere;" you feel the longing on "Omar Sharif" and "Answer Me;" the genuine joy of life on "The Beat of Your Heart" and "Haled's Song About Love." With just a few predominant motifs, Yazbek conjures magic. (A sample lyric: *Floating on a jasmine wind... honey in my ear, spice in my mouth... he was cool to the marrow, the pharaoh of romance*). If *Fiddler on the Roof* were modernized, it might sound something like this. ■



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It was social suicide at first sight.

But what I didn't know back then was that those girls were even more insecure than I was. It was that very desperation that pushed them to follow the crowd in every sense, to dress the same and talk the same and drool over the very same heartthrobs. I was too naïve to know any better. I was just being, well, me. That summer was the beginning of me deciding that that whole "be yourself" thing was for the birds. All it got you was a seat at the

dork table in the cafeteria and a lot of lonely Saturday nights.

But years of following the crowd did me no good, either. Not in the long run, anyway. Why? Because I wasn't being me. I was faking it... and not in the "fake it till you make it" kind of way, just in the plain old "fake it 'cause you don't know what the heck else to do" kind of way. That's never good. When I was faking it, I felt fake. When I was my actual self, I felt so much better. Slowly it became clear to me: Being yourself might not always be the

easiest, but it is always the best.

So, when I got to college, I decided it was the perfect time to retest my dad's "be yourself and they will come" theory. And, go figure, it worked. People liked to be around me, because I knew who I was, and I was happy and comfortable in my own skin. From then on, that was my path. Sure, I had and continue to have plenty of days plagued by insecurity. But most days are pretty prancy. I became That Unicorn by not trying to be any girl other than me.

That Unicorn is the best you. That

Unicorn is a glittery, rainbow-maned metaphor for one's joyful self... the kind of person we are all drawn to. That Unicorn is you. My mom has always said that people are drawn to me because I make everyone feel good about themselves. Throughout my life, people have echoed that sentiment. It's the thing I love about myself the most: I'm the big sister, the BFF, the mom, the cheerleader, the coach... "the little unicorn that could" who everyone deserves. ■

■ DAY From Page 21

Was growing up both Mormon and gay difficult? When I was a kid, apart from a few teachers in school who would say [homosexuality] is God's punishment, my experience wasn't known by anyone. No one seemed to know anyone who was gay. It's one thing to have people talk about how you're going to burn in hell and how wrong it is. But it's a different kind of suffering to not have it exist for you. You don't quite know why you feel that way, and it took me a lot of years to learn to love myself.

Were you already out by the time you were doing music professionally? It was definitely a gradual process. I was around people who knew *me* personally. At age 25, I was in the industry full-time, and though it's changed so much since then, I had lost an early record deal I know in large part to them finding out [I was gay]. And I'm grateful for that. And it's because of people such as K.D. Lang and Rufus Wainwright, I could be in the place where I'm today, but I lost a lot of people. To be honest, I feel my career would have ascended more. I know my career has suffered in a sense because of it, but still, I wouldn't change a thing. I know my comfort as a performer and what's made me compelling is ignoring everything I had been told growing up and just living my life in an authentic transparent way and not apologize for it.

How do you avoid having your music labeled with your sexual identity? I think that I've been lucky that my music has never been fully labeled as "gay" music... whatever that means. But I think it's still a challenge for any minority group. And I can understand why people want to relate to it that way, because they want to feel like their experiences are mirrored. But there's no such thing as black music or gay music. I think it's about making it a nonissue. Being out and being an advocate for that just by being transparent is part of it, and then pulling the focus in your life back to the example you set and never forgetting that it's ultimately about the work you do.



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Friday 02.07 – Sunday 02.16

‘Andi Boi’ takes on trans teens in school

As we profiled last week, Bruce Coleman’s new play *Andi Boi* highlights transgender teen life in today’s changing high school environment. When Andi arrives for the first day of school, his classmates wonder about this new male student. Dallas trans actor Zander Pryor portrays the title role in this world premiere dealing with issues of social acceptance, bullying and gender nonconformity. Presented by Dallas Children’s Theater.

DEETS: Rosewood Center for Family Arts, 5938 Skillman St. DCT.org.

Saturday 02.08

Country queen and ‘proud ally’ Miranda Lambert tumbles into town

After carving herself into one of country music’s most respected female vocalists, North Texas’ country sweetheart Miranda Lambert returns to Dallas for another night of twanged up energy. The singer-songwriter released her seventh studio album titled

Wildcard last fall, and now Lambert brings new material across North America. Here’s a chance to see one of the area’s biggest hometown country acts.

DEETS: American Airlines Center, 2500 Victory Ave. 7 p.m. Ticketmaster.com.



Thursday 02.13 – Sunday 03.08

Kitchen Dog presents Dallas debut of ‘Alabaster’

Part of a record-breaking 11-theater rolling world premiere, Audrey Cefaly’s *Alabaster* featuring an all-female cast addresses the healing of scars and power of women. This somber, but slightly comic, southern drama follows June, who loses nearly everyone except her talking pet goat Weezy after a tornado rips through her hometown in Northern Alabama. June struggles to heal after the disaster after a prominent photographer arrives to capture the devastating remains. Previously, Cefaly used her native Alabama as the setting for her award-winning 2018 LGBTQ drama *The Gulf*.

DEETS: Trinity River Arts Center, 2600 N. Stemmons Freeway, ste. 180. KitchenDogTheater.org.

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calendar highlights

ARTSWEEK

THEATER

Ada and the Engine. Regional premiere of Lauren Gunderson's play about the real-life woman, daughter of Lord Byron, who in the mid-19th century pioneered the first computer. Stage West, 821 W. Vickery Blvd., Fort Worth. *Final weekend.* StageWest.org.

Andi Boi. World premiere play written and directed by Bruce Coleman about trans youth. Presented by Dallas Children's Theater. Rosewood Center for Family Arts, 5938 Skillman St. Through Feb. 16. DCT.org.

The Band's Visit. Based on the hit arthouse film, this 10-time Tony Award winner about an Egyptian police band that spends a day stranded in Israel is full of rich music. *Reviewed this week.* A co-presentation between Dallas Summer Musicals and AT&T Performing Arts Center. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. Through Feb. 23. DallasSummerMusicals.org. ATPAC.org.

Little Women. Umpteenth adaptation of the 19th century novel. Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through March 1. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

One Man, Two Guvnors. A Mod 1960s farce. Circle Theatre, 230 W. 4th St., Fort Worth. Through March 7. CircleTheatre.org.

To Be Young, Gifted and Black. Just in time for Black History Month, Jubilee Theatre stages this play from the writings of Lorraine Hansberry. Jubilee Theatre, 506 Main St., Fort Worth. Through Feb. 23. JubileeTheatre.org.

Zombie Dearest. One of the camp melodramas at Pocket Sandwich Theatre, 5400 E. Mockingbird Lane. Through Feb. 15. PocketSandwich.com.

INSTALLATION

PY1. A light and music pop-up installation, with two shows (Through the Echoes and the family-style Stella: The Time Machine Journey) it also becomes a late-night dance club with themes on select weekend nights. 1550 Convention Center Drive, Arlington. Through March 1. Visit PY1.com for details.

SATURDAY 02.08

COMMUNITY

FrontRunners. Gay jogging/walking group meets weekly at 8:30 a.m. in Oak Lawn Park at Hall Street and Turtle Creek Boulevard for a run along the Katy Trail.

SUNDAY 02.09

BROADCAST

The Academy Awards. Airs on ABC

MONDAY 02.10

CABARET

Mama's Party. Amy Stevenson's weekly show featuring talented singers. Mainstage, 222 E. Irving Blvd., Irving. 7:35 p.m. \$10.

TUESDAY 02.11

FILM

Breakfast at Tiffany's. One of Audrey Hepburn's signature roles, the aptly-named Truman Capote heroine Holly Golightly. Features a painfully yellowface performance by Mickey Rooney but also the Oscar-winning song "Moon River." Screens as part of the Tuesday Big Movie New Classic Series, which now includes a matinee. Landmark's Magnolia Theatre in the West Village, 3699 McKinney Ave. Screens at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY 02.12

COMMUNITY

FrontRunners. Gay jogging/walking group meets weekly at 7:15 p.m. in Oak Lawn Park at Hall Street and Turtle Creek Boulevard for a run along the Katy Trail.

The Queer Off All Stars: The Winter Games. Contestants from season 1 and 2 return for this elimination-style talent show for the queer community. Sue Ellen's, 3014 Throckmorton St. 10:30 p.m.

THURSDAY 02.13

CABARET

Glitterbomb Denton. Weekly queer variety show with a new lineup every Thursday, now at a new locale and new time. Andy's Bar, 122 N. Locust St., Denton. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY 02.14 — VALENTINE'S DAY

this week's solution

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Ask Howard

How to do the wrong thing right

Ho hum, another Valentine's Day approaches and all it arouses is, "But I haven't even used up all my Santa Claus stamps yet... and there's still divinity in the carpet!" This year my spouse and I will be celebrating our 27th Valentine's together; or more precisely, this year will mark the 27th time neither of us remotely acknowledges that, perhaps — just this once — we should do *something* in the name of romance, together, as a couple. The upcoming 14th day of February here at Howard's End, though, will most likely pass blandly by as any ordinary other day... sans cards exchanged, chocolates given or flowers delivered. We've resignedly breeched the AARP tipping point now at last, my spouse and me: Holiday "sap" is only tolerated within the context of gauging Sundays' pancake syrup viscosity, love means never having to say you're sentimental and every day's a keeper. Yeah, happiness is finding one's true love, eternal, and a broken heart's a lonely bitch: It's a Hallmark world, bois. Let's get glass-hearted right to it.

Dear Howard: I got married last summer, we're finally putting the finishing touches on our new house... and now my husband's suddenly being transferred up to Buffalo, N.Y., where the snowpack melts for, like, two entire weeks every August. I didn't enter my marriage vows lightly, but I can't leave my job here to join him; I just got promoted. Our bed sizzles on fire every night — exploratory fetishes, kink games, even "safe" words: Hark, are those the suspension squirms of 8-gauge galvanized sling chains I hear jangling? Seriously, though, I'm just a plain, good old country bear, Texas born and bred. My prairie-cave blood starts going into hibernation at Fahrenheit 52, which is why I say, "Anywhere but Buffalo!" I don't want this Valentine's Day being the first, last and only I ever get to spend with my sweet Teddy baby: I need sex, like, constantly, and I only want it with him. The very last thing I expect is to end up in divorce court. Howard, how do we possibly make this long-distance thing work? Is there a trick? — **Grizzly Boner**

Dear Gristly Boner: As a man who's been successfully hitched to the turbulent currents of a long-distance relationship for well over a quarter-century now, and with a spouse who resides much further away from his Dallas partner than yours will in Buffalo, and in a climate that makes the windswept, whiteout shores of Lake Erie seem downright pina-colada balmy — I got your back on this one, Gristle, trust me.

So, here's the trick (and I can't emphasize it enough): You must always, *always* speak to your partner every single day. Not every other day, not six days out of seven but every. Single. Day! Adherence. Daily

adherence. I'm talking protease inhibitors' level. Do you hear me, slick? And no texting permitted, either: *Real* voices only. No skip days allowed. No hall passes. Ever. Whether it be only for three seconds, scheduling conflicts be damned, you make the effort: "Hi, honey, in a meeting, can't talk, love you, call you tomorrow!" ... a conversation that my own long-distance spouse and I have exchanged together only about a million times. The secret trick to enjoying a long-term, thoroughly successful and happy marriage is to pick a mutually agreed upon daily time, pick up the friggin' phone and punctually tell your partner you love him. That's *all* it takes.

Dear Howard: I've got two dates lined up on Valentine's already, a third one in the wings, and a boyfriend in Hong Kong who I said I'd be faithful to. I love my boyfriend, but his dick just ain't available. Am I supposed to feel guilty for being horny? — **Succulent Sid**

Dear Succubus: You didn't hear this from me, but as emotions go, guilt is by far the most pointless of them all: Never let sex interfere with love. Admittedly, Sid, size queens such as yourself have always been the Achilles heel of long-distance relationships, yet sexual gizmos and gadgetry we never expected to see in our lifetimes only a couple years back, are now so commonplace that lovers no longer have to occupy even the same bedroom, or same continent, to still have mutually exclusive, monogamous bedroom fun together. Long-distance interactive sex toys are the future, and the future is here: OhMiBod Remote Apps, Durex Fundawear, Empire Labs' Clone-A-Willy, Lovesense Lush Vibes, Vibease Smart Vibrators, Fleshlight Launch Pads to Lovotics Kissinger (a curiously titled robot for transmitting kisses). Some come, some go, some stay the whole show, all share in common what everyone knows: There ain't no such thing as monogamy. Wise is he who adopts the policy of "Ask me no questions and I'll tell you no lies." Or as comedian Chris Rock so succinctly sums it all: "A man is only as faithful as his options." Just date the dick that's biggest, Sid. Be it in Dallas or Dubai. You'll love it more, and guilt-free.

Dear Howard: I'm 19, rent a room in an old, leaning house two blocks from campus; five other guys do, too, but I'm the only gay dude. All of us have part-time jobs to help with tuition and rent. None of us come from the mansions of Highland Park or Preston Hollow. Just the same, though, I'm the only one who actually trudges off to a timeclock job — every afternoon following my week-day classes, plus on weekend nights as well; yes, I wait tables. Why? Because I've no sex appeal. Only the homely nowadays have to work *job* jobs. I ain't joking. Just ask yourself

when exactly was the last time you entered, say, a movie theater, an amusement park, a Marriott or a McDonald's and saw a fuckable employe? The restaurant where I work, management team all the way down to illegal dishwashers, you gotta tie porkchops around our necks just to make the dog play with us. What is my real problem? Lack

room just petting his erection? Stupid is the straight 20something stunner nowadays who still valets, bartends or chauffeurs visiting celebrities about town. What college dude in his right mind with a pretty face and a big cock is gonna run his ass ragged, smiling a chipper "Thank you, sir!" just to fetch some cheapskate asshole's Lamborghini... "Son, fuck with my seat adjustment, and your ass is grass!"

Oh, but to be handsome, dumb and hung. Just ask my five straight homeboy housemates: the gayer they fake it, the more they rake it in. Not a drop of body fluids in our household ever goes to waste, or even sees a drain. The meth head sells his urine online by the pint. The hockey player's used jock straps fetch more than even the identical twins' skid-marked boxers. The place is a veritable 24/7 assembly line of masturbation; still, they can't fill nearly enough condoms to meet their mail order demand. Nobody sucking out anonymous rubbers gets satisfied with just one. I only wish my jizz was sellable. — **Jim**

Dear Gem: You're a true jewel, you are. Even with kaleidoscopic editing, no matter which way I shake about or turn your above fantasy prose, it just still never quite clears the sanity hurdle. I don't mind that you didn't ask me a question. What I mind is that you didn't achieve any ulterior objective via this silly manifesto, whatsoever.

If you're hawking Chaturbate, you fell flat. If you're delivering a diatribe on the injustices of capitalism at its most base, you fell flat. If all you're doing is a satire on the ridiculousness of sporting a pecker, you fell flat. We're all consenting adults here, Jimbo, and we're all agreed upon the creed that one's bedroom door is just like a Valentine's card: One opens it with an assumption already given that what's inside shall light a smile upon one's face.

Dear Howard: I'm a straight Christian female engaged to a man who likes vegetables up his rectum during our intercourse sessions. He insists to me he's one-hundred-percent heterosexual, but the zucchinis sure keep getting bigger. Is this natural? — **The Debate Queen**

Dear HRH Dingbat: Okay, for starters, let's kill the Christian myth that straight men don't enjoy putting "insertables" up their sphincters. One might naturally assume that the market for vibrators to be predominantly female. One would, naturally, be wrong. In truth, 91 percent of men have used them, compared to only 81 percent of women; hence, now that you know what keeps the zucchini industry alive — the one vegetable no men ever actually ask to eat — let's turn now, instead, to your own naturalness: a good Christian girl like you enjoying out of wedlock fleshly pleasures of the loins like you do. You have all our prayers it being the very height of watermelon season for your wedding!

Happy Valentine's, all, my smirking cupids!
— Howard Lewis Russell

Send your questions to AskHoward@dallasvoice.com!



of inspiring erection-appeal "points" is my problem: I'm fat, short and ugly.

The straight dudes where I live, not a one of them has any visible means of support — shiny, rippling young himbos straight out of a Bruce Weber retrospective — they can all afford personal trainers, Equinox memberships, weekly maid service, sandalwood manicures and such cutting-edge camera equipment fill their rooms to make even DreamWorks blush. What sane 16-to-25-year-old is gonna sling hash for, hopefully, \$150 in tips on a good night, when he can earn 10 times that much in a single hour all by himself in the privacy of his own bed-



Having fun at Lambda Legal's kickoff reception for Creating Change 2020. (Photo courtesy Sheryl Lanzel)

Making the SCENE the week of Feb. 7-13:

- **Wine Walk: The Cedar Springs Wine Walk**, usually held on the first Wednesday of each month, was rescheduled this month to Wednesday, Feb. 12, because of last week's weather. Hours 6-9 p.m.
- **1851 Club: Kiana Lee** hosts an all-star cast at 10:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.
- **515 Bar: Test your Trivia skills** from 8-11 p.m. on Thursday.
- **Alexandre's: Vero Voz y Compania** on Friday. **Anton Shaw Band** on Saturday. **Wayne Smith Karaoke** on Sunday. **K-Marie** sings Broadway on Tuesday. **Vero Voz** on Wednesday. **Chris Chism** on Thursday.
- **Cedar Springs Tap House: Hot Mess Hangover Drag Brunch** from 1-3:30 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Club Reflection: Karaoke with a Spin** hosted by **Tucker** from 9 p.m.-2 a.m. on Sunday.
- **Dallas Eagle: United Court of the Lone Star Empire** presents **Rock Around the '50s & '60s** on Friday. **Dallas Bears Club Night** on Saturday. **NLA-Dallas Club Night** on Saturday. **United Court** presents **Dynamic Duets** on Saturday. **Dallas Diablos Third-Half Meet-Up** from 2-5 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Hidden Door: Cher-e-oke!** From 7-10 p.m. on Thursday.
- **House of Blues: Sex in the City Drag Diva Brunch** at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday.
- **JR.'s Bar & Grill: Cassie's Freak Show** with **Rocky, May May, Stefani** and **Lana** on Monday. **Double Trouble with Bleach, Raquel, April** and **Rocky** on Tuesday.
- **Liquid Zoo: Steak Night** starts at 7:30 p.m. on Monday and Friday.
- **Magnum: Come get trashy** with us every Tuesday from 8 p.m.-2 a.m. On Monday, **Club Magnum, Howard Okon, Betty Neal** and **Michael Lybarger** present **Cher's Gypsies: A Farewell Tribute to Sweet Savage**, featuring **Kelexis Davenport, Bubblicious, Tommie Ross, Layla Larue, Sasha Morua, Michael Lybarger, Kennedy Davenport, Toni Andrews, ShaeShae LaReese, Craig Henderson, Taryn Taylor** and **Victoria West**.
- **Marty's Live: Miss Wanda** on Sunday nights.
- **Round-Up Saloon: Boys, Boots and Boxer Briefs** with cash prizes for the winner hosted by **Sassy O'hara** at 10 p.m. on Monday.
- **S4: Miss CEBA Sweetheart Pageant** at 10:30 p.m. on Thursday.
- **Sue Ellen's: Kathy & Bella** and **The Anton Shaw Band** on Sunday. **Corn Hole** from 7-10 p.m. on Wednesday followed by **Queer Off**.
- **The Rose Room: Cassie, Kelexis, Jenna, Josephine O'hara Andrews, Layla, Krystal** and **Fantasha** on Friday and Saturday.
- **Urban Cowboy: Glamazon Prime Drag Brunch** from noon-3:30 p.m. on Sunday. \$20.
- **Woody's Sports & Video Bar: Relive the '90s** from 9 p.m.-close on Monday. **Showtunes Tuesday. Karaoke** from 10 p.m. on Wednesday.



Jaime at Roundup



The late Sweet Savage will be honored with a show Monday at Magnum Dallas.

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Solution on Page 26

Across

- 1 Untouchable head
- 5 Gomer Pyle's branch
- 9 Thomas who wrote 334
- 14 Beginning of *Wicked*
- 15 Cause of Pinocchio's 8-incher
- 16 Sound of a facial discharge
- 17 With 38-Across, with "The," venue for Dolly memorabilia
- 20 Superman's beard?
- 21 Part of the head
- 22 Seed spilled on the farm
- 23 Gay ski weekends rides
- 25 *Lip Service* network
- 27 Sources of delight
- 28 Like an erect nipple
- 32 Disney lamp rubber
- 35 Barbary Coast country
- 38 See 17-Across
- 39 Dolly of this puzzle's theme
- 40 Fraser of *The Mummy*
- 42 Tinkerbell portrayer Julia
- 43 "___ small world"
- 44 *Now and ___*
- 46 Verb ending
- 47 Gomer's "not at all"
- 49 HRC, e.g.

51 Kidron of Wong

Foo fame

55 *Hairspray* actor

59 Venue for The Grande

Ole Opry

61 "... who ___ heaven"

62 Chance beginning

63 Beat, but barely

64 Like Albert, in

The Birdcage

65 Getting on in years

66 Manhandle, with "with"

Down

- 1 Chemist's condiment
- 2 Rubber stamp
- 3 Lots of people go down on them
- 4 Pantywaist
- 5 Bone in a limp wrist
- 6 Joins the team
- 7 No more than
- 8 Tennessee's country, once (abbr.)
- 9 Ophelia and Hamlet or Claire
- 10 SALT subject
- 11 Visit Barneys, e.g.
- 12 Part of Batman's costume
- 13 Hoover hookup that sucks
- 18 Suffix with project
- 19 "___ be my pleasure!"

24 Hrs. in P-town

25 Disney deer

26 Say without thinking

27 Iwo ___

28 Put in a position

29 Lube brand

30 Historic Stonewall disturbances

31 Saint-Saen's "___ Macabre"

33 TV actress Dietrich

34 Lemon that isn't a fruit

36 Second word of a fairy tale

37 Snatch

41 Math degree

42 Second draft

45 Meat on a bun

47 Fran Drescher show, with *The*

48 *Cat ___ Hot Tin Roof*

49 Egg head?

50 Composer Ned

51 Kid needing a butt whipping

52 Brontë woman

53 Respondents to 911

54 Tease

56 Not much, to a Lincoln kid?

57 Harbor pushers

58 "My Cup Runneth Over" singer Ed

60 Poet Dorothy ___ Ratcliffe



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