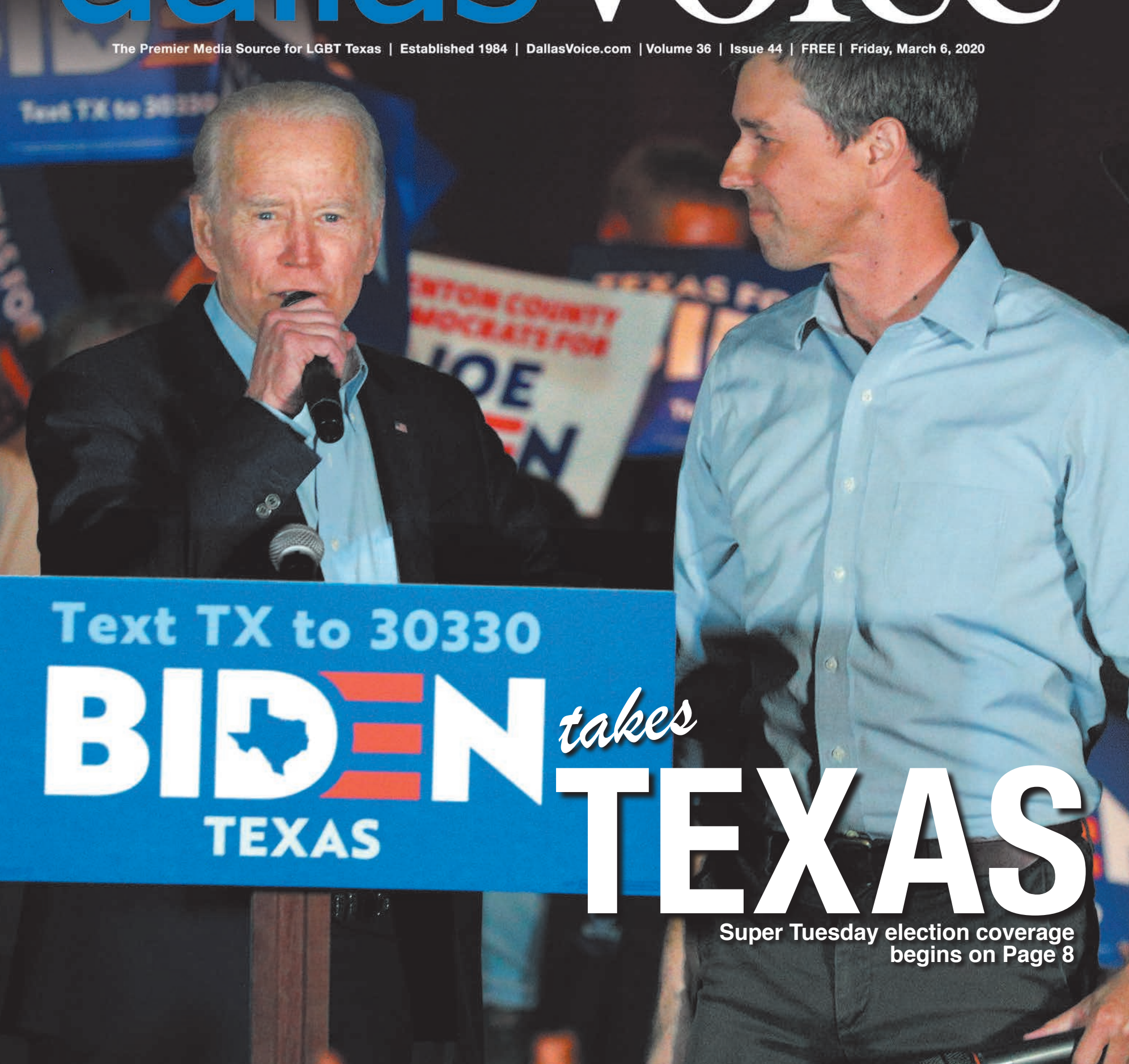


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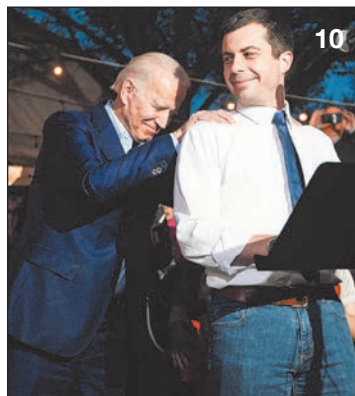
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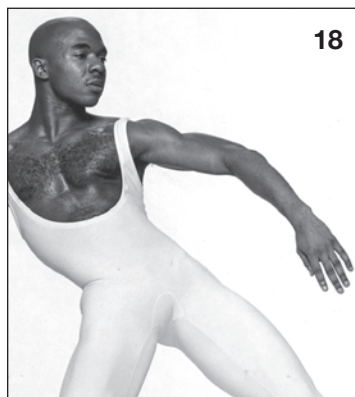
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Beto O'Rourke, right, endorsed Joe Biden at a campaign event March 2 in Dallas. (Richard W. Rodriguez/Associated Press)

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Biden, Klobuchar meet with Houston, Goree

Former Vice President Joe Biden and Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar on Monday night, March 2, met with Stephanie Houston, the mother of slain transgender woman Muhlaysia Booker of Dallas, and LGBTQ activist Ahmad Goree following Biden's presidential campaign rally earlier that evening at Gilley's in Dallas.

Klobuchar, who announced Monday she was ending her own campaign for president, was in Dallas to announce she will be supporting Biden's campaign.

Following her daughter's murder last May, Houston began working with Goree and other activists at Abounding Prosperity Inc. in South Dallas to create the Muhlaysia Booker Foundation to serve transgender women. Goree is president of the MBF board and public affairs director for Abounding Prosperity Inc., an HIV/AIDS organization.

According to Goree, Biden told Houston he was proud of her and offered to support her and the Muhlaysia Booker Foundation by connecting her with his daughter. Klobuchar commended Houston on her bravery. Both Biden and Klobuchar "expressed their extreme support of the transgender community," Goree said.

Houston said, "I was glad to have received an opportunity to sit down and personally speak to Mr. Biden and Sen. Klobuchar. It meant a lot to know that they support transgender women and the hard work we are doing here to help combat the issues they face."

Goree added, "It was an honor and a privilege to be a part of an important conversation with Vice President Biden, Sen. Klobuchar and Ms. Houston to discuss the importance of supporting our transgender sisters and brothers. Stephanie and I and others will not stop fighting for this community."

— Tammye Nash

Tiffany, Jennifer Holliday to headline MetroBall 15

'Eighties pop queen Tiffany is returning to the S4 stage as the headliner for MetroBall

15, and she will be joined by Grammy-winning Dreamgirl Jennifer Holliday, Thea Austin (formerly of SNAP) and local entertainer Chris Chism to kick the fundraising party's 15th anniversary celebration into high gear.

MetroBall is presented each year by the Greg

Dolgener Memorial AIDS Fund, the nonprofit that helps fill in the funding gap for other agencies serving people in the HIV/AIDS community.

MetroBall 15 is set for Friday, June 5, at S4 (Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road), and more than 700 people are expected to attend, according to GDMAF founder David Hearn. In addition to the stellar lineup of performers, MetroBall will include a silent auction featuring more than 100 items and a DJ dance party.

Advance tickets are \$40, available online now at GDMAF.org; tickets at the door will be \$50. A limited number of VIP packages — which include a Diamond Access Meet-and-Greet with the stars — are also available at the GDMAF website. Beginning April 1, a limited number of \$40 advance tickets will be available for "cash only" purchase at the UPS Store on Cedar Springs Road.

— Tammye Nash

Virginia bans conversion therapy for minors

Virginia's Gov. Ralph Northam on Monday, March 2, signed legislation making Virginia the 20th state — and the first southern state — to protect LGBTQ minors from conversion therapy. The bill goes into effect July 1.

Conversion therapy, which allegedly turns gay people straight, has been widely condemned by every leading medical and mental health organization in the U.S.

The other 19 states to have banned such so-called therapy are (in the order in which the bans went into effect): New Jersey, California, Oregon, Illinois, Vermont, New Mexico, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Nevada, Washington, Hawaii, Delaware, Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, Massachusetts, Colorado, Maine and Utah. The District of Columbia and more than 60 municipalities have adopted similar laws.

According to an estimate from the Williams Institute at UCLA Law, more than 350,000 LGBTQ minors have been subjected to so-called "conversion therapy," which studies have linked to these youth being more than twice as likely to experience depression, and nearly three times more likely to attempt suicide.

— 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.

• **March 6: Senior Living Conference**
UNT Dallas presents the annual Senior Living Conference, focusing on "Senior Preparedness, from 9 a.m.-10 p.m. in UNT Dallas' Campus Hall, 7300 University Hills Blvd. The event, which features Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, is free to seniors, but space is limited. For information call Susan Zeb at 214-922-8885 or email her at susan.zeb@mail.house.gov.

• **March 6: GALA Karaoke Night**
The North Texas Gay and Lesbian Alliance hosts First Friday Karaoke Night at Plano Super Bowl, 2521 K Ave. in Plano. For information visit GALANorthTexas.org or email info@galantx.org.

• **March 9: Gender inclusive career workshop**
Navigating the workplace as a trans or gender variant person can come with questions and challenges. These free workshops empower with information on how to prepare, search, find, interview and land a compatible and inclusive job. From 6:30-7:30 p.m. at

Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road. Free.

• **March 10: 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.

• **March 11: PrimeTimers**
Dinner at 7 p.m. at Mario's, 5404 Lemmon Ave. 214-218-0912.

• **March 12: Punch Bowl Social**
The LGBT Chamber of Commerce holds its Business Connections Mixer/ New Member Showcase at Punch Bowl Social, 2600 Main St. LGBTChamber.com.

• **March 12: Thrive mixer**
Dinner with speaker award-winning master gardener Nancy Wilson from 6-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road. MyResourceCenter.org.

• **March 12-15: TBRU XXV**
Texas Bear Round Up's theme this year is A Roman Holiday. Hyatt Regency Dallas, 300 Reunion Blvd. TBRU.org.

• **March 13: DFW Pride Happy Hour**
The LGBT Chamber of Commerce Foundation presents DFW Pride Happy Hour, hosted by TMC: The Mining

Company, 3903 Cedar Springs Road. For information email lisa.howe@glbtchamber.com or call 214-865.7313.

• **March 13-15: Sweethearts & Orphans**
Classic Chassis Car Club visits Waxahachie's Sweethearts & Orphans car event. Info at ClassicChassis.com.

• **March 14: DFW Gaymers**
Game night for LGBTQ gaymers from 7:30-10:50 p.m. at Common Ground Games, 1328 Inwood Road.

• **March 14: Graffiti Arts Festival**
Spray can artists create billboard-sized murals, shop for crafts and eat from food trucks from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at 1953 Golden Heights Road, Fort Worth.

• **March 14: PrimeTimers**
Irish Fest at 10 a.m. at Fair Park. 214-218-0912.

• **March 16: DIFFA Dallas' 30th Anniversary Celebration**
DIFFA Dallas celebrates its 30th anniversary with House of DIFFA Extravaganza, the annual black tie gala raising awareness and money for HIV/AIDS services. For tickets and information visit DIFFADallas.org.

• **March 16: Gender inclusive career workshop**

Navigating the workplace as a trans or gender variant person can come with questions and challenges. These free workshops empower with information on how to prepare, search, find, interview and land a compatible and inclusive job from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road. Free.

• **March 16: Pride Festival tickets go on sale**

Tickets to the 2020 Pride festival on June 6 go on sale. Purchase tickets at DallasPride.org.

• **March 17: St. Patrick's Day**

• **March 18: PrimeTimers**
Lunch at 12:30 p.m. at Cheddars, 12355 Greenville Ave. 214-218-0912.

• **March 19: Born Perfect**
Panel discussion on reparative therapy at 7 p.m. at The Riveter, 3333 Welborn Ave.

• **March 20: Pride beneficiary applications due**
Deadline to apply to be a Pride festival beneficiary. Register by 5 p.m. DallasPride.org.

Everyone Deserves a Spring Break!



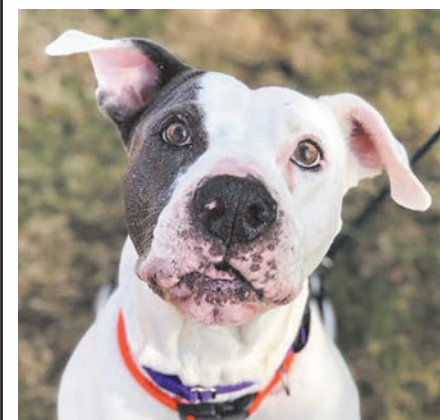
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Gretel is waiting for you at the SPCA of Texas' Jan Rees-Jones Animal Care Center in Dallas, 2400 Lone Star Drive (near I-30 and Hampton Road). Hours are noon-6 p.m. Sun-Wed and noon-p.m. Thurs-Sat. Regular adoption fees are \$150 for puppies and kittens aged 0-6 months and \$75 for adult dogs and cats aged 6 months or older. Fee includes spay/neuter surgery, age-appropriate vaccinations, a heartworm test for dogs six months and older and a FIV/FelV test for cats 4 months and older, initial flea/tick preventative and heartworm preventative, a microchip, 30 days of PetHealth Insurance provided by PetHealth, a free 14-day wellness exam with VCA Animal Hospitals, a rabies tag and a free leash. Call 214-742-SPCA (7722) or visit today.

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Keeping your pet safe from poisons

Welcome back! I am thrilled to share with you more information about animals through my monthly Dallas

Voice column.

In February, we discussed dental care with our dogs and cats, but now we have a new topic: Across our nation, March is known as the Poison Prevention Awareness Month. One important thing to be aware of is that technically anything can be toxic if it is consumed in big enough quantities or if a person or pet is exposed to it long enough.

Some common examples include sugar and alcohol, although many of us love these poisons any day of the year!

Even though we will focus on the most common poisons and toxic products found in most homes, just know that other things can be toxic as well.

Most people know that chocolate is toxic for pets. Baking chocolate is the most toxic type, while white chocolate is the least toxic. Chocolate has methylxanthines, a substance that can lead to vomiting, diarrhea, cardiac issues, seizures and even death. Needless to say, if a Great Dane eats one chocolate chip, it probably would not be as concerning as, say, a Chihuahua eating a whole bag of Snickers candy bars.

Technically, we are not supposed to give human food to our pets (with some exceptions, like carrots). But let us face reality: Most of us cannot resist those faces begging us for food!

However, be careful with onions and garlic, as these foods can damage blood cells. You also have to be careful with xylitol, a sweetener used in some types of gum, candies and even some peanut butter brands.

If your fur baby ingests a xylitol-containing product, it can lead to hypoglycemia, seizures and liver failure. Ingestion of xylitol should always be considered an emergency.

Grapes and raisins are known to be toxic to be dogs, potentially causing kidney failure. With cats, lilies can be deadly when ingested, causing kidney failure. It is not known why grapes, raisins and lilies are toxic to our pets; we just know they are.

Now let's talk about alcohol. Most of the people that we know love alcohol, but it can cause sickness and even death in our pets. So, whenever you are enjoying your mimosa or wine or beer, keep your fur baby sober.

Nicotine can also be deadly to our pets. Even cigarette butts may contain enough nicotine to send your baby to the emergency room, so make sure you dispose of them safely.



WOOF

Dr. Josh Talks Animals

When it comes to plants, some are more toxic than others. Overall, ingestion of any plant material can cause vomiting and/or diarrhea.

But some plants can cause more serious issues.

There is one plant that everyone knows about: Marijuana. Ingestion of marijuana by our fur babies can lead to neurological and cardiac issues. These intoxicated babies can also get startled easily and seem uncoordinated.

Pets can also get intoxicated with baked goods that contain cannabis. If you suspect that your pet may have ingested marijuana, do not feel like you need to avoid telling your vet! We need to know in order to treat your baby quickly and efficiently. Most of us will not even judge you!

As a general rule, do not ever give medications to your pet that you use for yourself without consulting your veterinarian. Some common medications used in human medicine may have a different use with animals or may even be toxic to them.

For example, ibuprofen can cause stomach ulceration with dogs, which can lead to stomach rupture. They can also cause kidney failure and neurological disease that can end in seizures and death. Acetaminophen and ibuprofen are considered lethal to cats!

If you ever suspect your fur baby has ingested or been exposed to anything toxic, please make sure to contact your veterinarian or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center at 888-426-4435 right away, as they are available 24/7. Make a note of what your baby ingested, including time and quantity. If there is a wrapper or label, save it so that you can use that information.

Lastly, if Dr. Google says *anything* about *anything*, confirm with your veterinarian if it is true or not. ;)

Thank you so much for taking the time to read my column, and I look forward to sharing more information on the first Friday of every month! Until then, keep your fur babies safe. Abrazos!

Dr. Josh owns Isla Veterinary Boutique Hospital in 14380 Marsh Ln. Ste. 110 Addison, TX 75001 (Next to Tom Thumb). Contact him by phone at 972-738-1111 or visit IslaVet.com.

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LGBTQ candidates shine on Super Tuesday

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor

nash@dallasvoice.com

LGBTQ candidates, and non-LGBTQ candidates who sought the community's support, did well in the Texas primary elections on Super Tuesday, including Gina Ortiz Jones, who could become the first openly LGBTQ person to represent Texas in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Jones won the Democratic primary in Texas' 23rd congressional district without a runoff, despite there being five candidates in the race. Jones claimed 66.83 percent of the 65,553 votes cast in the primary to advance to the general election in November against the winner of a runoff between Tony Gonzales (28.12 percent) and Raul Reyes (23.34 percent). There were nine Republican candidates in all, accounting for a total of 41,062 votes.

District 23 is currently held by Republican incumbent Will Hurd, who chose not to run for reelection.

Openly LGBTQ Republican candidate Mauro Garza, who owns the San Antonio LGBTQ nightclub Pegasus, brought in 33.3 percent of the vote in the 20th congressional district, the most of the five candidates in that race. He now faces Gary Allen, who earned 26.87 percent, in a runoff.

Democratic incumbent Joaquin Castro had two challengers in the primary but still claimed 91.88 percent of the 67,185 votes cast in that race. All five GOP primary candidates combined could muster only 23,157 votes.

Texas House

Of the five LGBTQ incumbents in the Texas House of Representatives, four faced no primary opponents, and the fifth won her race handily.

Texas House District 45 incumbent Erin Zwiener, the legislature's only openly bisexual member, won her primary with 69.19 percent of the vote. Zwiener got 16,035 of the 23,185 total votes cast in her race; that's more than the top two candidates combined — 15,355 — in the GOP primary for District 45. All three GOP candidates combined brought in only 17,203 votes.

Republican candidates Carrie Isaac (47.88 percent) and Kent "Bud" Wymore (41.38 percent) are in a runoff for the Republican nomination in District 45.

Democratic incumbents state representatives Mary Gonzalez in District 75 (El Paso County) and Jessica Gonzalez from District 104 (Dallas) faced no primary challengers and will have no Republican challengers in November, sealing their return to the Capitol.

Democratic incumbent state representatives Celia Israel in District 50 (Austin) and Julie Johnson in District 115 (northwest Dallas County) were both unop-



Gina Ortiz Jones

posed in their primary races but do have Republican challengers in the general election. Israel garnered 19,772 votes on Tuesday, compared to GOP nominee Larry DeLaRose, who got only 5,745 votes in the primary. Johnson got 6,901 votes in the Democratic primary, compared to Karyn Brownlee's 7,513 votes in the GOP primary.

Six more LGBTQ candidates either won their Democratic primary races or secured a place in a runoff on Tuesday, as did one LGBTQ Republican candidate. Eric Holguin in District 32, Eliz Markowitz in District 28 and Stephanie Phillips in District 73 were all unopposed in their primary races.

Holguin, who got 9,407 votes this week, now faces Republican incumbent Todd Hunter in November. Hunter, who was also unopposed in the primary, received 9,902 votes. Markowitz got 16,294 primary votes and will face incumbent Republican Gary Gates, who won his primary with 95.28 percent — or 19,444 — of the 20,407 total votes cast. And in District 73, Stephanie Phillips was unopposed, getting 10,720 votes, compared to unopposed Republican incumbent Kyle Biedermann's vote total of 30,062.

Transgender woman Addison Perry-Frank made some history in West Texas' District 83, winning the Democratic primary there with 54.03 percent, or

2,893 of the 5,354 total votes cast. In the GOP primary, incumbent Dustin Burrows was unopposed, and pulled in 22,050 votes.

Also making history was transgender candidate Jennifer Rene Pool, who claimed 29.53 percent of the 6,654

votes cast in Houston's District 138 Democratic primary to get into a runoff with top-vote-getter Akilah Bacý, who got 45.58. The winner of the runoff will face Republican Lacey Hull in November. Hull won her primary race with 59.41 percent of the 9,127 total votes cast.

Another LGBTQ candidate in Houston, Ann Johnson in District 134, claimed 70.64 percent of the 16,939 total votes cast in her Democratic primary race and will face Republican incumbent Sarah Davis in November. Davis had no primary opponent and brought in 10,596 votes.

Shawn Terry, the openly gay candidate for Texas House District 108 earned 27.26 percent of the vote in that Democratic primary to place second, but Joanna Cattanch, who was endorsed by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas, won the three-way race outright with 58.51 percent of the 12,746 total votes cast. She now faces Republican Morgan Meyer, to whom she lost the District 108 election in 2016 by only 220 votes, in the November general election. Meyer was unopposed in the Republican primary, getting 9,172 votes total.

Other races

Laurie Eiserloh, who was the second executive director of the Lesbian/Gay



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The rainbow ballot

LGBTQ voters turn out for Democratic primaries

JAMES RUSSELL | Contributing Writer
james.journo@gmail.com

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people came out this week — to vote in the presidential primaries, that is. An NBC exit poll conducted in 12 of 14 states on Super Tuesday showed one in 10 voters identified as LGBT. In Texas, 10 percent of Democratic primary voters identified as LGBT.

A third of LGBT Election Day voters are younger than 30 years old, while 65 percent of the LGBT voters today are under 45, the NBC report noted. About four in 10 supported Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders in the Democratic primary while 21 percent backed Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who dropped out of the race on Thursday, March 5. Another 19 percent voted for former Vice President Joe Biden, and 6 percent voted for former New York City Mayor Mike Bloomberg.

Former South Bend, Ind., Mayor Pete Buttigieg, the first openly gay candidate to earn delegates in a presidential primary race, earned 6 percent support. Both he and Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar ended their campaigns this week and endorsed Biden.

This year “marks the most pro-equality field of Democratic presidential candidates in U.S. history,” Human Rights Campaign President Alphonso David said in a statement after Tuesday’s voting. “Our power has continued to grow, and candidates are seeing us increasingly for the critical voting bloc we are and have pursued us vigorously, releasing policy after policy providing more details about their LGBT platforms than any other Democratic primary field in history.”

In Texas, those votes helped propel a slate of out and allied candidates to vic-



Pete Buttigieg, right, endorses Joe Biden at a campaign event on March 2 in Dallas. (Juan Figueroa/The Dallas Morning News via AP)

tory in their Congressional primaries in swing districts, such as Congressional District 23, where lesbian candidate Gina Ortiz Jones led the Democratic pack in the race to replace retiring Republican incumbent Will Hurd, and in Congressional District 21, where ally and former Texas Sen. Wendy Davis won the Democratic Primary to face off against anti-LGBT Congressman Dan Crenshaw in November.

In a pivotal North Texas seat, 2018 Agriculture Commissioner candidate Kim Olson former Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD member Candace Valenzuela have advanced to a May 26 runoff. Both support LGBT rights.

Olson is backed by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas, and Valenzuela is backed by out Dallas City Councilman Omar Narvaez. The winner of that runoff will face former Irving Mayor Beth Van Duyne, who opposes LGBT rights, in the general election to fill then seat now held by Republican incumbent Kenny Marchant, who is retiring.

“Pro equality voters are coming out in significant numbers,” said Equality Texas spokesperson Angela Hale. “It’s a situation where we’re showing our political leaders we support pro-LGBT candidates.”

According to a Public Religion Research Institute study, 66 percent, or



By the numbers

- According to the Texas Secretary of State’s election results website, more Texans voted in the Democratic presidential primary — 2,076,046 — than in the Republican presidential primary — 2,008,385.

- In the Democratic primary, by the time about 57 percent of the precincts had reported results on Tuesday night, voters had already eclipsed the 2016 primary turnout of 1.4 million. And this turnout came despite the fact that voters across the state found themselves waiting in line for, in some places, as much as five hours. Final numbers show that the 2020 Democratic primary turnout was more than 200,000 over the 2016 turnout.

• In the final count:

- * Joe Biden won 751,071 votes, or 33.90 percent.
- * Bernie Sanders won 658,042 votes, or 29.70 percent.
- * Michael Bloomberg won 329,206 votes, or 14.86 percent.
- * Elizabeth Warren won 253,650 votes, or 11.45 percent.
- * Pete Buttigieg won 92,334 votes, or 4.17 percent.
- * Amy Klobuchar won 48,906 votes, or 2.21 percent.
- * Julian Castro won 17,252 votes, or 0.78 percent.
- Democratic candidates need at least 1,991 delegates to win the nomination on the first vote at the Democratic National Convention, July 13-16, in Milwaukee. Super delegates do not participate in the first vote.

As of Thursday, March 5, all but three candidates — Biden, Sanders and Hawaii Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard — had dropped out of the race. Biden was leading in the delegate with 596, followed closely by Sanders with 531. Gabbard had only one delegate, which she earned on Super Tuesday by placing second, behind former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg in voting in American Samoa.

Elizabeth Warren, who had 65 delegates, dropped out of the race on Thursday. She said she was not yet endorsing either Biden or Sanders. Bloomberg, who dropped out on Wednesday and has endorsed Biden, had 58 delegates. Buttigieg, who dropped out Sunday, had 26 delegates, and Klobuchar, who dropped out Monday, had seven delegates; they both have endorsed Biden.



one in three, Texans support LGBT rights. That was clear in the 2018 elections, Hale noted.

“Voters showed people like former Rep. Ron Simmons, the bathroom bill author, the door and targeted other anti-LGBT candidates,” she said. “Equality is a winning message.” ■

Coalition for Aging seeks board members

Committee members may also assist in gathering information, providing education and engaging the community

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Coalition for Aging LGBT is an ambitious four-county organization that is currently seeking board members to specialize in one of several categories — housing, advocacy and education and social engagement.

Last year, CFA published its first assisted living housing guide. Portland print-

ed an eight-page brochure on its area facilities, so the DFW group produced an 8-page “North Texas LGBT-Friendly Senior Housing Guide.” This year, the organization’s goal is to add home healthcare options as well as re-certify those facilities that made it into the first housing guide.

Home healthcare is important because many aging LGBTQ people are opting to remain in their homes as long as possible, coalition officials explained. Having some assistance can keep people in their homes longer, and knowing the company they’re hiring can be trusted is important.

Those board members specializing in housing options would be contacting facilities and rating their inclusiveness. But as part of its certification, companies need to offer LGBTQ sensitivity training to its employees. That’s where the advocacy



Nominating committee members John Reiger and Emma Colquitt are searching for new CFA LGBT board and committee members. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

and education elements come in. CFA is looking to expand its team of volunteers to provide training to staff of assisted living facilities throughout the area.

Social engagement is also important in the health of aging members of the LGBTQ community. When CFA contacted companies throughout North Texas about whether LGBTQ people are welcome in their facilities, all responded “of course.” But when asked what programming they offer to keep LGBTQ residents interested or safe, none could give an answer, coalition officials said.

The social engagement committee offers a variety of programming and program ideas to help facilities fill in those gaps. One facility shuttles a few of its residents to Cedar Springs Road once a week; another has put Gaybingo on its monthly program offerings. But other programs might be as simple as showing a film that’s of some interest to LGBTQ residents.

Anyone interested in joining the board or participating on a committee should contact Emma Colquitt at emma.colquitt@att.net. ■



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SUPER TUESDAY From Page 8

Rights Lobby of Texas — now known as Equality Texas, after founding executive director Glen Maxey, is in a runoff with Delia Garza for the office of Travis County Attorney. Eiserloh was the top vote-getter, with 43.63 percent, and Garza had 38.15 percent. The other two candidates in the race were Mike Denton and Dominic Selvera. There is no Republican candidate, so the winner of the runoff will win the office.

In the race for the Democratic nomination to face off against Republican incumbent U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, military veteran MJ Hegar got 22.77 percent of the vote in a crowded field, and as of Wednesday, votes were still being counted to decide if she will face former state Sen. Royce West of Cristina Tzintzun Ramirez in the runoff. As of Wednesday afternoon, March 4, with 5,187 of the 5,212 polling locations statewide having reported results, West had 14.53 percent of the vote to Ramirez's 13.27 percent.

Democrats statewide cast 1,839,258 in that primary race, while Cornyn claimed 76.32 percent of the 1,924,822 votes cast in the Republican primary to defeat four challengers and advance to the November general election.

Texas Republican Platform Proposition 6:

Republican primary voters this week voted overwhelmingly to approve 10 proposed platform planks, including the factually inaccurate and anti-transgender Proposition 6. Proposition 6 reads: "Texas should ban chemical castration, puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and genital mutilation surgery on all minor children for transition purposes, given that Texas children as young as three (3) are being transitioned from their biological sex to the opposite sex."

The other proposed platform planks include a call for no restrictions on prayer in public schools; a rejection of any restrictions on "the right to keep and bear arms;" a ban on taxpayer-funded lobbying; support for construction of Trump's border wall; a declaration that parents or legal guardians are to be the sole decision makers on healthcare matters for children under 18, including psychological assessments and treatment, contraception and sex education; a call to "protect and preserve" all historical monuments, artifacts and buildings, including "our beloved Alamo;" a demand that election officials follow orders from the governor's office regarding purging "illegal voters" from the Texas voter rolls and verifying that every new voter that registers is a Texas citizen; a call for bail in criminal cases to be based on whether the person is a danger to society or a flight risk and not their ability to pay; and a call to limit Texas legislative terms to 12 years.



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Trump's failed response to the coronavirus

P.S.: Wash your hands. Often

Public Service Announcement: Wash your hands — more than you already do. And get yourself a bottle of rubbing alcohol and some cotton balls and swab down your phone on the daily.

As an expert on disease transmission recently said on "This Podcast Will Kill You," there is definitely poop on your phone.

You're welcome.

So. Coronavirus. Not good. But also not something to panic about. At least, not yet.

Who knows? Maybe it will be the thing to wipe out civilization. But when you watch Donald Trump telling his brainwashed supporters at a rally in South Carolina that the coronavirus is a hoax — well, you can't say we didn't have it coming.

Speaking of brainwashed supporters, on Feb. 28, U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., tweeted, "Once upon a time, when politics & media was inhabited by normal people, a viral outbreak was treated as a public health matter. But now even an infectious disease caused by a virus, a submicroscopic infectious agent, is a domestic partisan political issue to exploit. Crazy."

Oh, yeah. It's crazy all right.

Self-described "mouthy gay" Steve Kenson had the perfect response: "As a gay man who came of age during the AIDS era of the 1980s," he tweeted, "I'm intensely curious for you, a Republican senator, to tell me more about how virus outbreaks were once handled apolitically."

It took President Ronald Reagan until 1985 to even say "AIDS" publicly. By then, according to NBC News, more than 12,000 people had died.

In 1982, Reagan's press secretary Larry Speakes laughed when asked about AIDS at a press conference. The reporter referred to it as "gay plague," to which Speakes replied, "I don't have it, do you?" And everybody laughed.

Reagan's religious-right supporters like Jerry Falwell were declaring that



D'Anne Witkowski
Creep of the Week

AIDS was God's punishment for homosexuality. Reagan didn't want to lose that sweet right-wing support by seeming to give a shit about gays, so he just let people die.

Are those the "normal" people who inhabited politics and media that Rubio was talking about?

I mean, I'll give him the fact that there are people who are definitely not normal in politics right now. Chief among them is Trump, who believes that the virus will magically disappear once the weather gets warmer in April.

Trump can't assure the nation that the government has this coronavirus thing under control, because 1. it doesn't, and 2. Trump is only concerned about himself and remaining in power.

And then there's Mike Pence, Mr. Coronavirus Task Force, who exacerbated an HIV/AIDS outbreak in Indiana when he was governor there, because he needed to take time to pray on whether or not needle exchange programs were a good idea. He also believes that electrocuting people will turn them heterosexual and that science is dark magic.

The Trump administration is actively trying to prevent the release of factual information about the coronavirus to the public and seems mainly concerned with the stock market rather than public health. Meanwhile, Trump is calling news agencies that report on the virus fake news.

Not helpful!

That said, the news media's coverage of the coronavirus outbreak is problematic at best. The breathless coverage of



every single new confirmed case and every death are much more likely to inspire panic than precautions.

But even if this doesn't become the next flu pandemic of 1917, what's truly terrifying is that we have a woefully incompetent crime syndicate running the show. As a country, we are not prepared, because our government is headed by the dumbest man in America.

And he's also a liar. On Last Week Tonight, John Oliver took Trump to task for ignoring or contradicting his own health experts, often in real time. "Your experts just said cases will go up, and you said they would go down," Oliver said. "You can't just ignore real numbers and pick out ones you like better."

But, of course, he can. And he does.

And instead of focusing on Trump's lies and incompetence, much of the media is proceeding as if things were still normal.

But things are not normal.

Are we all doomed? Well, only time will tell when it comes to coronavirus. But we can't keep on going on as a country with this administration in charge.

Trump may be fighting any connection to the outbreak response right now, but chances are, if the numbers of infected and dead get huge enough, he'll be more than happy to take credit for anything seen as helping curb the outbreak. And at least Rubio will Tweet some more Bible verses and Pence will pray for you.

Who needs health insurance with coverage like that?

And, once again, wash your hands, cover your coughs and sneezes and swab that cellphone. You know where it's been.

D'Anne Witkowski is a poet, writer and comedian living in Michigan with her wife and son. She has been writing about LGBT politics for over a decade. Follow her on Twitter @MamaDWitkowski.



Photos courtesy Steven Trumon Gray and Chad Wagner

Being his own (girly) man

Out artist John Duff on why 'iconic' is overused, being understood and Paula Abdul calling him 'strange'

In his 2018 debut music video "Girly," singer-songwriter-director John Duff is seen imitating some of music's biggest pop icons, replicating the shot-by-shot choreography of Madonna's "Hung Up" video and Mariah Carey's gesticulations and eyelash-bat-

ting in "Heartbreaker." It was impressive, like Duff had been practicing his whole life.

And, well, basically he had been. In the case of Britney Spears' "Stronger," he'd been mirroring Spears' choreo since grade-school summer camp. For

the hip-pop mid-tempo "Rich," his follow-up to "Girly" released in September, the 30-year-old performer created a satirical and celebratory commentary on pop culture's love-hate obsession with the rich and famous, in part by impersonating Kim Kardashian's internet-breaking, butt-exposed cover shoot. Duff, who graduated with a B.F.A. in musical theater from Syracuse University, also currently stars in *Cubby*, his film debut that its director, Michael Blane, describes as a story about "three different generations of men looking for acceptance and love."

When we connected recently, Duff had gotten acrylic nails and was feeling "very Marilyn Monroe/Mariah Carey, like helpless, like I can't pick things up with this hand." He clanked his nails on a table for me to hear over the phone while we talked about making a place for himself in the music industry after believing there wasn't one for him, experiencing homophobia from Simon Cowell and Paula Abdul on *The X Factor* and being understood. ■

— Chris Azzopardi

Dallas Voice: How did you end up here?

Is this what little John Duff envisioned for himself? John Duff: I started as a talent show kid because there aren't really outlets for an artist when you're in third grade, but I think my idea was to always be a performer. Growing up in a suburb of Baltimore, there weren't many opportunities to really be on a stage, so I did get into public speaking, I did get into musical theater, and those became my main outlets. Then, of course, I went to college for musical theater, graduated, did shows in New York for years and then found my way to Los Angeles to write music. The rest just made sense to me. I like the big imagery of the old days, and people who really were doing something, not just ... well, I don't know what the other people are doing, honestly. [Laughs]

Who are the other people? Just, you know, all the other artists that I've kind of been a little bewildered by. For the generation that uses the word "iconic" more than anything, I think we have some of the *least* iconic imagery that's existed in pop music in the last couple of years.

Growing up, you were a Janet, Madonna and Mariah fan, and so you do seem to have an appreciation for an era when



real artistry flourished. Well, it's not just real artistry; it's also budget that they put into everything. My sisters are 43 and 45, so I had them in high school driving me around when I was in first grade, second grade. And my sister had [Mariah Carey's] *Fantasy* CD single, and I stole it from her.

Did you start imitating Mariah and other pop icons in your youth? Yeah. I spent most of my time in my basement, and I had Janet Jackson's video collections and Michael Jackson's *HIStory* video collection, and I had Mariah's live Thanksgiving special, and I was an *American Idol* kid. So I had all these things on tape, and I would just watch and watch and imitate. When it came time to start performing in talent shows, I think I wanted to do Britney Spears just because I could really dance then, but my parents were very insistent that I stick to the classics. So I did Elvis and Frank Sinatra. Michael Jackson was the first time I was allowed to bend a little. I mean, I didn't have friends until junior year of high school — that was the first time I had any semblance of a social life — so it was just me, by myself. So I know the words to every song. I'm like a savant.

In 2018, you posted a video of you singing a song you wrote, called "Thoughts and Prayers," to YouTube, and I think I was surprised to find out that you can actually sing, only because I don't expect much from gay Instagram. Oh, yeah. I kind of had fun with that when "Girly" was just coming out by letting people think I was going to do something stupid, and then once it came out I think a lot of

people wrote it off as a fluke, which is like, go off. You can totally do that. Because I know what I am. With "Rich," we'd done the video a while back, and the song is like — god, my manager's gonna kill me for saying all of this, but it was never my favorite song. But the imagery made such sense to me. So it was sort of supposed to follow up "Girly" right away, but we were having some issues with the original producers of the song because not everyone in Hollywood is nice, I don't know if you knew that.

So I've heard. [Laughs] They're not all in it for the art of it, that's for damn sure. And so we had a lot of issues, and it took some time. But I ended up getting to work with Alex Delicata, who's a great producer and has created songs that are some of my favorite songs, and he really turned that one around. So in terms of production, I love it. Very happy. But I'm really happy for everything that's to come.

What's to come? Is there a full album on the way? At this point, I would say that I can genuinely look at my playlist of songs that I've created, and we have about 30 that I think are good enough to stand in their respective realm. We're trying to hone in on what exactly the introductory sound is, and "Girly" and "Rich" have kind of set that up. But I think the next moves get a little more specific in terms of who I am and what my inspirations are and what I want to be.

Are you still figuring that out? And as a pop artist, is authenticity important to

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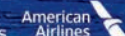
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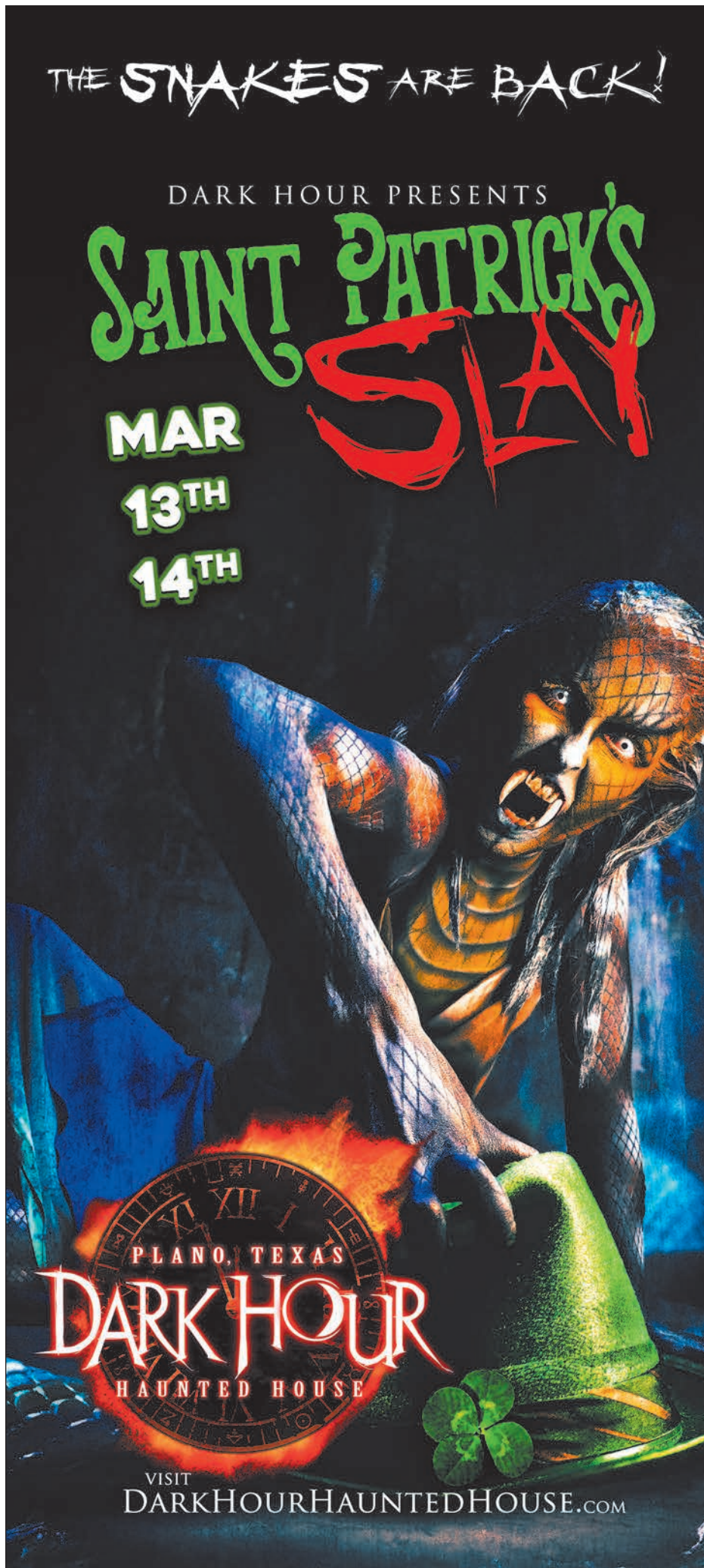
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you? Well, that's the thing: I'm a very, very layered human being like everybody else is. I guess I am actually a very deep-feeling and -thinking person, so that's kind of a hard thing to cover off the bat. I think I'm being very authentic to my ideas, my wit and parts of myself in terms of the next couple of things we're putting out, and there is sincerity there. But it'll be a minute before I get to really give you some of the depth of my humanity.

Well, it took seven years before we got Mariah's *Butterfly* album, where she went her deepest musically. Sure, yeah, and we know that some of Mariah's really great, serious, deep works were written long before they came out or had been in the works for years. And so I've got three songs on here that I'm like, "Oh my god, these are game-changer." They're so important, but they're not for right now. It doesn't make sense to lead with them. And my parents really don't understand that. Because they heard all of my music, and they're like, "What about this one?" There's this ballad that they just – it's about death, and I'm like, "How the hell am I gonna put out a song about death after 'Girly' and 'Rich'?" It's just not gonna happen.

What does your mom and dad think about the video for "Rich?" My dad told me this: "We like the video." They prefer "Girly," though. "Rich" is melodically cocky and hip-hop-y, and their generation just doesn't understand that at all. Like, swag doesn't process for them, and that's fine.

You've expressed some frustration with the industry. Is it hard to convince these industry heads which songs you think should be out at this current moment in time? Absolutely. I say it all the time, and we know this is common talk around town: Nobody knows what is going to work now. Now, 10 years ago? Sure, they knew. Twenty years ago? They definitely knew. But no one could've ever predicted [Lil Nas X's] "Old Town Road" would've been the biggest hit of all time. So there's a lot of people whose literal job it is to try to predict what's gonna happen.

Does being an out gay artist add to the challenge? It's really weird. It's weird, because we just all get compared to each other. We're looking to get on the same public interviews and the same whatever, and that's probably how you end up getting compared is the same people are promoting you. So being an out gay artist,



I don't personally think it helps or hurts *me*. I don't know about everybody else. And I don't even know what I mean by that. I can only speak for myself, I guess, is what I mean.

Have you ever experienced any kind of homophobia in the industry? Absolutely. Look, I was on *The X Factor*, Simon Cowell's show. And of course, this was not aired on television, but within three seconds of being on stage, he asked if I would've preferred to have been born into a female's body. This was 2011, so there was no representation. I think Sam Smith had just come out with a single, and I don't think he was gay. It was super hard for me to go on a show that's run by the same people who are selling those records and have no comment on my talent whatsoever. Paula Abdul called me "strange." What was strange about me? That I was gay.

Did you challenge her on that? No, I didn't, because I had just graduated from musical-theater school, so the whole training is, "OK, thank you," "OK, thank you." Looking back, I would've been like, "You know what, Paula, this is a singing competition. Why don't you come up here and we can sing 'Straight Up,' and we can see who's better, me or you? Because you calling me strange is a high compliment, because if I'm strange to your whack-ass." I mean, the strange thing is that she sang flat on her records!

Being a Paula fan, this seems like something that must've been difficult for you to hear. Especially standing on stage in front of an audience of 4,000 with your family watching. Everything about it was mortifying.

I've read that you were told that you would fare better in this industry if you played up your masculinity. At what point did that happen? We shot this music video that's about to come out, and I'm not playing a girl in it, but I'm very androgynously behaved. I don't know, it's just the mannerisms I wanna give. It's a little diva energy. And we went back and added another scene to play up masculine whatever, because I think the song is the most mainstream I've done, but is it just so we can make it easier for other people to digest? Sure. Sometimes it's like, "Oh, you're handsome, so you should be doing it this way." I've been told by other people, "I see you being like a Sam Smith," and it's funny because they



bring up a gay person. Well, Sam Smith is already doing Sam Smith.

There are also a lot of people who say I shouldn't be playing up my gayness in my videos. I view it like drag, sort of. It's just who I am when I'm performing — not that there's not elements of it in my life. Like, I'm standing next to a giant Mariah Carey portrait in my living room; I'm not pretending that I'm a jock when I'm off the field. I'm the one walking around with acrylics. Had 'em for two weeks. So all the other girls using their press-ons can have fun, but, you know, I'm committing to this.

Also, we can't be more complex than just one thing now? What it is, and I've talked to my therapist about this: There's this desperation currently to find identity within separation rather than within what makes us similar. People are desperately clinging to anything that keeps them misunderstood, and for me, I would be happy to be understood. I'm happy for people to see me and say, "Yes, I relate to that." For me, it's been the most rewarding part of being who I am. And some days I wanna put on a pink shirt. That I wanna do the Mariah Carey "Heartbreaker" video doesn't mean anything more than I wanna do the Mariah Carey "Heartbreaker" video.

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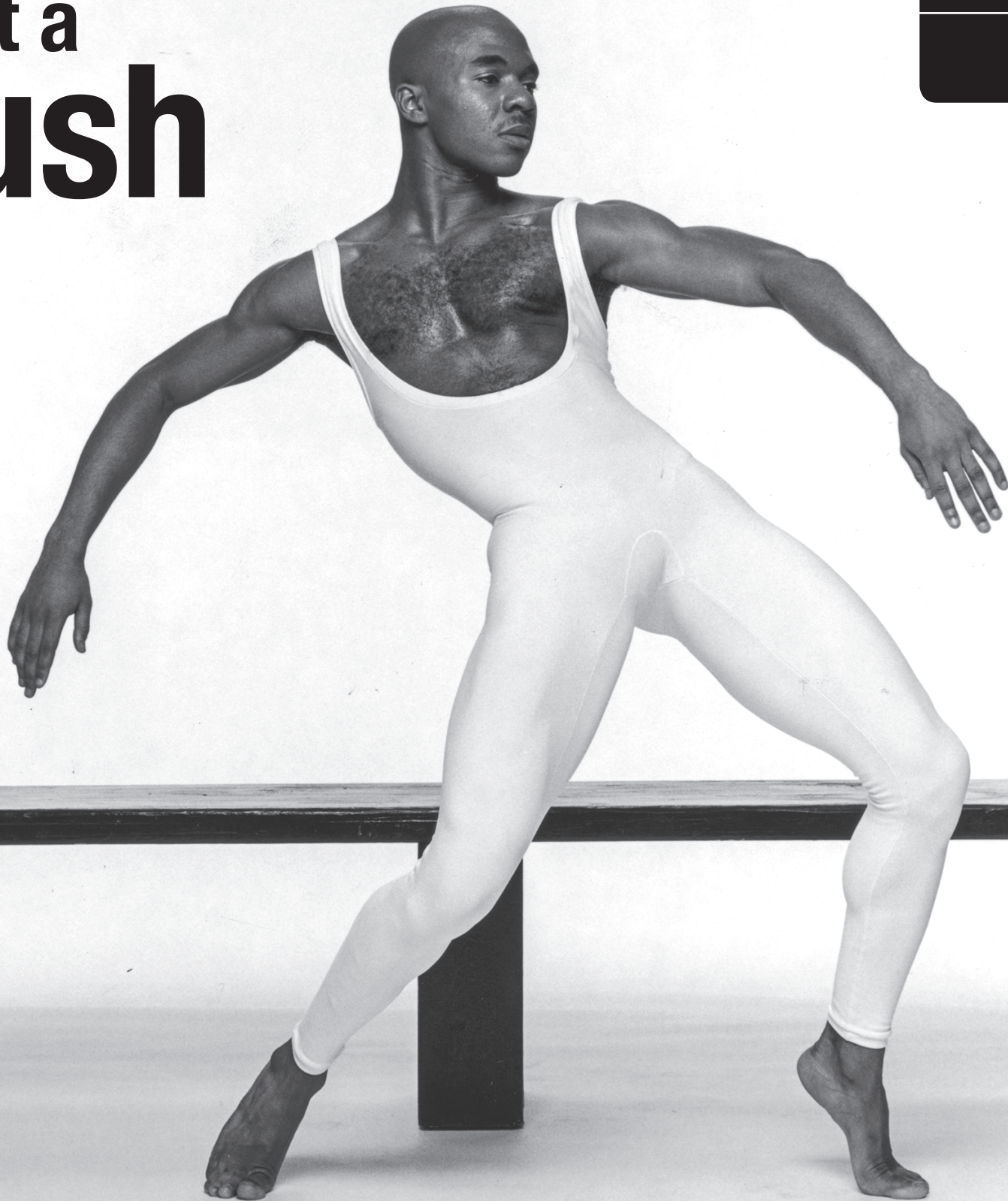
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What a Rush



Matthew Rushing was a dancer with Alvin Ailey for nearly three decades before being named associate artistic director in January.

New Alvin Ailey director Matthew Rushing talks the message of dance beyond the stage

RICH LOPEZ | Contributing Writer
richlopezwrites@gmail.com

The dance world changed forever when Alvin Ailey — a gay black man in Jim Crow America — created his titular company with a troupe of young dancers (all African-American) in 1958. Today, more than 30 years after

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Ailey's death from complications resulting from AIDS, his legacy lives on through that company that has performed throughout the world with more than 200 works in repertory.

As of January, the company has had a

big change with the naming of Matthew Rushing as its new associate artistic director... and he's intent on perpetuating Ailey's vision both as a dance pioneer and queer icon. Weeks into his new position, he's still sinking into it.

■ **MATTHEW RUSHING** Page 20

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"So, I'm still trying to figure that out, and that means there is a lot I'm finding out," he says with a laugh. "Nothing prepares you for the weight and span of the responsibilities of this job..." not even 28 years as a *dancer* for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, which will present three performances March 13 and 14 at the Winspear Opera House, plus a sold-out master class at Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts.

Well, maybe a little. His history as a dancer and performer *does* help some

with the gig ... especially how to take care of the dancers.

"I guess the best way to explain it is, I'm responsible for programming, performances, national and international and our two seasons in New York," he says. "I'm also in charge of casting. A lot of it is keeping the integrity of the repertory, and that alone is massive." (He does so with a team that includes rehearsal director Ronni Favors and assistant rehearsal director Clifton Brown.)

In addition to maintaining its history, part of the job is carving out his own

course. Rushing explains his vision for the company revolves around the dancers and providing a foundation of support as well as the programming, but he does recognize that in today's dialogue on prejudice and inequality, the importance of what AAADT contributes to the conversation.

"One of beautiful things about art is that it encompasses beauty and entertainment but also healing in times of discourse," he says. "We've been this vehicle of expression in speaking different truths on behalf of different people.



We've always been a vehicle for social justice and equality."

And today, that need is greater and perhaps more specific.

Alvin Ailey's queer legacy adds another layer to that, but for Rushing the message remains the same.

"When you have a true message, especially a message of love, everyone will feel embraced and receive these messages," he says. "I think all communities will feel a sense of [being] included and valued in the conversation. That's the vision Mr. Ailey and Mr. [Robert] Battle [the current artistic director] have always operated in."

For the Dallas performances, Rushing recognizes the key roles of women in these upcoming shows.

"We have two different programs over the weekend. One includes *En* by Jessica Lang. This was her 100th ballet, and she has a strong connection to Ailey," he says. "But there are many created by women this weekend."

En will also be performed with the world premiere of *Ode* by Jamar Roberts Friday and Saturday night. The second program, on Saturday afternoon, will feature the company premieres of *BUSK* by Aszure Barton and *City of Rain* by Camille A. Brown, along with *A Case of You* by Judith Jamison. Both programs conclude with Ailey's *Revelations*.

"As I think about the job and Mr. Ailey, these works are used to bring hope and to heal, and I think there is this universal effect that dance has," Rushing says. "After all this time, I am understanding the power of dance now." ■

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Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Solomon Dumas. Photo by Andrew Eccles

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Tuesday
03.10 –
Sunday
03.22

'Come From Away' finds humanity in the wake of tragedy

We've welcomed musicals about dancing cats, singing locomotives and blasphemous Mormons, yet *Come From Away* deals with one of the unlikely topics for a Broadway musical: The aftermath of 9/11. Following

the terrorist attacks, 38 passenger planes were diverted to a small Newfoundland town, and suddenly 7,000 strangers were forced to deal with their surprised hosts and the fallout of a tragedy of huge proportions. Three years after its Broadway debut, *Come From Away* makes its regional debut in this national tour of the heartwarming story of strength and resilience.

DEETS: Fair Park Music Hall, 901 First Ave. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

Wednesday
03.11

Drag Racer Trixie Mattel sings and laughs in a live concert performance

Trixie Mattel is more than just the winner of the third incarnation of *RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars*: She's also a comedian, author, singer-songwriter and who-knows-what-else. The multi-hyphenate entertainer returns to North Texas in support of her new album of catchy retro pop music, but also showing off her dazzling drag skills for a one-night-only show.

DEETS: The Bomb Factory, 2713 Canton St. 7 p.m. doors, 8 p.m. show. AXS.com.



Fort Worth antiques show returns with an endless lineup of vintage decor

After 57 years, the Fort Worth Show of Antiques, Art and Jewelry is as storied as many of the furnishings, sculptures, paintings, brooches and other collectibles that it has showcased over the decade. This weekend, it unofficially kicks off festival season in North Texas with everything from art glass to mid-century modern furniture and almost anything else you can find. The \$10 admission even gets you into all three days of the expo.

Friday 03.06 –
Sunday 03.08

DEETS: Will Rogers Memorial Center, 3400 Burnett-Tandy Drive, Fort Worth. Opens daily at 10 a.m. \$10. FortWorthShow.com.

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calendar highlights

ARTSWEEK

THEATER

Mlima's Tale. Second Thought Theatre kicks off its 2020 season with this play by two-time Pulitzer Prize-winner Lynn Nottage about the black market ivory trade. Reviewed this week. Bryant Hall on the Kalita Humphreys campus, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through March 14. SecondThoughtTheatre.com.

Tuna Does Vegas! The so-called "fourth play in the trilogy" about the third smallest town in Texas, where all the denizens are played by just two actors (David Coffee and Jonathan Beck Reed). Casa Mañana, 3101 W. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth. Through Sunday. CasaManana.org.

FINE ART

Mylgration. Exhibition exploring the migration of artists and ideas. Dallas Museum of Art, Center for Creative Connections, 1717 Harwood St. Free. Through Jan. 3, 2021. DMA.org

SATURDAY 03.07

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.

BOOKSIGNING

Philanthropy Misunderstood. Bob Hopkins signs copies of his new book celebrating charitable people in North Texas Nuvo, 3311 Oak Lawn Ave. 2-4 p.m.

MONDAY 03.09

CABARET

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

TUESDAY 03.10

FILM

High Society. Musical adaptation of *The Philadelphia Story*. 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.

THEATER

Come from Away. The Tony Award-winner for best direction of a musical, this unlikely crowd-pleaser is about the small Canadian town that hosted airline passengers diverted in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Fair Park Music Hall, 901 First Ave. March 10-22. DallasSummerMusicals.org

WEDNESDAY 03.11

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.

COMEDY

Trixie Mattel. The Drag Racer performs music and standup. The Bomb Factory, 2713 Canton St. 7 p.m. AXS.com

this week's solution

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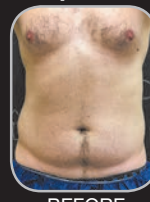
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Ask Howard

How to do the wrong thing right

Violence in the springtime, dear readers: Whatever would the month of March be, void of something wicked this way coming? This is a rough and lengthy one — be warned. No room for any leisurely, witty intro. Let's just get right to it.

Dear Howard: My life partner, Mr. Survivor, has found heaven within the headlines lately: The coronavirus, he prays, will be his ultimate “I told you so!” He's been stockpiling gallons of potable water, canned goods, sacks of flour, rice and shotgun shells down in the basement for a decade now. I haven't ventured down there for years. There's no telling what end-of-days supplies he has squirreled away, salivating for some globally catastrophic pandemic. Suddenly, with increasing reported deaths in America, he's now talking about moving our bed into the cellar. Yesterday, two orange biohazard suits arrived, along with the requisite gas masks. I'm beginning to think Joel truly needs some professional help. How far should I let this lunacy go? — **The Omega Man**

Dear Megan: Personally, I would have probably walked out the door when the pile of shotgun shells surpassed the number of deer living in Texas. Granted, the mortality rate of the coronavirus is two percent, but so is the chance of wheat dust down in your basement igniting a flash fire. Does G.I. Joel at least have a good sense of humor in bed? While fucking, does he coo things like, “Alert! Cavity penetration in manhole No. 2!” If not, then what fun is he gonna be during a *real* Armageddon? The risk of the media creating a Mount Everest from every coronavirus molehill coming down the pike is that ultimately the sheep will begin seeing fanged wolves drooling everywhere. Should Joel reach the point of ceasing to go into work, the time for you to seek him professional help will have arrived.

Dear Howard: Over the past decade, my partner and I have sort of ad hocked a fairly even distribution of labor pertaining to our housework. We both detest it, but a maid isn't in our budget, and neither of us is willing to play the other's house slave, so: Jim volunteers to clean the kitchen if I'll do the cooking, and I raise my hand to clean the toilet if Jim will do the laundry. We take shifts walking our two labradoodles, Snowflake and Sunny. All in all, it works without any of the knockdown/dragouts we used to have: We never take each other for granted anymore.

It had become toxic. Used to be, if Jim left his towel on the bathroom floor, I'd let Snow and Sunny urinate on it while he was at work, then air-dry it, folded neatly back atop the stack for Jim to dry off with it his next shower: That's the level of pettiness we'd sunk to before realizing our relationship was worth more than vengeance against a

slovenliness. I think what I'm getting at here is that gay partnerships can work long-term, despite my being able to count on just one hand the number of other couples who have made a successful go of it for 10 years or longer. Neither of us can figure out why most gay couples just give up after a few years, split, then grouse how they let the one true love of their life get away because of some stupid, fill-in-the-blank reason: He ate with his mouth open, he chewed gum during sex, he never cleaned his dirty dishes, he watched pro sports too much, he was too nelly in public, he wouldn't change his hairstyle with the times, etc. Are Jim and I an anomaly? — **The Devil's Details**

Dear Devil's Food Cake: You're absolutely right — ultimately, most throw in the towel rather than let imperfections slide. I don't know why couples aren't willing to make things work just because one has a habit of biting his nails in bed and the other won't ever fill the gas tank all the way full. Everyone is quirky. Everyone is a pig. A great relationship is a working partnership that splits life's mundane chores along a balanced division of aptitude, versus strengths and weaknesses, equally.

Dear Howard: I'm a young counselor of severely abused kids from “troubled” homes ... or rather, torture chambers where almost daily they were emotionally, physically and sexually assaulted, starved, beaten and raped — you can't sugarcoat it. More often than not, none of my patients will speak to anyone at all by the time they reach me. They learned staying mute was better than saying something wrong. The silence of molestation is near impossible to break through. So, if you don't mind, Howard, I'd like to share with your readers my own personal story I've honed over the years—an icebreaker with these damaged kids that gets them to finally smile at me:

I was 12 the day a car crash killed my mom but spared me, sitting directly behind her, without even a scratch. Before her wake was even over, I got sent straight to hell for surviving. The man who mom had lived in sin with for the four years put one arm around me and the other around his own 16-year-old son, my older stepbrother, and whispered to him just loudly enough for me to hear, “First thing tomorrow we're phonin' foster care to haul precious baby here away. I'll be damned if we're feeding her orphan with my paycheck.” Junior nodded rapturously, “Amen to that, Father! Praise Jesus, I get to have my room back all to myself again, tonight! Soon as this party's over, his bed goes straight in the Dumpster.” To which His Eldership nudged me closer, somberly smiling, “Along with all his fancy shoes, his mama's clothes from my closet and their stupid collection of jigsaw puzzles, too; why, he'll be just dandy sleepin' out in the garage 'til they come get him. Oh, and ain't nobody drivin' Little Miss Nancy to school tomorrow either, or ever again, hallelujah! I sure as hell ain't wasting another nickel on that pissy private school. And should anybody come nosing around askin', why, we'll just say he's



being home-schooled now — what with his heartbreak and all.”

So, there I waited, shivering in my mother's garage a full week waiting for child services to whisk me to paradise. And then another week went by, and another, until finally I realized nobody from anywhere was coming to rescue me. I had an aunt living somewhere out in California, but she and my mom didn't speak. I didn't even know her married name. Nobody ever missed me or wondered where I was. My two kidnapers, whose garage (my garage!) that I was allowed take refuge in, would occasionally toss me a bag of McDonald's or Sonic out the kitchen entry's door. At night, I heard dining table tidbits, sighed with growing anxiety over money: “We can't just keep him out there in the garage 'til he's 18,” they fumed, dumping all my clothes and personal possessions into the fireplace. “Hell, he'd run away long before then, and our gravy train with him. Any normal kid with even half a brain would have bolted by now.”

Gradually, I pieced together that, at 18, I was to become the sole beneficiary of a life insurance windfall worth a quarter million dollars. The conundrum lay in how to most swiftly cheat me out of it in a legally-bullet-proof way. The quicker they got my money, the faster they could kick me out of my own home — my uneducated, utter destitution being just a delicious cherry on top their going away sendoff. Legal adoption seemed to be the frontrunner, until somebody must have clued them in that, legally adopted or not, mom's insurance policy would still go exclusively to me, which was also still six years away. Meanwhile, putting this worthless street whore to use as their barefoot house slave helped nothing toward actually turning me from a resented money drain to a profit gain. They still were forced to hurl a bag of cold fries and burgers at me once in a while, lest risk my sorry little, good-for-noth-

ing faggot ass starve literally to death *before* they got full hold of my inheritance.

Then, somehow one day, those two idiot SOB's stumbled upon their genius stroke: In accordance with the law, when one turns 16 in Texas, one is allowed to legally marry anyone 18 or older. In no time, of course, their every meal invariably turned into a clowns' ruckus, with each buffoon shouting out the other as to why he should be the one who Little Miss Nancy Pants gets to marry — the unspoken being, naturally, “And thus, as thy Lady Nancy's betrothed master, shall therefore immediately retain sole proprietorship over the distribution of all well-deserved spoils from its dowry.”

I never knew how much money their whoring me out brought in. During all my teenage years as their personal ATM, I never even saw a single one of the erections I entertained. For the protection of my abusers, I was always kept in a sensory blackout: blindfolded, wearing earphones, playing acid rock at full volume. Apparently, I'd scream out for my mom as the duct tape was being wrapped around my head, to which Junior would shove amyl nitrate up my nostrils.

I must have been a goldmine. Within weeks of entering my new career, I noticed a new candy-apple Corvette in the garage, and Pops had a new luxury fishing boat in the driveway. They began eating steaks for dinner off their new patio grill, while permitting me enjoy any leftover scraps dumped atop the garage floor's drain.

The only gratis client they allowed me was my consigliere from child protective services, and local law enforcement. The reports of the wonderful environment my guardians provided me couldn't have been more glowing...until they weren't. One bright day, the constable was zipping up after his freebie and said he heard the bass were biting over at the lake and he “might apprehend that shiny new boat of yours a couple hours. Hitch it up for me, would you?” Pops grimaced. “Just lemme take out my tackle box first.” The fuzz grunted, “How'm I expected to catch anything without lures?” Pops snarled, “You ain't takin' my tackle box,” chuckling, “You don't think I ain't got video of you, cop?” And those were the magic words! Just two days shy of my 18th birthday, I celebrated in the hospital with all the cake and ice cream I could eat. I went back home a legal adult, owner of a shiny red corvette and a boat roomy enough to seat six, while my torturers went on to enjoy solitary for life, plus one extra day. Oh, and a funny thing about that tackle box. Heavy as the dickens, it was: There was sure no fishing bait in it, but seems my ass produced solid gold, indeed. And, Howard, that's when I reach a first smile from these kids. — **D.P.**

Dear D.P.: Kudos to you. That you survived is a miracle. That you're using your expertise to salvage other kids deserves canonization. I've nothing else to add. Thank you sincerely for sharing.

— Howard Lewis Russell

Have a question about love, sex, etiquette or anything else? Send it to AskHoward@dallasvoice.com.



Roy G's

Making the **SCENE** the week of Feb. 28–March 5:

- The **Dallas Gay Sports Bar Crawl** starts at 7 p.m. Friday at JR.'s, moves to **TMC: The Mining Company** at 7:45 p.m., then crosses Cedar Springs Road to **Round-Up Saloon** at 8:30 p.m. There will be raffles and prizes; participating organizations include **Gay Dodgeball**, **Gay Kickball**, **OLTA Dallas** and **Gay Cornhole**, but everyone is welcome.
- **1851 Club**: Friday night's show features **Kiana Lee**, **Barbie Davenport**, **Mulan Alexander** and **Jaden Davenport**. On Saturday night, **Kiana Lee**, **Candi Carrol**, **Caress Riata** and **Sapphire Davneport** hit the stage for show time.
- **Alexandre's**: The fun starts Friday night at 7 p.m., with the **RuPaul's Drag Race Watch Party** and the **Dallas Bowl-A-Thon Kickoff**.
- **Cedar Springs Tap House**: **RuPaul's Drag Race Watch Party** starts at 7 p.m. on Friday, and at 8 p.m. **DJ Memoz** starts spinning. And Monday night is **Ladies' Night**.
- **Club Reflection**: **The Imperial Court de Fort Worth/Arlington** holds its **Candidate Show** Saturday, beginning at 6 p.m.
- **Dallas Eagle**: Celebrate **John and Donna's Anniversary Gathering** from 7-10 p.m. Friday, then head back to the Eagle on Saturday night for **John and Donna's Anniversary Show** from 7-10 p.m., followed by the **Dallas Bears' Pre-TBRU Toga Party** from 10 p.m.-3 a.m.
- **Hidden Door**: Sing out Louise at **Cher-e-oke** at 7 p.m. on Thursday. Don't forget that every Wednesday night is **Club Night** at the Hidden Door.
- **JR.'s Bar & Grill**: TGet your freak on with **Cassie's Freak Show** at 11 p.m. on Monday. Then Tuesday at 11 p.m., it's **Double Trouble**, and **Dream Girls** take the stage at 11 p.m. on Thursday. And of course, **Krystal Summers** is on hand Friday to host the **RuPaul's Drag Race Watch Party**.
- **Liquid Zoo**: Friday night is always **Steak Night** at Liquid Zoo, and this Friday, **Chris Chism** will be performing from 7-10 p.m.
- **Marty's Live**: **Vogue Night** with cash categories at 11 p.m. on Wednesday.
- **Pekers**: Happy Hour Prices all day and all night, every Sunday through Thursday. And start making plans to attend the "**Shamrocks Are Blooming**" show on March 15, benefitting the **Miss Gay Texas State Pageant System**, **Educare**, **GDMAF** and the **Minitaure Schauzer Rescue of North Texas**.
- **Round-Up Saloon**: Join **Kenya**, **Lil' Nugg**, **Daphne**, **Mayra**, **Marissa**, **Bridgette**, **Macarena** and **Domita Sanchez** at 11 p.m. Thursday for the **Saloon Girls Drag Show** and **Lip Sync Battle**.
- **The Rose Room**: Shows nightly, Friday through Sunday with **Cassie**, **Layla**, **Sasha**, **Chevelle Brooks** and **Krystal**, plus **Jenna** and **Fantasha** on Friday and Saturday, and **Chanel LaMasters** on Sunday. Come back on Thursday for the **Rising Star Show** with **Jenna** and **Rocky**.
- **Urban Cowboy**: Celebrate at Urban Cowboy's **3-Year Anniversary Blowout** Friday, beginning at 9 p.m., then head back Saturday for the **Texas Three Step**, starting at 9 p.m.
- **Woody's Sports & Video Bar**: **Karaoke** at 10 p.m. Sundays and Wednesdays.

Photos by **Chad Mantoath** and **Nicholas Gonzalez**



Pretty in Pink at Trash Disco at Dallas Eagle

LGBTQ Global Symposium on Equality and Human Rights at SMU

Photos by David Taffet



Steve Grand event

Photos by 2nd2Nunn Photography 2020



Pictured are (L to R) Sponsors Rick Adams, UPS Store Lemmon Ave, Joe & Arnold Pacetti, Exec Dir SCC Margie Wright, Show Producer David Andrews, & SCC Board Member Dr. Carla Russo

Joe and Arnold Pacetti, Presenting Sponsors of the Steve Grand ONE NIGHT ONLY benefiting Suicide & Crisis Ctr Fundraiser in Dallas, presented the check for \$21,450.00 to Fashion Stars for a Cause which benefits the Suicide and Crisis Center of North Texas.

Arnold Pacetti serves as one of the 2020 Fashion Stars for the event which takes place at the Dallas Country Club on March 27, 2020 and raises funds for the Suicide & Crisis Center of NTX. www.sccenter.org/fashion-stars

Hundreds attended the Feb 25th performance of Steve Grand at SMU's Bob Hope Theatre and delighted in the hour long performance by the singer / songwriter who found huge success with the release of his first album, All American Boy in 2015. The audience also enjoyed an opening performance by local comedian, Helen Holy

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Solution on Page 22

Across

- 1 Peter player on *ER*
- 5 *Cast Away* escape boat
- 9 XXX, to the Greeks
- 13 Cafeteria list
- 14 160 rods
- 15 Chase game
- 16 The last part of "Semper ubi sub ubi," in English
- 18 Memo start
- 19 He won a Tony for playing Lola in *Kinky Boots*
- 21 Williams of *Ugly Betty*
- 24 Twin made without hetero sex
- 25 Small stream, to Gomer
- 26 Top targets
- 28 LBJ's successor
- 29 Dinah on a beach?
- 31 TV show in which 19-Across will appear with Elmo
- 36 David Hyde ____
- 37 Egypt and Syr., once
- 39 Rubbed the wrong way?
- 42 Tim of *Rocky Horror* fame
- 44 "I Got a Name" singer Jim

Down

- 45 Bette Midler film of 1979
- 47 Gown worn by 19-Across to the Oscars
- 50 River Kwai locale
- 51 O'Keeffe collection
- 55 Annapolis inst.
- 56 "Like ____ lump it" in English
- 57 Ark architect
- 58 Pounder part
- 59 Not hard to get in bed
- 60 Like Lea DeLaria's comedy

- 12 Barneys and others
- 17 Take a chance
- 20 Autumn color
- 21 Remote target
- 22 Pump with them at the gym
- 23 Team in *A League of Their Own*
- 26 Fruit with a peel
- 27 Art Deco design name
- 29 Foe of Peter Pan
- 30 Bunch of stallions
- 32 Visitor to Uranus, perhaps
- 33 Lent a hand to
- 34 Shared coin
- 35 Seamen
- 38 Reuben bread, usually
- 39 Goes on the fritz
- 40 Fruit flaw
- 41 Cyrano's beloved
- 42 *Camelot's* " ____ Moi"
- 43 Like a bear
- 45 Smallest nonmonogamous groups
- 46 *Daisy Miller* author James
- 48 Sheriff Taylor's boy
- 49 *Star Trek* automaton
- 52 Doze off
- 53 Not swallow easily
- 54 Just short

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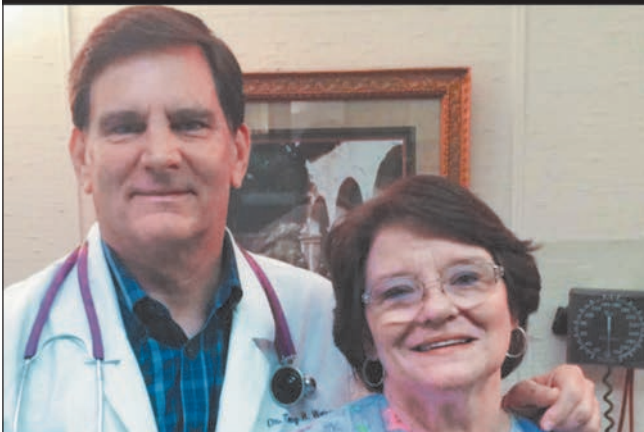
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