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December 6, 2019

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MARLOWE



MUHLAYSIA BOOKER



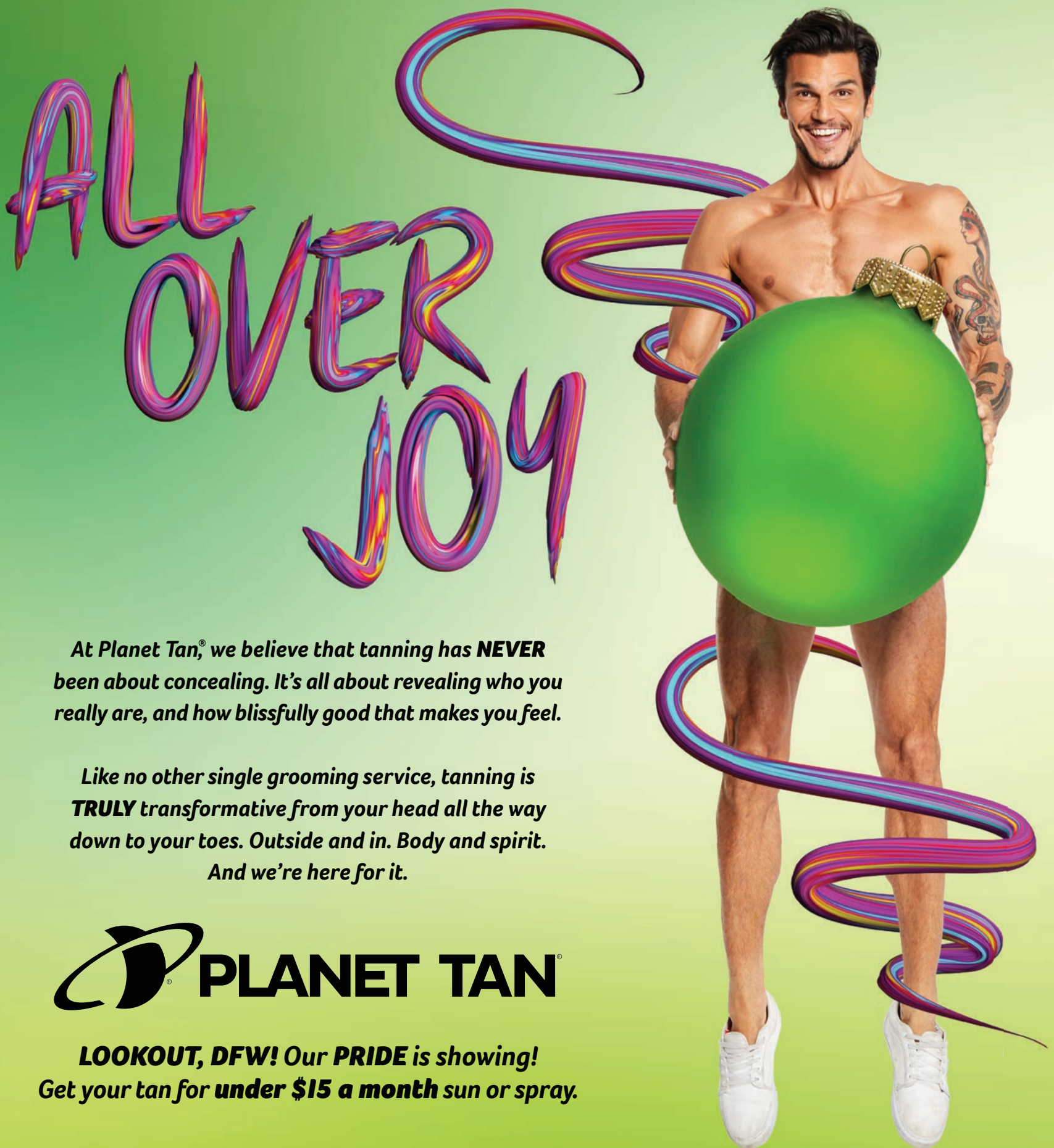
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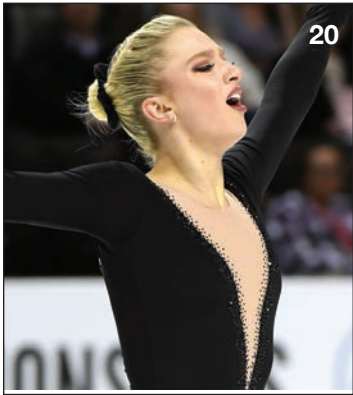
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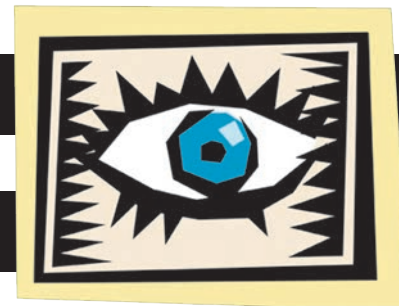
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Judicial commissions warns Waco JP who refused to marry same-sex couples



The State Commission on Judicial Conduct has issued a warning to McLennan County Precinct 1 (Waco) Justice of the Peace Dianne Hensley for refusing to perform marriages for same-sex couples while continuing to do so for opposite-sex couples. The public warning was issued Nov. 12 and announced Monday, Dec. 2.

The commission concluded that Hensley "violated ethical standards by adopting a policy that casts doubt on her ability to treat LGBTQ people fairly in her courtroom," according to a report by the Austin American-Statesman. The commission noted that the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct requires that judges "do not cast reasonable doubt on the judge's capacity to act impartially," and that her refusal to treat all couples equally does indeed cast such doubts.

Since August 2016, Hensley and her staff have given same-sex couples asking the JP to perform their marriage ceremonies a document stating: "I'm sorry, but Judge Hensley has a sincerely held religious belief as a Christian, and will not be able to perform any same-sex weddings."

— Tammye Nash

13% of LGB people have utilized LGBT-specific clinics

Only 13 percent of LGB people have utilized LGBT-specific clinics, although 52 percent expressed an interest in utilizing such clinics in the future, according to a new study from the Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law.

The study included "a representative sample of LGB people in the United States from three age groups — young (18-25), middle (34-41) and older (52-59) — to understand the factors that influenced past utilization of LGBT-specific clinics and providers and interest in using them in the future," researchers noted.

Dallas has one LGBT-specific clinic — the Resource Center LGBTQ Health clinic, with Dr. Gene Voskuhl, located on Resource Center's Health Campus at 2701 Reagan St. The clinic is open 2-6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Here are some of the highlights of the study:

- Utilization of LGBT-specific clinics was associated with better overall sense of health.
- Men have more than twice the odds of utilization as women.
- Bisexuals have about one-third the odds of utilization as their lesbian and gay peers.
- Living more than 60 miles from an LGBT clinic reduces the odds of past utilization by two-thirds.

- Black LGB people were nearly three times more likely to express interest in future utilization compared to white LGB people.
- Younger LGB people were 1.4 times more likely to express interest in utilization compared to older LGB people.

— Tammye Nash

Dallas, Fort Worth receive 100 on Municipal Equality Index

Four cities in Texas — Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin and San Antonio — received a score of 100 on Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index. Of the 25 Texas cities scored, Houston, which has no nondiscrimination ordinance, is next with a 70 and Plano scored 69.

The index included five major categories: nondiscrimination laws, municipality as employer, municipal services, law enforcement and leadership on LGBTQ equality.

Bonus points were awarded that helped both Dallas and Fort Worth. On the five categories alone, Dallas scored 89 and Fort Worth 91. However, Dallas received 12 bonus points and Fort Worth 9. A score of 100 is the highest score given, even if points total higher.

Bonus points are awarded, up to a total of 22 additional points, to balance disparities in state laws. Under municipal services, for example, Dallas received two bonus points for "city provides services to LGBT elders." Reverchon Recreation Center and the Dallas Public Library work with Silver Pride Project to provide space and programming for LGBT seniors.

— David Taffet

HIV prevention isn't reaching enough people

The Centers for Disease Control said new data shows current HIV treatment and prevention isn't reaching enough Americans to curtail the epidemic.

The Trump administration announced it wants to reduce new infections by 90 percent in the next decade. But not enough people who have HIV know they have the virus and too many with the virus are not getting treatment.

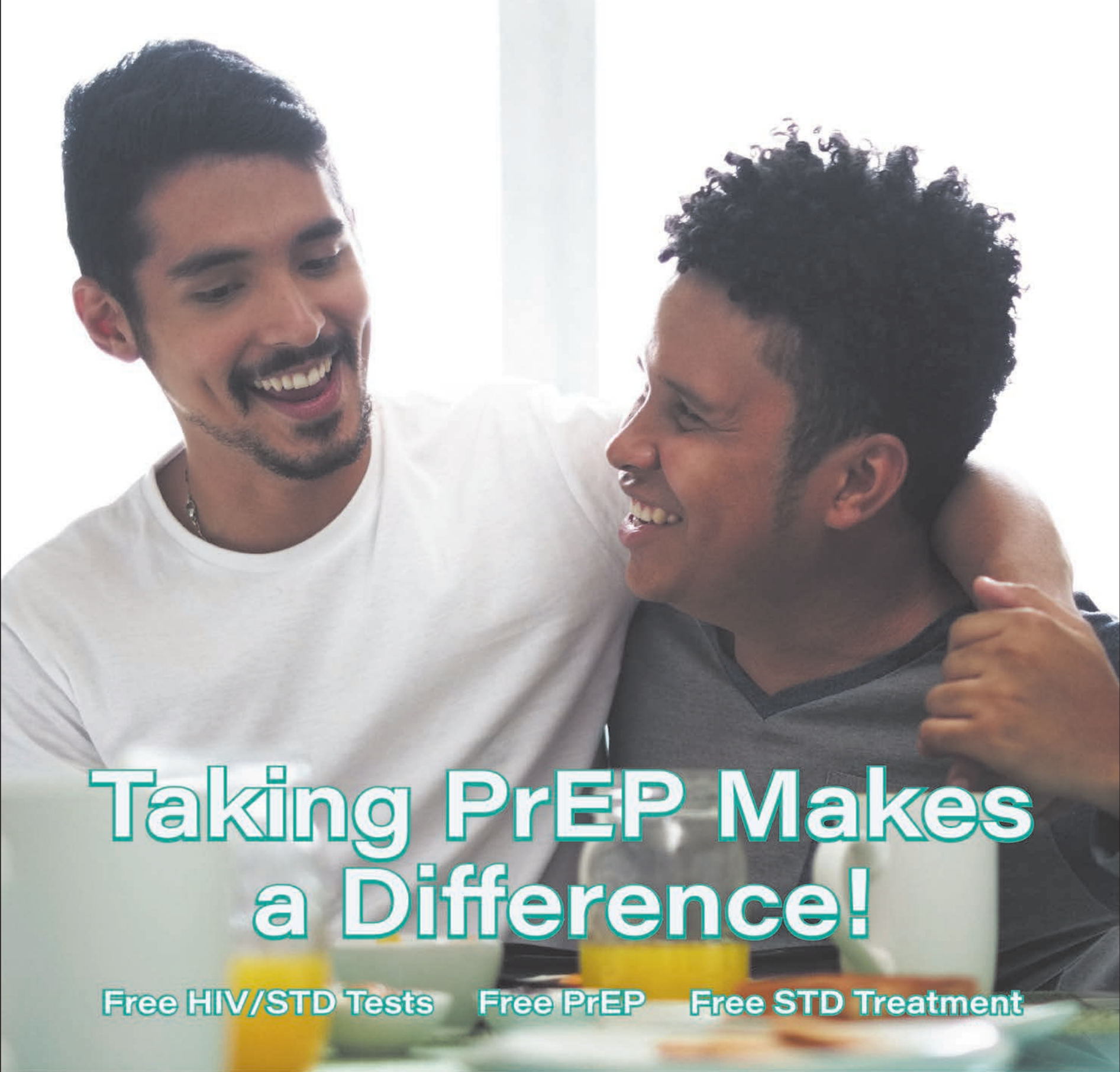
According to the CDC, 154,000 people with HIV haven't been tested and don't know they have the virus. About 37 percent of people who know they have the virus don't have it under control, which translates into the virus being undetectable and not transmittable.

And 4 in 5 people who could benefit from PrEP aren't getting it.

About 38,000 new HIV infections still occur each year, according to the CDC report.

The CDC recommends that healthcare providers can help lower the number of new infections by routinely testing all of their patients. Someone who tests positive should begin treatment as soon as possible after diagnosis. PrEP, the CDC recommends, should be prescribed to all patients who could benefit from it.

— David Taffet



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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.

DECEMBER

• Dec. 6: Federal Club

Holiday party from 7-10:30 p.m. at Magnolia Dallas Downtown, 1401 Commerce St. DFWFederalClub.org.

• Dec. 6: Jingle Bells on Bishop toy drive

Bring a new toy and enjoy discounts, drinks and nosh while you shop beginning at 7 p.m. at Indigo 1745, 370 W. 7th St.

• Dec. 7: Lost Souls Rugby Toy Drive and Tacky Sweater Contest

Lost Souls Rugby toy drive benefits Adelfa Botello Callejo Elementary School and the tacky sweater contest is just for fun from 6-9 p.m. at the Round-Up saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road. RoundupSaloon.com.

• Dec. 7: Sleigh Ball

BearDance presents Sleigh Ball benefiting Resource Center from 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. at Dallas Eagle, 5740 Maple Ave.

• Dec. 7-8: The Nutcracker

North Central Ballet presents The

Nutcracker with discounts sponsored by Dallas Voice. With promo code: BALLET, buy one and at one half off at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday and 2 p.m. on Sunday at Will Rogers Auditorium, 3401 W. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth. NorthCentralBallet.com.

• Dec. 8: Chillin'

The Women's Chorus of Dallas presents its annual holiday concert at 7:30 p.m. at Moody Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. Tickets at TWCD.org.

• Dec. 8: The Dallas Way Winter Brunch

Annual brunch benefiting The Dallas Way hosted by Richard Champain and Jeff Henderson from noon-2 p.m. at 4060 Cochran Chapel. \$50 reservation, \$60 at the door. TheDallasWay.org.

• Dec. 8: Jingle Bells on Bishop

Bishop Arts District Holiday Poinsettia Walk starts at noon. Buy a glass for 10 tasting pours through the district

• Dec. 8: Prime Timers

Games hosted at a private home in Carrollton. Call for address and directions 214-218-0912. chapters.theprimetimersww.com/dallasfortworth.

• Dec. 8: Stocking auction

Stockings benefit Legacy Founders Cottage from 7-10 p.m. at The Round-

Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road.

• Dec. 9: Creating Change Host Committee Meeting

The Task Force needs volunteers to plan the January 15-19 Creating Change Conference in Dallas. Committees include fundraising, special events, hospitality, recruitment. Dinner at 7 p.m. and meeting from 7:30-9 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road. For more information visit CreatingChange.org.

• Dec. 9: Black Tie Dinner Wrap Party

Black Tie Dinner distributes checks to its 2019 beneficiaries from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Southside Music Hall at Gilley's, 1135 S. Lamar St. BlackTie.org.

• Dec. 10: Prime Timers

Dinner at 7 p.m. at The Dinner Table, 580 W. Arapahoe Road, Richardson. chapters.theprimetimersww.com/dallasfortworth.

• Dec. 10: Grief group

Grief group for persons who have lost a same-sex spouse meets the second and fourth Tuesdays each month from 6:45-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road. For more information visit MyResourceCenter.org.

• Dec. 10: Pathfinders

Pathfinders group is a community resource for trans masculine individuals

(including non-binary trans masculine people and binary trans men), age 18+ in the North Texas/DFW area. Meets the second Tuesday of every month from 6:30-8 p.m. in the Oak Lawn Library Auditorium, 4100 Cedar Springs Road.

• Dec. 10: East Texas PFLAG Holiday Gathering

East Texas PFLAG celebrates the holiday season from 6:30-8 p.m. at The Well of Tyler, 3320 Troup Hwy, Suite 230, Tyler. More info at Facebook.com/groups/EastTexasPFLAG,

• Dec. 11: GALA holiday party

GALA holds its holiday party and fundraiser with silent auction, raffle, photo booth, food and drink from 6-10 p.m. at event1013, 1013 E. 15th St., Plano. \$25 at GALANorthTexas.org. Raffle tickets \$5.

• Dec. 12: THRIVE Discussion Group

Peer-led discussion group for LGBTQ adults 50+ at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road, 6-8 p.m. Questions to THRIVE@myresourcecenter.org.

• Dec. 12: Business Connections Mixer and Holiday Party

LGBT Chamber mixer and holiday party from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at ERDOS + KO, World Trade Center Building, 2050 N. Stemmons Freeway. Free to Chamber members and their guests. LGBTChamber.com.

• Weekly: Lambda Weekly

at 1 p.m. on Sunday on 89.3 KNON-FM with David Taffet, Lerone Landis and the late Patti Fink. This week's guests are Teddy Bear Party founders Jason Hanna and Joe Riggs; Silver Pride Project Coffee and Convo for LGBTQ+ seniors meets Mondays from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Oak Lawn Library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road, Tuesdays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Grauwylar Park Branch Library, 2146 Gilford St. Wednesdays for Breakfast Club from 10 a.m.-noon at Reverchon Recreation Center, 3505 Maple Ave. and Thursdays for Rainbow Rec from 10 am.-noon at Reverchon Recreation Center, 3505 Maple Ave.; Unwired Group of Crystal Meth Anonymous meets

Sunday at 5:30 p.m., Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday at 11:30 a.m. at Resource Center, 2701 Reagan St.; Core Group Meeting every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.; Fuse game night every Monday evening except the last of the month at 8 p.m. at the Fuse space in the 3918 Harry Hines Blvd.; FuseConnect every Wednesday from 7 p.m. For more information call or e-mail Jalenzski at 214-760-9718 ext. 3 or Jalenzski@myresourcecenter.org; LGBT square dancing group Pegasus Squares meets the second and fourth Sunday from 2-4 p.m. at Grace United Methodist Church, 4105 Junius St. For more info, email pegasussquares@gmail.com; Dallas

Frontrunners meet for a walk or run at Oak Lawn Park, near the intersection of Turtle Creek and Hall Street, every Wednesday at 7:15 p.m. and every Saturday at 8:30 a.m.; Leadership Lambda Toastmasters practices and develops speaking and leadership skills from 6:30-8 p.m. on Mondays at First Unitarian Church, third floor of the Hallman Building, 4012 St. Andrews; Thrive, program of Resource Center for LGBTQ adults 50+ support group every Monday from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. followed by free lunch at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road; Lambda AA meets at noon, 6:30 p.m., 7:45 p.m. and 11 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 6525 Inwood Road.

Call 214-267-0222 for details; LGBT Sex Addicts Anonymous meets at 6 p.m. every Friday at 1919 Independence St., Room 19, Plano. 972-316-9188 for details; Leadership Lambda Toastmasters gay-identified Toastmasters group meets from 6:30-8 p.m. every Monday at the First Unitarian Church, 4015 Normandy Road (does not meet on Mondays that are holidays); United Black Ellument hosts discussion on HIV/AIDS in the black community (UBE Connected) at 7 p.m. every fourth Tuesday of the month at 3918 Harry Hines Blvd.; DVtv in Spayse, news and entertainment discussion live streaming every Friday, 4-5 p.m., on the Spayse Station YouTube channel.

Obituary

Craig Steven Hess, 68, died at home on Nov. 20. He was born on April 11, 1951.

Hess celebrated 25 years with Resource Center in 2011, having begun as one of the organization's first employees when he was hired as volunteer coordinator in 1986. When he retired in 2015, he was insurance assistance coordinator.

Co-workers described Hess as "the keeper of institutional knowledge" and "the quiet authority." He described himself as "the voice of reason among the insanity" at Resource Center. He was originally hired as a temporary employee but told Dallas Voice on his 25th anniversary with the agency that he could easily have been a client: "If this happened to me, how would I want people to treat me?" he said. Asked at his anniversary how long he'd remain on the job, he said, "I'm there till it's over."

Hess became involved in animal rescue after Hurricane Katrina and was a volunteer with two animal rescue groups — Animal Allies of Texas (AAT) and Saving Pyrenees In Need (SPIN). He became president of AAT, and he adopted a Great Pyrenees dog named Brianna from SPIN. A close friend has adopted Brianna since Hess' death.

Hess also volunteered with the Sachse Animal Shelter, taking homeless dogs from



the shelter to adoption events at Petco and PetSmart. And he loved the State Fair of Texas, serving for more than 30 years as a judge for all of the food categories.

He is survived by his mother, who lives in Iowa, and a number of friends. He was predeceased by a brother. A memorial service will be held on Dec. 8, from 2-5 p.m., at the Dallas Elks Lodge 71, 8550 Lullwater Drive.

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Muhlaysia Booker and the entire Texas trans community

In a year of highs and heart-wrenching lows, transgender Texans have helped focus the country's attention on the lives of trans women and men everywhere

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
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DAVID TAFFET | Senior News Writer
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It was April 12, in an apartment complex parking lot in South Dallas. A 22-year-old black transgender woman named Muhlaysia Booker had been involved in a minor fender-bender in the parking lot outside her own apartment, bumping into another car as she was backing out to leave.

The other driver blocked Booker's car, holding her at gunpoint and refusing to let her leave until she gave him money to pay for the damage to his car. As they argued, a crowd gathered, and someone pulled out a cell phone and began to videotape the confrontation. Someone allegedly offered a 29-year-old man named Edward Thomas \$500 to beat up Booker, and the crowd closed in around, laughing and jeering and shouting transphobic and homophobic slurs as Thomas assaulted the young woman.

Then other men joined in, punching, kicking, stomping on Booker as she lay huddled on the ground. By the time several women stepped in to stop the attack and help Booker to safety, she had suffered a concussion, fractured wrists and numerous other injuries. Someone uploaded the video to social media. The video was stomach-churning and at the same time infuriating, and it focused national attention on the not just the attack on Booker, but on the insidious and often overlooked epidemic of violence that leaves dozens of American transgender women and men — hundreds, perhaps thousands worldwide — dead or injured every year.

Suddenly, Muhlaysia Booker's face was in all the newspapers and on all the TV news programs in DFW and beyond. Everyone knew her name. The outrage began building. Rallies were held, and Booker became the poster girl for efforts to combat the anti-trans violence that had already claimed the lives of four transgender women of color since the start of the year. Leaders in every community in DFW were speaking out, condemning the violence.

Police arrested Edward Thomas and charged him with aggravated assault. Abounding Prosperity Inc. announced a plan of action that included providing Booker with legal counsel and other services she needed, including a GoFundMe page to help pay her expenses. The agency, serving primarily the South Dallas community impacted by HIV/AIDS, also found safe housing for Booker and another trans woman who lived at the

same apartment complex where Booker was attacked.

For once, people were paying attention.

A month later, Muhlaysia Booker was dead, her name added to the ever-growing list of murdered transgender women.

Booker's body was found early Sunday morning, May 19, lying in a street in East Dallas. She had been shot to death. An urgent frenzy of attention and activity erupted.

Dallas police held a press conference announcing that they believed Booker's murder may be connected to a non-fatal knife

day that thousands gathered at Fair Park to celebrate the first day of Dallas Pride — that number became eight when Dallas police announced that the body of 26-year-old trans woman Chynal Lindsey had been found in White Rock Lake. Fears that a serial killer was stalking Dallas' black trans women mushroomed.

Then on June 12, Dallas police announced the arrest of Kendrell Lavar Lyles, 34, for the murder of Muhlaysia Booker. Although he was initially considered a suspect in the deaths of Lindsey, Schuler and White and

Donald Williams, has been charged in her death.

Around the country, 22 transgender people have been murdered this year. The majority of the victims have been black trans women, and most of them have been under the age of 30. But the violence can't be counted in just deaths: In Dallas alone, we know of the knife attack on one trans woman and the assault on Booker in April. In early September, a Tampa, Fla., trans woman named Pauline DelMundo disappeared from DFW International Airport during a lay-over on her way to Cancun, and on Sept. 20, Daniela Calderon-Rivera was shot multiple times and left critically wounded in an attack in Northwest Dallas. Domingo Ramirez-Cayente was arrested and confessed to shooting Calderon-Rivera, but he was released on a \$25,000 bail and is believed to have fled the country.

The community responds

This year, Dallas Voice has chosen to honor the four trans women murdered in Texas this year along with the two — Calderon-Rivera and the woman who survived the knife attack in April — who were injured in anti-trans violence by naming them as our LGBT Texans of the Year for 2019. But we are also including the Texas transgender activists who every day are fighting for their lives and the lives of their transgender sisters and brothers.

We know that as we name these activists, we will, inevitably, miss someone. So, let us say right here and now, without equivocation, that we honor ALL transgender Texans as our Texans of the Year. That includes the "old guard" — activists like Monica Roberts and Phyllis Randolph Frye of Houston, and Pam Curry, Kelli Anne Busey, Carter Brown and Shannon Walker of Dallas — as well as those who are newer to the activism scene — like Voice columnist Leslie McMurry, Krista De La Rosa, Ethan Avanzino and Jayla Wilkerson.

And there are so many others: Dee Dee Watters, Atlantis Narcisse, Ana Andrea Molina, Carmarion Anderson, Naomi Green, Frankie Gonzales Wolfe, Mieko Hicks and Robyn "Pocahontas" Crowe with the Transfusion podcast, Jaysa Jones, Diamond Stylz, Mia Mix and See with the Marsha's Plate podcast, Mia Ryan, Landon Richie, Dylan Forbis, TreShaun Pate, Finn Jones

The list goes on.

All of these activists have been in the fight in one way or another. Some are well known, others work more quietly in the background. But all are vital in the battle for not just the



Monica Roberts

attack on another trans woman in April (she has never been publicly identified) as well as with as many as three unsolved murders of trans women in Dallas dating back to July 2015, when Shade Schuler was found dead in a field near Parkland Memorial Hospital. The others include Armani Dante Morgan, who disappeared June 3, 2017 and whose remains were found a month later in a field near her home. Police initially classified her death as a drug overdose, but her family has always maintained that she was murdered, and police have since re-opened the investigation into her death. The third is Brittney White, who was found shot to death in her car in the parking lot of a South Dallas apartment complex in October 2018.

On May 28, hundreds of mourners packed the sanctuary at Cathedral of Hope for Booker's funeral — her family, her friends, the LGBT community and even city and county leaders attended.

In the meantime, the national death toll had risen to seven. On June 1 — the same



Leslie McMurray

the April knife attack on the unnamed trans woman, on June 20, police announced they had arrested 22-year-old Ruben Alvarado and charged him with the murder of Chynal Lindsey. Police have not said whether Lyles remains a suspect in the other incidents.

Although the frenzy of attention seemed to die down at least a little after the arrests in June, it ramped back up again the next month when trans woman Tracy Single, 22, was murdered in Houston. Her boyfriend, Joshua Dominic Bourgeois, has been arrested for her death. The Sept. 20 murder of Itali Marlowe in Houston raised the Texas trans death toll to four for the year, the most of any state. Marlowe's roommate, Raymond

ability to live safely, but for equality as well.

Monica Roberts is a familiar face at the Texas Capitol, traveling there often for rallies and to testify on pending legislation affecting the transgender community. Although the deaths of the four transgender women in Texas — along with all the others worldwide — definitely cast a shadow over 2019, Roberts said there have been some bright points this year, too.

“Frankie Gonzales-Wolfe’s run for a San Antonio City Council seat” was a high point, she said, as was the fact that Texas House Bill 1513, “which would have added Texas trans people to our state’s hate crimes bill,” actually got a hearing during the 2019 legislative session.

Another big victory came with the defeat of Senate Bill 17, which would have allowed individuals — including health care professionals — to discriminate based on their own “sincerely-held” religious beliefs and still be able to have state-regulated professional licenses issued and renewed.

Personally, Roberts said, one of the brightest moments of the year came when she and Dee Dee Watters, Atlantis Narcisse and Ana Andrea Molina were named honorary grand marshals of Houston Pride in June.

Jayla Wilkerson, an attorney with the city of Dallas, describes herself as a “relatively privileged member of the transgender community,” and she became an activist to use that privilege to help those in the community who don’t have the same advantages. As a white trans woman, she said, “it is heart wrenching to think about the experiences of black transgender women in my own home city and to recognize how very little I can do to improve the situation.”

But she doesn’t let that keep her from trying. In fact, one of the highlights of the year for Wilkerson was the Pride is a Protest March she organized for June 2. It began at Dallas City Hall and ended at Fair Park, just in time for participants to join the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade.

“Dallas Pride moved the parade to Fair Park, a huge closet from my perspective. I did a lot of work related to speaking out and speaking up about how the trans community is still in dire need of social support and understanding from the broader cis/straight community, along the same lines of the sentiments that led to the ... first Pride parades,” she said. Trans people, she



Ethan Avanzino, left; and David Whitehead

continued, “are still suffering in many ways not experienced for decades by affluent gay white men. I had a lot of support and a great turnout [for the march], and I felt like I really made a difference for visibility.”

“Not everyone agreed with me, and some very badly misunderstood my purpose,” Wilkerson added. “It was never a protest against the other Pride celebration. It was about visibility for a still-marginalized community. But it sparked some very important conversations and thoughts.”

That march was also a high point of the year for transgender man Ethan Avanzino. “The support from allies and the community was amazing to see,” he said of the Pride is a Protest event. “It seems that each and every year we become more visible and build more bridges, gain more connections and get more support.”

But perhaps even more gratifying for Avanzino is the progress being made on the nonprofit organization he is cofounding

with his partner, David Whitehead. Safe To Be, designed to provide an actual village for transgender residents outside Eureka Springs, Ark., has received its 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, and Avanzino and Whitehead have purchased 20-plus acres of land that they will be donating to Safe To Be for the village.

“I can hardly wait to see what the future holds for us!” he declared.

For Leslie McMurray, the murders of trans people and the fact that Edward Thomas was convicted only of a misdemeanor in connection with the April assault on Muhlayia Booker were undoubtedly low points in 2019.

So was her experience in Austin when she went to testify in favor of HB 1513. Arlington Republican state Rep. Bill Zedler, she said, walked out of the room rather than listen to her testimony.

“Voting against the bill was one thing,” she said. “But not even listening when someone

was talking about people’s lives was unconscionable.”

But there have been bright points, too. McMurray, who works for Resource Center, led a training on transgender healthcare at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth. A large number of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals attended, and she said she has never seen such a positive attitude about providing the best possible care to trans patients.

She had a similar experience when she was invited by the Dallas Stars organization to speak on trans issues. She arrived to find human resources managers from about a dozen hockey teams all interested in learning about best practices in working with transitioning employees and the trans community overall.

The Rev. Carmarion Anderson, a former Dallasite who now works as the Human



Jayla Wilkerson

TEXANS, Page 16

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Making it Count

Ahead of 2020 Census, a glimpse of LGBT families in the United States

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

The U.S. Census Bureau last month released data on the number of same-sex couples in the country, marking the first time same-sex couples have been included in the bureau's annual America's Families and Living Arrangements report.

According to the 2019 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic data, there are an estimated 543,000 married same-sex couple households and 469,000 households with same-sex unmarried partners living together. Of those, 51 percent are female couples, while 48 percent are male couples.

Additionally, 191,000 children live with same-sex parents.

Yet those numbers are small compared to the overall population of married and unmarried couples in the country, with same-sex couples comprising less than a percent of the population. There are an estimated 61 million opposite-sex married couples, and 8 million opposite-sex unmarried partner households.

Specific data is not available about the number of polyamorous same-sex or opposite-sex households.

According to the bureau, which is a division of the Commerce Department, this year was the first time the CPS included opposite and same-sex couples and added gender-neutral parent iden-

tification questions. The gender-neutral option allows respondents to identify as having two mothers or two fathers present in the household.

Among the cities included in the 2017 American Community Survey, San Francisco has the largest concentration of same-sex couples among the nation's largest cities at a whopping 3 percent. A majority of the couples are male couples.

Austin comes in at number 10, with less than 1.5 percent. Dallas stands at 14th with slightly more than 1 percent, followed by San Antonio and Houston, each with less than 1 percent.

The majority of couples in Dallas and Houston are male. San Antonio is almost evenly divided among both.

Married couples make up 60 percent of all same-sex couples. That's up from 27 percent in 2008.

The data is gathered by asking how the residents are related, then broken down to distinguish between same-sex or opposite-sex couples. That's why the data is, in part, not reflective of the entire LGBT population. These reports are solely confined to households.

The larger picture of LGBT Americans, however, is harder to break down.

Thwarted efforts

The Census does not ask about sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. In 2017, President Donald Trump's administration scrapped a proposal by President Barack Obama to include questions about sexual orientation and gender identity.

Allies in Congress continue to push for LGBT inclusion, including a bill requiring all federal data-collecting agencies to ask that question. But LGBT Data Inclusion Act, filed in June by Sen. Tammy

Baldwin, D-Wisc., the upper chamber's first out LGBT person, and Rep. Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., is stuck in committee.

CAP's Vice President of the LGBT Research and Communications Project Laura Durso said, said the act is smart, practical and crucial. "The health and security of LGBTQ people nationwide depends on the information that this bill can provide," she said.

However, in the absence of federal action, advocacy groups have in recent years encouraged LGBT participation in the decennial survey, which is critical to doling out federal funds, drawing congressional seats and even a city's fire fighting budget.

Groups like the National LGBTQ Task Force have led a Queer the Census effort in recent years highlighting the importance of participation toward guaranteeing a full count.

The Task Force, in partnership with the Center for American Progress, a progressive think tank, compiled a fact sheet emphasizing the questionnaire's importance. The goal is to prevent undercounting residents. Undercounting impacts everything from how congressional districts are drawn to federal funding.

Texas currently receives \$23 billion

in Medicaid funding and \$8 billion in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or food stamps, accordant to the 2018 CAP report "Protecting Basic Living Standards for LGBTQ People." Additional reports highlight the urgency of Census participation. One of those additional reports, released by the nonpartisan Urban Institute earlier this year, warned that marginalized communities risk not being included in the headcount, which begins next month. People of color could be disproportionately impacted, the report notes.

The Trump administration's failed attempts to add a question about a citizen's legal status could also deter undocumented immigrants from filling out the form. The Supreme Court blocked the administration from asking the question this summer. But Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross continues to explore options for including the question.

That's a trend with previous Census

counts, according to the Task Force and CAP report.

"Since the Census was created, it has served the interests of white and wealthy populations and has funneled more resources into those communities and away from the communities that need it the most," the report found.

The Census may have undercounted, or not counted at all, as many as 16 million people in 2010. Among them were about 240,000 Texans, or 1 percent. A 2018 report from the George Washington University estimated the state would have lost an additional \$290 million in funds if an additional 1 percent went undercounted.

Texas already has an estimated 6 million hard-to-count populations, the highest in the country, followed by California and Nevada.

Yet during the most recent legislative session, Texas Democrats were unsuccessful in creating a "complete count" committee ensuring every person is counted. Texas is one of only five states

without a committee. The others are Florida, Louisiana, Nebraska and South Dakota. That's put the burden on cities and counties, including in North Texas.

The private sector is working on efforts as well. The Communities Foundation of Texas and Center for Public Policy Priorities, an Austin think tank, launched the Texas Counts campaign with the goal of doling out grants ranging from \$15,000 to \$100,000 to grassroots groups with strong census outreach plans.

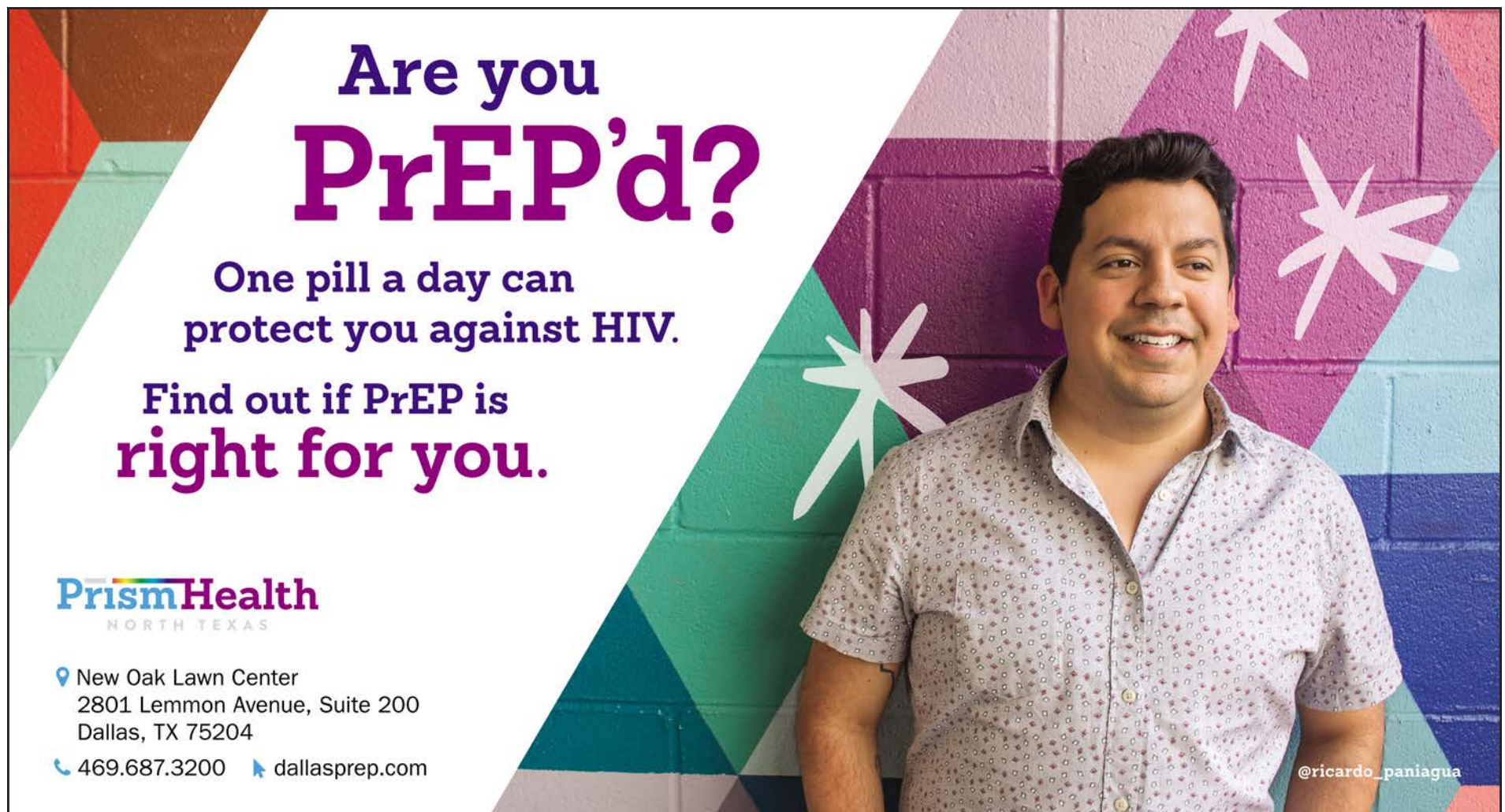
"For generations, politicians have attempted to erase LGBT people from the story of America and when it comes to the 2020 census, we cannot allow this dangerous trend to continue," said Charlie Bonner, communications manager for the MOVE Texas Civic Fund & MOVE Texas Action Fund, a non-profit dedicated to empowering underprivileged and LGBT youth.

"The lived experiences of LGBT Texans must be reflected in the 2020 census and that only happens when queer Texans speak out and participate in this critical census process."

The Census process begins in January. Census Day is April 1.

Data will be available beginning in March 2021.

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Gifts for queer creatives

Since this is the last installment of my queer creatives series for the year, and since the holiday/gift-giving season is upon us, I wanted to do something a bit different.

Instead of profiling a single creative, I wanted to share a few unique gift ideas for your favorite creative. Whether they are a drag artist, a writer or ANY kind of creative, there is something on this list that will put a smile on their face and inspiration in their heart.

Each section features an experience you can gift, a book and tools to help them keep on creating on!

Happy shopping!

Gifts for all artists and creatives

Membership to Arts Mission

One thing that any kind of creative craves is a space to create as well as a place to be among like-minded and inspiring artists. Better than a co-working space, Arts Mission offers up an amazing old church as a hidden creative haven for artists of all mediums. Monthly memberships start at \$100 a month, but the energy and inspiration to foster your creativity you'll get in return is priceless.

I was a member this year and I can vouch that this space, this family that Anastasia Munoz and her team have created will do wonders for your creative productivity.



Brandi Amara Skyy
Queer Creatives

Check out this month's schedule and membership at artsmissionoc.com.

"The Art Spirit" by Robert Henri

This book BY FAR has been both a bible and an oracle to me throughout my creative career. The Art Spirit is a compilation of writing fragments, speeches and thoughts from dissident artist Robert Henri. Even though Henri was a painter, this book isn't about a singular medium of art, but about an attitude — the artist's attitude, mindset and lens through which they see, and then make art out of, the world.

Because this is not a book in the traditional sense of a story with a beginning, middle and end, you can turn to any page and begin reading for inspiration. Whenever I have a question or need a little inspiration, I hold my desire/question in my head and open the book to a random page and read what my eyes first see. It has always given me sage advice.

The Art Spirit is my must-have book for any artist.

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With this first gift option, you are providing a way for your artist friend to take payments in person. Square and PayPal's mobile readers are amazing options for taking physical payments. Both require you to purchase a card reader — which is where the gift comes in.

Pick whichever one will be easier for your friend. I personally use PayPal's mobile card reader, and I love it!

Or ...

Arts Mission Oak Cliff also offers up a variety of performances, classes, sewing space, variety shows and book clubs that range from free to always accessible in price.

If they've been dying to create an online shop, gift them a year's subscription to Big Cartel, Shopify or Send Owl. All these online merchants are cost-effective and easy to use and set up shop so you can start selling your merch online!

Gifts for writers

Ticket to DFWCon

Named one of the best writing conferences in America by The Writer Magazine, DFWCon (The Dallas-Fort Worth Writing Conference) is one of the best places in Dallas to sharpen your writing skills. The weekend event happens in June and is two days full of classes, agent pitches, awesome catered lunches and networking.

I had no idea how much I would benefit from a writer's conference until I went to this one. Not only did I get fabulous writing advice, but I made life-long writing friends. If you want to make your writer friend's year, snag them a ticket for this awesome conference! Check them out at dfwcon.org

"Still Writing" by Dani Shapiro and/or "Writing Down the Bones" by Natalie Goldberg

Coming up with just one book to gift your writer friend was impossible because there are so many great writing books. But these two have been my go-to sources for decades.

Still Writing focuses more broadly on the creative life and is written in a memoir-esque style. Writing Down the Bones, on the other hand, is set to do one thing: get you writing. Both are essential to a writer's library. And either one will help a writer take their craft to the next level.

Stash of their favorite pen or notebook

I know that this gift might seem archaic in our age of technology, iPhones and MacBook Pros, but believe it or not, most writers still love and reach for a pen and notebook to jot down their thoughts, story ideas and notes.

I have carried what I call my blue notebook with me for the past four years. My pen of choice is a Pilot G-205. These tools allow my ideas to flow, and they assist me in creating my best work. Find out what favorite pen or notebook if for the

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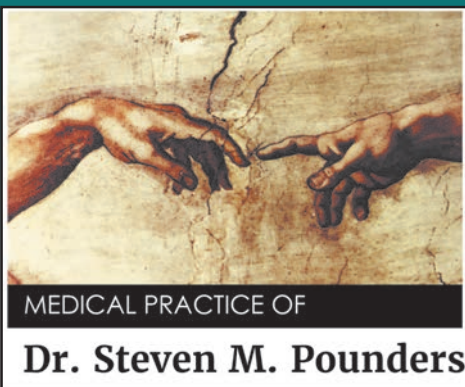


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QUEER

From Page 12

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Gifts for drag artists and/or performers

A dance, improv or theater class

Any of these movement classes will help sharpen your favorite drag artist's performance skills. Dallas Comedy House offers amazing improv and comedy classes. Plus, they have a great LGBTQ+ community within their house.

Arts Mission or Contemporary Ballet Dallas both offer adult dance classes to help performers hone their musicality and dance skills. Gift them the one that you feel will help round them out the most.

"How to be a Drag Queen" by Brandi Amara Skyy

(Note: Tammye Nash is writing this section, not Brandi)

There's a lot of debate these days over who can be a drag queen. Some say women — either cisgender or trans — don't qualify, because the whole idea of a drag queen is a man dressing up as a woman to perform. Folks, that is the art of female impersonation. Yes, it comes under the heading of "drag," but it is not the totality of "drag."

"Drag" — and this is my definition based on years of observation — is an art form an individual creates a whole new persona, a character, an expression for and of themselves, and then uses that new persona to not just create but to actually BE art. Whether that's a man or a woman putting on stage makeup and outrageous costumes and performing on stage, or whether that's you getting in the morning and putting on your "work drag" to go to the office to perform the art of your career, it's "drag" (although the "work drag" kind usually omits the "queen" part).

For those who know a drag queen is living inside them and fighting to get out, Brandi's book can help you open that door and let them breathe. And if you know someone — or if you are someone — who needs that help, this book is the perfect stocking stuffer this holiday season. It offers 32 lessons divided into six separate sections and even has DragWerk worksheets. So whether someone is yearning for their moment on stage or just looking to up their work



drag game, head on over and get Brandi's book for them now: bit.ly/howtobeadragqueenbook.

A "Drag Essentials" Gift Box

As drag artists, we can never have enough e6000, duct tape or spirit gum. One of the greatest gifts you can give to any drag artist is a box full of the items that are essential to their drag. Whatever their staples of drag are, put together a box full of everything they will need for a year of drag.

This is actually a two-fer kind of gift. Not only are you gifting them their must-have products, but you're also gifting them the freedom to now use their money to further their drag creativity, not just maintain it. This is a special gift in and of itself.

Gifts for artists that they can give themselves

And finally, gift-giving isn't something that we just do for others, it is also something that we should do for ourselves.

One of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves (besides the time to do and craft our work) is an AM ritual, something that sets up our day to create. Every great artist has one. In fact, there's a whole book about them! Gift yourself a copy of the book, Daily Rituals: How Artists Work, and use it as inspiration to find your own AM/daily ritual and watch your creativity flourish!

Have a great holiday season! And I'll see y'all next year!



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TEXANS

From Page 9

Rights Campaign's state director in Alabama, was there at the rallies following the April attack on Muhlaysia Booker to stand by the young woman's side. The national attention sparked by that attack and, later, by the murders of Booker and Chynal Lindsey triggered the Dallas trans community, she said.

"We knew her," she said of Booker. "The community felt the impact. It happened in our backyard." The attack on Booker and her subsequent murder woke people up to the fact that no one should have to live with such violence. It had an effect on the Dallas

police, too, she added, noting that the community "held them to a high accountability, and they worked tirelessly. Then here comes another death." Police took both Booker's and Lindsey's deaths personally and worked feverishly to solve them.

Anderson said that she hopes the attention generated by that the attack on Booker and then her murder, coupled with other anti-trans violence locally and nationally, will continue beyond this year, and that it will help the community at large gain a better understanding of trans women and men.



The Rev. Carmarion Anderson

Transgender people, she said, are just like any other human beings — with one big

difference: Every morning as they get ready to start their day, they have to prepare for the discrimination they will almost inevitably face.

Even though transgender people are "hard workers, smart, educated and degreed," they also face a very high unemployment rate because of anti-trans discrimination in the workplace. Still, she said, once you've been rejected by an employer because of who you are, when you do get hired, you work harder and are more loyal than other employees.

Anderson points to Dallas trans woman Naomi Green as one of the up-and-coming leaders in the trans community. Green, though, just describes herself as a black trans woman and, while she herself is not HIV-positive, an HIV advocate.

Because of the bigotry and the violence targeting the community, Green said, "we're always looking over our shoulder, being aware of looks and vibes from people around us." Still, she added, trans people have to do what they have to do to try and survive, even when that puts them at risk.

From Green's perspective, media coverage of Muhlaysia Booker's murder was in many ways more humanizing than coverage of most of the murders of other trans women of color. The stories about Booker connected the public to the victim.

"For once, people saw a person instead of a 'transgender,'" Green said, "which gave people a glimpse into what we deal. We're people."

And that is at the heart of the matter. "We are a lot more like you than not," McMurray said to the cisgender world. "I get up in the morning, let the dogs out. Then I get dressed. I kiss my wife, and I leave for work."

For Avanzino, the key is for the non-trans people to see their commonalities with trans people rather than their differences. "The struggles and fights almost mirror each other," he said. "It took allies to help make bigger strides for the gay community, and now the trans community needs LGBTQ-plus and straight folks to be our allies."

"Listen to trans voices. Show up at trans events. Hire transgender people. Speak up when you see transphobic posts/memes/stories on social media."

"This is a movement," Avanzino said. "We need people, trans folk and allies alike, to join us in solidarity. We are a beautiful, persevering and resilient community. No law, no bill, no ban, no removal of protection is ever going to change that."



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Coming out as transgender

Coming out as transgender is one of the hardest things I have ever done in my life. I personally know the anguish and mental toll it takes on a person and on their family to come to terms with being transgender.

I also know the courage it takes to finally admit it.

For me, it took getting to the point of suicide before I could come to terms with it in myself. And it took so much more to come out to my family, friends and, finally, the public. Having support and people that accepted me made the process bearable. But not everyone is as lucky as I have been.

As far as transitions go, mine has been relatively easy, even though no transition is ever really easy. Remember, “easy” is a relative term. While not easy for everyone concerned, at least my journey has been easier than what most have endured.

Let’s look at three of my friends who are also transgender women. Their transitions haven’t been so easy.

The first is Jasmine. When transitioning, she went through what most people think happens, and her losses were tremendous. First, her marriage of 10 years ended in a divorce. Next she lost her home, and her business ended up in bankruptcy. She then also lost her children and most of her family. I think this was the most bitter pill for her to swallow.

At least her mother stood by her side and became one of her biggest supporters. This is usually one consolation. It seems that mothers and/or grandmothers are more often the supportive ones. Father are often known for not being supportive in these situations. Mine was, although he struggles to understand entirely, and that’s okay because I don’t entirely understand either.

Then there is Zoey. I didn’t know that a transition like hers was even possible. I’d wish I had, because I would have saved myself years of heartache. Her family stood by her side. She kept her job (being in California probably helped). People seemed to take it in stride and be okay with it.



Sophie White
Guest Columnist

Now let’s talk about Emma.

Her’s has been a transition filled with unnecessary tragedy. She spiraled down so far, because her family would not accept her as trans-

gender. Emma killed herself in front of the family, after an argument in the middle of the street. You can either accept your transgender kids for who they are, or bury them because you couldn’t.

Her family made all of this even more tragic. When she was buried, they cut her hair and put her in a suit. Because the family thought, very wrongly, that being transgender is just a mental illness. Even in death she could not be who she died to be.

I have often thought of putting coins on her grave. This is what Armed Forces people sometimes do to let loved one know that someone is still thinking about them: Leaving a penny simply means you visited. A nickel means you trained together. Dimes mean you served with them. And leaving a quarter means you were there when they died.

I thought about painting a dime pink and super gluing it to her gravestone. So when — or if

— her dad ever visits her grave, it will be a reminder to him that it was his fault she is dead, and that we still love her.

After coming out and presenting full-time as a female, I’ve noticed a few things that I haven’t done in a long time — like looking forward to things happening in the future or dancing in the kitchen, just because I had a song in my head. I think coming out brought me a freedom that I haven’t known in years, although my friends have lost a lot by coming out, because the acceptance wasn’t there for them.

I was fortunate with my family and friends. I got three responses when I came out: Many of the males said they had no idea. A second group said they thought I might be. And the third group, mostly females, said, “It’s about time.”

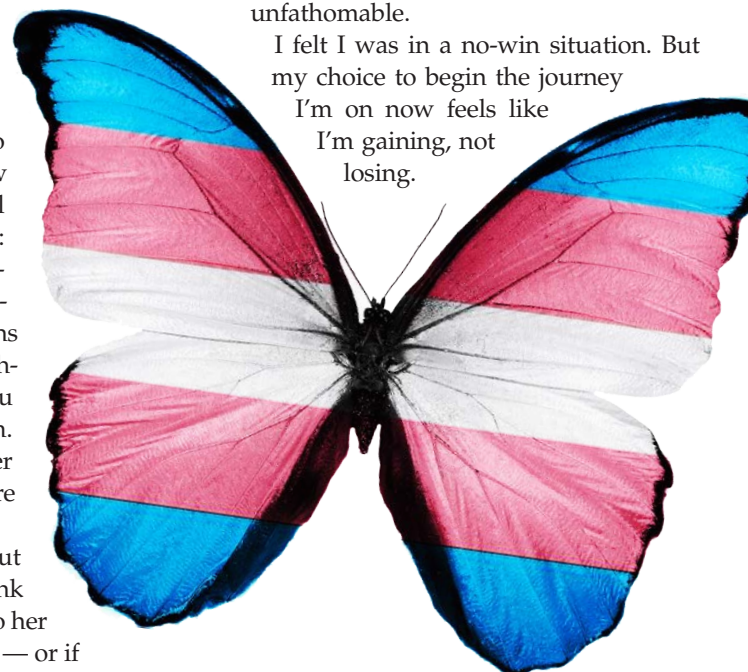
Regardless of your age, social level or ethnic persuasion, transitions can be hard. But it can give you a peace, and if you are anything like me, it could be a peace you haven’t felt in years. Also, how far you go is up to you and only you.

I’m not ashamed of my scars. They make me who I am. After transitioning, I chose the name Sophie because of Meryl Streep’s character in *Sophie’s Choice*. She had a choice, but no matter what she chose, her loss would be tremendous and unfathomable.

I felt I was in a no-win situation. But my choice to begin the journey

I’m on now feels like

I’m gaining, not losing.



Holy Waters

Trash god John Waters wishes everyone a merry crude Christmas in his new show

In some ways, it's disappointing to learn that John Waters' childhood Christmases were fairly normal. This is, after all, the guy who brought us scat-eating drag queens, murderous moms and puking poodle-skirt-wearing outcasts. He grew up without hints of what would be his art? Or maybe it's ironically sweet that he did... and that fans know he turned that into his own cultural touchstones.

Now 73, Waters is an unabashed fan of the yuletide ... especially a filthy one, as he will recount in his one-man show *A John Waters Christmas: Filthier & Merrier*.

With a brand new solo performance — and even a new-ish book, *Mr. Know-It-All: The Tarnished Wisdom of a Filth Elder*, which came out last spring — Waters talked to us before the show about bringing Dallas holiday cheer... on his terms.

— Rich Lopez

Dallas Voice: It's fair to say, your show has become a holiday tradition. Did you ever think that this would be the case? John Waters: Well, I hope so. I rewrite it every year, so I have all this new material. It's almost completely different from the last time.

That sounds potentially burdensome. Not only do I write it, but then I have to learn it! I'm about three-quarters of the way through writing it, so I have plenty of time to learn it. I read while on the plane, and I'm on planes a lot.

Why take that on each year? It's the same skeleton of the show but I always rewrite it. I figure people aren't going to come if it's the same every year. I also try not to have what's in the book, since they've already read it. I come up with material for the Christmas show that I can use for the other shows I do. I add stuff all the time, since so much happens in the news.

Do you look back on the year... I look back

on the day! You wonder now how *Newsweek* continues. You can't avoid it. Now all the bulletins I get from papers... by the time I get the print edition, I've read half of it already. But I like alerts. I like the "BULLETIN, BULLETIN BULLETIN."

Can you describe your writing process for a solo show? It's the same process when I write anything. I go in exactly at 8 a.m. I have the same legal pads, the same Bic pens, Scotch tape, the same thesaurus and rhyming dictionary. I always have my *Little Book of Filth*. It is the best dictionary of dirty terms ever.

I noticed you didn't list a laptop or computer. I use my phone! I just say what I need into the phone, and it tells me back. It's faster than typing it in. I ask, "What are the names of the reindeer?" or "Tell me the top Christmas carols." I'm always doing research on it, but it's so much quicker than a computer. It used to be where you had to go to the library and find some microfiche, and that would take all day. It's not even 20 minutes now to get research done.

Are you sentimental about the holidays? I remember them fondly. I don't think the future is going to be better than the past. I miss people; I certainly miss my mother and father, but I still see my family. We have a traditional dinner, and every three years it's my turn to cook it. I certainly think of my parents a lot, but is that sentimental or just realistic?

Does that sentimentality or realism work its way into your show? It does. I talk about my family very much. It'll be tough this year for some families because of all the politics. You have families not speaking at the dinner because of political differences. They're in a civil war. You just have to not talk about it, and some families will sit in stone silence all Christmas, praying no one turns on the television on any news where they will erupt into knocking over not only the Christmas tree, the dining room table, throwing turkeys at each other. True anarchy.

They could always just sing carols. I have this whole thing with crack caroling where you bring the scariest people to other people's houses singing hideous songs. It's technically not illegal.

You once said you were a twisted version of your mom and dad. I am! I think anybody is.

Does that then reflect in your Christmas show? Yeah, I had to learn all the rules of a traditional Christmas to possibly break them and then think of a humorous way to talk about it so completely. I always had a very functional Christmas. I would take anything that was weird at Christmas and completely exaggerate it and obsess over it. It was never traumatic. The Christmas tree did fall on my grandmother, but it was an accident, and she wasn't hurt or anything.

When you say "weird," did that extend to gifts you were asking for as a kid? My parents would get me stuff I asked for. There's a picture of me under the Christmas tree

A JOHN WATERS CHRISTMAS

The Kessler, 1230 W. Davis St. Dec. 14.
6 p.m. bar, 8 p.m. show. \$40.
TheKessler.org.

when I'm really young holding a hand puppet and the album *The Genius of Ray Charles*.

Well, that seems nice? I look at that picture now and first of all, my parents did not know who Ray Charles was in 1958, and I was young enough to be getting puppets. There you go. And that's still a really good album!

Do you think people expect one thing and get another at your show? They know. They wanna be startled. They want to hear the rude stuff. They wanna come into a world they might not feel safe in. You don't come see a show called *Filthier and Merrier* or whatever it's called not knowing.

It's right there on the marquee. That's not exactly disguising the subject matter. No one ever comes in and say "Well, that was offensive." Well, duh.

What prompted the book this year? I had a 100 stories I wanted to sell. We all gotta make a living.

Preach, sister. Alan Cumming reviewed your book and said it was the most revealing and authentic. Do you see it that way? Yes I do because I talk a lot about my failures.

It seems interesting in all your years and through your movies and books that you're still revealing yourself.

Everyone thinks they know a lot, but they don't know anything because I believe in having a private life — or else you don't have any life. When I hear about people telling *People* magazine their most personal thoughts, I think "Don't they have friends?" You shouldn't tell everything because then you have nothing left.

Do you look at this as an autobiography? It's a memoir — essays about things that obsess me. It's practical advice. I talk about how to collect art that nobody else collects. How to build a dream house that everyone else will hate. How to fail upwards in Hollywood.

This sounds very helpful for life. I think it has advice on every single thing but sports, which is funny because now I'm the new Nike ad, which is even more improbable in a career of improbabilities.



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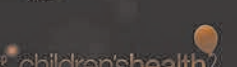
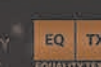


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Cain-Gribble and LeDuc at the 2019 U.S. Classic.



Combinatio

Capping a great year on the ice, out Pairs skater Tim LeDuc and partner Ashley Cain-Gribble focus on improving the lives of others, while fellow Ladies skater Amber Glenn officially comes out

COY COVINGTON | Special Contributor
coyact@aol.com

The North Texas-based ice skating team of Ashley Cain-Gribble and her queer partner Timothy LeDuc blasted out of the 2019 gate by winning the U.S. National Pairs Championships in spectacular fash-

ion last January. They will forever be national champions. It's in the record books. Pretty cool.

Also pretty cool was LeDuc notching a place in history as the first out gay athlete to win a U.S. Pairs title. For LeDuc, the win reawakened the dreaming child in him, something he admits he doesn't often feel in his "old age." (He's 29... eye roll.)

He's not the only one, of course. "Once you've attained that goal and hit what you thought would be the highest point in your career," says Cain-Gribble, "you find you want more."

The "more" happened soon. They next had the daunting challenge of competing as the sole U.S. Pairs team at

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the 2019 World Figure Skating Championships in Saitama, Japan. Their goal was to place in the top 10, and in doing so, regain U.S. pairs a second spot at The 2020 Worlds. Getting back those two spots was huge. A must. The burden on the team to produce was massive.

"There was immense pressure going into Worlds," says LeDuc. "After Nationals it felt like I became pregnant with expectation and had been carrying this weight around with the stress growing like a baby inside. When we won those two spots it was like giving birth!"

The spring and summer unfolded with new achievements and milestones. They helped Team USA win the

World Team Trophy in April; in June, Cain became Cain-Gribble when she married long-time beau Dalton Gribble. (LeDuc was in the wedding party as a "bridesman.") After honeymooning on Turks and Caicos, Cain-Gribble flew back to Dallas, and she and LeDuc left the same day for an elite U.S. Figure Skating training camp. The autumn was shaping up nicely.

They continued to practice during the summer (including a camp in Baselga di Piné, Italy), and when September rolled around they calmly claimed their second straight Gold Medal (against a stacked field) at the 2019 U.S. International Figure Skating

■ COMBINATION Page 24

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Texans of the Year: Queer Locals

These figures in sports, culture and entertainment stood out in 2019, all by being proudly themselves

Jonathan Norton.

The local playwright, already acclaimed for several recent shows, enjoys two world premieres — *Penny Candy* at Dallas Theater Center and *A Love Offering* at Kitchen Dog Theater, cementing himself as a prolific conjurer of Texas life.



Winn Morton.

The legendary costume designer — for Broadway and Ringling Bros., among others — steps down after nearly 40 years of designing the gowns and set for the Texas Rose Festival.

Venny Etienne.

The Dallas fashion designer appears on the reboot of *Project Runway*. He fares well, placing seventh overall.



Terry Loftis.

Already a Tony-nominated Broadway producer, Loftis began developing a project about the murder of a gay teen (mounting a local staged reading) before being appointed executive director of the nonprofit TACA.

Timothy LeDuc and Amber Glenn.

LeDuc, with pairs skating partner Ashley Cain-Gribble, wins the U.S. Nationals title in January, making history as the first-ever out winner in the category. Meanwhile, Glenn, who trains with LeDuc, officially comes out — the only openly lesbian member of Team USA (see story, Page 20).

Laura Carrizales and Mel Arizpe.

The couple represents the U.S. singing duets in at the World Karaoke Championship, making the finals (sadly, they did not win).

A'keria Chanel Davenport, Plastique Tiara and Ra'Jah O'Hara.

The three Dallas-based queens appeared on the most recent season of *RuPaul's Drag Race*, coming in third (tied), eighth and ninth.



Colby Calhoun.

The gender-non-conforming theater professional develops a new play — *The First Annual Gay Show* — for the Festival of Independent Theatres, embracing and celebrating diversity onstage.

It's beginning to
sound a lot *like*
 2019
Christmas

HOLIDAYS AT THE DSO



DECEMBER 6 - 31 | 2019



Classic in Salt Lake City.

As they skated on the Grand Prix circuit in the fall (sadly, they failed to make the finals of the Grand Prix), their eyes remained on one goal: to retain their title at the 2020 National Championships this coming January in Greensboro, N.C. It has been several years since a pair's team has successfully defended their title, so yep, more pressure.

One way to keep pressure at bay was to focus on things outside of skating. For the newlywed Cain-Gribble, it's not just her marriage but issues of women's empowerment that fuel her off time, and she uses social media to share her experiences and advocate for strong women. It helps that she can share ideas and insight and learn from other formidable skaters such as Meryl Davis, Madison Hubbell, Mariah Bell and Adam Rippon. Also in that stable: Amber Glenn, who trains alongside her friends in Euless and Valley Ranch.

"I try to follow the example Ashley sets and her overall demeanor when she skates in front of thousands of people," Glenn says. "She's so strong and confident. I really look up to her and

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admire her for that.”

Strength is something Glenn, hailing from Plano, knows about herself. She is the only openly queer Ladies figure skater competing on Team USA. While Glenn has been out to those in her inner circle for some time, she publicly acknowledges it for the first time in this interview.

“The fear of not being accepted is a huge struggle for me,” she says. “Being perceived as [going through] ‘just a phase’ or [being] ‘indecisive’ is a common thing for bisexual/pansexual women. I don’t want to shove my sexuality in people’s faces, but I also don’t want to hide who I am.” Happily, she will have a constant ally in Cain-Gribble and an unwavering mentor in LeDuc.

As for LeDuc, he gets his mind off skating by advocating for the gay community. He proudly identifies as “queer” — a word once used as a pejorative but that has now become preferred by many. “The word has been reclaimed,” LeDuc says. “We used to use ‘gay community’ as the umbrella term, but it’s not very inclusive, since it only describes men attracted to men. Queer is much more inclusive because it includes sexual orientation and gender identities and other identities within the LGBTQ+ community. In the past, it was such a negative and hurtful word, there is power in reclaiming it.”

LeDuc is very open and comfortable about being an out athlete and doesn’t concern himself with those who might wish he were less visible and less vocal.

“Anyone who would prefer my silence doesn’t realize what’s at stake and is not aware of the good that comes from visibility, he says. “They are not aware of how many youths are not in an affirming environment and need an out and open advocate to give them words of affirmation when they are in an environment where they have none.

“You can’t discount the importance of visibility, because each person who uses their platform to be more visible does work to change the culture, and the more we can do to change the culture, the more community of likeness we make, and when we make that community of likeness, we can be strong.”

Being an advocate for gay youth is not just an idea for LeDuc, it is reality. He is a Core Group volunteer for DFW Fuse — a group for gay, bisexu-

al, pansexual, queer and questioning guys between the ages of 18 and 29 in the Metroplex. Their mission is to foster a safe, healthy, and supportive community.

Fuse feels equally as passionate about having LeDuc as an ally.

“Timothy is an absolute treasure,” says Fuse coordinator Tres Brown. “Support from outstanding members of the community like him is invaluable to the progress and atmosphere here at DFW Fuse. I know his time is precious, but he even checks in with us when he is traveling. Timothy is not just a

volunteer, but has become a dear friend who exemplifies leadership and generosity. He’s pretty fierce, too!”

Fierce is an apt term for the Cain-Gribble/LeDuc team. They are also poised and personable, bright and beautiful, confident and collected ... a powerhouse package. Look for those qualities to serve them well as they fight to defend their U.S. Pairs title at Nationals in January. They haven’t come this far to get only this far. They’re just getting started.



■ LeDuc with Remy Duran, volunteering for DFW Fuse.

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**Friday 12.06 –
Saturday 12.07**

The fur flies at Tony Moran dance party

Join superstar DJ Tony Moran for Furball XL, where the Grammy nominee will spin some of his Top 40 hits and No. 1 dance singles. For those bears who crave dancefloor madness, Moran might have the perfect set for your weekend. See him electrify Magnum in this show benefiting Dallas Hope Center's LGBT young adult homeless shelter.

DEETS: Magnum Dallas, 1820 W. Mockingbird Lane. 9 p.m.– 2 a.m. \$15 at the door.



**Friday 12.06 –
Sunday 12.22**

Burlesque meets Christmas in a wacky 'Nutcracker'

Lovers of irreverent stage comedy have a chance to catch *A Bur-Less-Q Nutcracker!*, a nutty tale surrounding the Christmas classic. Now in its 13th season, the Mark-Brian Sonna play tells about the women of a Louisiana Southern Baptist book club trying to stage Tchaikovsky's holiday ballet, but getting desperate for performers after their entire cast contracts food poisoning. A raunchy troupe of burlesque dancers saves the show after their bus in route to New Orleans breaks down.

DEETS: Addison Conference and Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road.



Friday 12.06 – Sunday 12.22

Celebrate holiday magic with 'Cirque Holidays'

WaterTower Theatre presents *Cirque Holidays*, a unique circus and theater collaboration with Lone Star Circus showcasing local and international talent in aerial acts, juggling skills, extreme hula-hooping and illusionary arts. This family-friendly showcase of big-tent entertainment features performers from across the globe executing gravity-defying tricks and amazing feats of the human body.

DEETS: Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. WaterTowerTheatre.org.

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THEATER

Cirque Holidays! WaterTower Theatre and Lone Star Circus join forces for this Christmas show. Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Dec. 5–22. WaterTowerTheatre.org.

A Christmas Carol. The holiday tradition. Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through Dec. 29. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

Dear Evan Hansen. The Tony winner for best musical, about how a misunderstanding at a high school escalates. Fair Park Music Hall, 901 First Ave. Through Dec. 8. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

Lifespan of a Fact. A play about the modern age of journalism, truth and artistic license. Stage West, 821 W. Vickery Blvd., Fort Worth. Through Dec. 8. StageWest.org.

Miss Saigon. The team responsible for *Les Miz* adapt Madame Butterfly to 1960s Vietnam. Bass Performance Hall, 535 Commerce St., Fort Worth. Through Sunday. BassHall.com

Noises Off. The best modern farce conceived, a behind-the-scenes look at a disastrous play rehearsal. Through Dec. 22. Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Theatre3Dallas.com.

Nuncrackers, A-Men! Uptown Players present the sequel to the hit Catholic comedy *Nunsense*, this time with a drag-tastic bent. Kalita Humphrey Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Dec. 5–15. UptownPlayers.org.

Queen of Basel. At the high-falutin Miami art event, a privileged woman flirts with the help in a Darwinian battle of changing social mores. Hilary Bettis reimagined Miss Julie in the Latinx world of contemporary America. Trinity River Arts Center, 2600 Stemmons Freeway. Through Dec. 15. KitchenDogTheater.org.

Swimming While Drowning. A coming of age story about life in an LGBTQ homeless shelter. Presented by Cara Mia Theatre. Latino Cultural Center, 2600 Live Oak St. Through Dec. 15. CaraMiaTheatre.org.

BALLET

The Nutcracker. Texas Ballet Theater's annual Christmas show, Tchaikovsky's enduring holiday classic of beautiful music. Bass Performance Hall, 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth. Dec. 13–29. (The comic spoof *Nutty Nutcracker* is performed on Dec. 20.) BassHall.com. TexasBalletTheater.com.

DANCE

Dallas Black Dance Theatre: Black on Black. Dancers from DBDT and DBDT: Encore! both perform to show new works. For 21 and up only. DBDT Studios, 2700 Ann Williams Way. Dec. 6–7 only. DBDT.com.

SATURDAY 12.07

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.

MONDAY 12.09

CABARET

Mama's Party. Weekly cabaret night with special guest performances. Uptown Theatre, 120 E. Main St., Grand Prairie. 7:35 p.m. \$10.

TUESDAY 12.10

FILM

Love Actually. An oddly beloved by mawkish romance, set during the holidays and with an ensemble cast. 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.

THURSDAY 12.12

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 12.13

DANCE

MOMIX. The innovative dance company, a TITAS favorite, returns for one night only. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. ATPAC.org.

CONCERTS

Turtle Creek Chorale: Fa La La. The gay men's chorus' annual holiday concert. Moody Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. Dec. 13–15. TurtleCreekChorale.com.

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Cassie Nova

Getting in the holiday spirit — one way or another

Hello hookers. The holidays are upon us, and I am trying to get in the holiday spirit. I refuse to be The Grinch this year, so I am going to get into the holiday spirit — even if I gotta blow an elf to do so. I'd settle for a little person wearing Spock ears.

As I get older, I'm noticing that I am stupid emotional over everything. Between that Xfinity E.T. commercial and the last 10 minutes of the movie *Scrooged*, I was a blubbering idiot the other day. I swear, all it takes for me to get a lump in my throat — which is a precursor to me full on crying — is a building orchestra. Damn Dolly and her Heartstrings!

I think there is something broken inside me that doesn't let me show emotion like a normal person. Hell, I can't even take a compliment! The other day someone told me I looked nice, and my response was, "Thanks Fag."

How hard would it have been to just say thanks? For me, damn near impossible.

When I'm trying to speak about something that gets me emotional, like my husband or my dogs, I have to stop talking for a moment. I have to look like I am choking before I can finish what I am trying to say. I blame growing up in a world where boys were told, "Boys don't cry," and you got called a pussy if you did.

That is not my world anymore. No one judges me anymore for showing emotion. If anything, I'm encouraged to show emotion to prove I'm not a complete monster. The only time I remember bawling as a kid and not getting judged was when my Mom took a huge group of us to see E.T. The group included my aunt Zina, who was literally a blubbering mess by the end of the movie — and that made me feel okay with openly blubbering with her. Our entire family cried. FYI: I was the only boy. I think if any other males would have been with us, I would have held it in like a fart in an elevator.

We really need to remove that stigma. We have to stop telling boys that if you show emotion you are somehow weak. It takes a strong person to own their feelings. Anger I have on lock, but I can definitely work on the emotions that include my heart.

I think my favorite emotion is laughter through tears. Do you remember the first time you saw *Steel Magnolias*? Then you know exactly what I am talking about.

When you are crying, you are right on the cusp of madness, and laughing is right there with it. It's the strangest mental state. You almost feel insane. Maybe that is why I make so many inappropriate comments and laugh at funerals. Crying and laughing are so close together on the emotional spectrum. One can lead to the other so quickly — or is that just me? If it is just me, that proves my wires are screwy.

Years ago at my Pawpaw's funeral, I had



a tears/laughter experience. The guy that volunteered to sing "Amazing Grace," in my opinion, had no business singing anything, much less at my Pawpaw's funeral. I know the guy really loved my Pawpaw and wanted to honor him by singing, but my messy ass couldn't stop laughing. He was awful, and I think he made up some of the lyrics. I looked over, and my sister was giggling and shaking her head. Then I saw my cousins — Jeremy, Kevin and Jon — all cracking up, so I know it wasn't just me. Pawpaw would have laughed too, I bet, but he would have told us to behave while he was smiling. My heart was so heavy that day, but our uncontrollable giggling, to me, was a way to honor a man that had a great sense of humor.

The laughter through tears thing can sneak up on you. At least, it does for my broken self. It was so weird: We were seeing Kathy Griffin live once when she was here in Dallas years ago, way before all the Trump drama. She was hilarious. She was making jokes about meeting one of the hundreds of celebrities she had talked shit about, and,

while laughing really hard, my mind briefly wandered to someone special I had recently lost, and I started sobbing. No one noticed; apparently my laughing face and my crying face are pretty similar.

That's what I mean by they are so close on the emotional spectrum. Laughing hard and crying hard are almost in the same head space for me.

Does anybody else feel that way, or am I as nuts as I think I am? Y'all let me know. Test it. Next time you are laughing really hard, think of something insanely sad and see how easy it is for your emotions to swing. It doesn't happen often for me, but it happens. I swear I am not bipolar; it usually only happens with extreme emotions.

Oh my God, I sound fucking crazy. What do you do to get in the Christmas spirit? I think we put too much pressure on ourselves to feel festive and get in the holiday mood. I think part of the problem is all the hype and buildup before the holidays, so that by the time the holidays are actually here, we are so ready for them to be over.

I sound jaded, but it is true. Two solid months of Christmas everywhere you look kind of dulls the shine.

But like I said, I refuse to be a Grinch this year. So bring on the Christmas music, and I promise not to be that bitch! I am going to enjoy this season. I even bought pumpkin spice lube, and it only burns a little.

I promise to laugh till I cry and only make a few inappropriate jokes — nah, just kidding! Inappropriate jokes are my bread and butter. I am going to keep being my same annoying self but now with more hugs.

I will try to tone down my sarcasm, and I can almost promise not to punch any children. It is Christmas, and I am full of it ... the Christmas spirit, that is. I'm going to jingle all the bells and lay me half a dozen geese. And for all those that have been worried about me and that pesky vertigo, I'm doing much better, thank you.

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



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Making the SCENE the week of Dec. 6-12:

- **1851 Club:** Kiana Lee emcees an all-star cast at 10:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.
- **Alexandre's: Repeal of Prohibition Party** with **The Diminished Fifths** on Friday.
- **Stephanie Sallie** on Saturday. **Wayne Smith** on Sunday. **K-Marie** on Tuesday. **Vero Voz** on Wednesday. **Chris Chism** on Thursday.
- **Cedar Springs Tap House: The Darlin' Show** with karaoke, games and live entertainment from 8-11 p.m. on Friday.
- **Club Changes: Movie Night** featuring a screening of *A Christmas Story* from 9-11 p.m. on Tuesday.
- **Club Reflection: Tucker** hosts Karaoke at 9 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Dallas Eagle: Mr. North Texas Pride's Underwear Auction** from 7-10 p.m. on Friday. **Diablo's Third-Half Meet-Up** from 2-5 p.m. on Saturday. **United Court Stocking Stuffers** from 6-10 p.m. on Saturday.
- **Havana: Showtime** is 11 p.m. on Thursday.
- **JR.'s Bar & Grill: Double Trouble** featuring **Bleach, Raquel, Rolla and Barbie** at 11 p.m. on Tuesday. **Dream Girls** with **Chanel, Bleach, Rocky, Ariel and Fantasha** at 11 p.m. on Thursday.
- **Liquid Zoo: Jack Mason** live from 9 p.m.-midnight on Friday.
- **Magnum: Joe Fiore** presents **Furball Dallas** from 9 p.m.-2 a.m. on Friday.
- **Marty's Live: Miss Wanda** from 9 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Round-Up Saloon: Lost Souls Rugby Toy Drive and Tacky Sweater Contest** from 6-9 p.m. on Saturday. The **20th annual Stocking Auction for Legacy Counseling Center** from 7-10 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Sue Ellen's: LLH Presents Winter Wonderland** at 10 p.m. on Friday. **Christmas with Carmella** with food, show and raffle benefits Tucker's Gift from 6-9 p.m. on Sunday. **Rocky and the Bullwinkles** and **Empire Cats** on Sunday.
- **The Rose Room: Drag Me To Christmas** featuring **Victoria Paige** and **Montana Reed** at 7 p.m. on Sunday. **Ms. Gay Kickball** at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday.
- **TMC: The Mining Company: Fuego Wednesday** with \$200 cash prizes at 11:30 p.m. on Wednesday.
- **Urban Cowboy: The Season 3 Finale Battle of the Best** at 11 p.m. on Thursday.
- **Woody's Sports & Video Bar: Your favorite NCAA game** all afternoon and evening on Saturday. **Karaoke** at 10 p.m. on Wednesday.

Scene Photographers: **Chad Mantoath** and **Nicholas Gonzalez**

Showtime at the Rose Room



Cassie Nova's F



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Solution on Page 28

Across

- 1 Clay Aiken and others
- 6 "Dancing Queen" band
- 10 Adam and Steve's locale?
- 14 Oscar winner Marisa
- 15 Vibrator measure
- 16 Winged goddess
- 17 "Ready __, here I come!"
- 18 Piece of Aaron Copland
- 19 Chin stroker's words
- 20 Slogan on banners of the Pink Pistols
- 23 *Atlas Shrugged* author Rand
- 24 Mob collectors
- 26 "Suzie Q" band, for short
- 28 T, as in Leviticus
- 31 With 33-Across, slogan coined by Frank Kameny
- 33 See 31-Across
- 34 Sorta
- 37 Grazing ground
- 38 River of Michelangelo's land
- 39 Woman who goes both ways?
- 40 Give a pink slip to
- 41 Tyler of *Lord of the Rings*
- 42 Kahlo's country
- 43 Trick joint, maybe

44 "The end of ___"

- 46 Mama's boy
- 47 Wood and more
- 48 Tiny bits on South Beach
- 51 Bellows of *Ally McBeal*
- 53 Slogan used to draw attention to the AIDS crisis
- 59 Label on a lemon that isn't a fruit
- 61 "Queen of Country" McEntire
- 62 Kilmer simile phrase
- 63 *Star Trek* counselor Deanna
- 64 Deviate
- 65 Helmeted cartoon character
- 66 A. Spear's state
- 67 Slips up
- 68 Words said from one's knees

Down

- 1 "Believe ___ not!"
- 2 Nickelodeon explorer
- 3 Potent leader?
- 4 Sculptor da Vinci
- 5 Be passive
- 6 Admit openly
- 7 Conks on the head
- 8 Words on a book jacket
- 9 Cruising, maybe
- 10 It's hard to figure out
- 11 Gay-friendly

- 12 Barely get, with "out"
- 13 Born, in gay Paree
- 21 How punctual people come
- 22 Pop of pop
- 25 Sibling issue
- 26 Removing a fruit center, e.g.
- 27 Homophobic type of therapy
- 29 Some have it to grind
- 30 *Quo ___?*
- 32 Drink from the land of the samurai
- 33 The Oscars, e.g.
- 35 Baylor's city
- 36 First ___
- 40 Like a pirate insignia
- 42 Chains around a knight
- 45 Hansberry's wrinkled fruit
- 49 Cheek
- 50 Look from Snidely
- 52 *My Own Private ___*
- 54 Good buddy
- 55 Features of Disney's *Dumbo*
- 56 2012 Ben Affleck movie
- 57 Tin Woodsman's rust source
- 58 Bunch of stallions
- 59 It swallows plastic
- 60 Hindu title of respect



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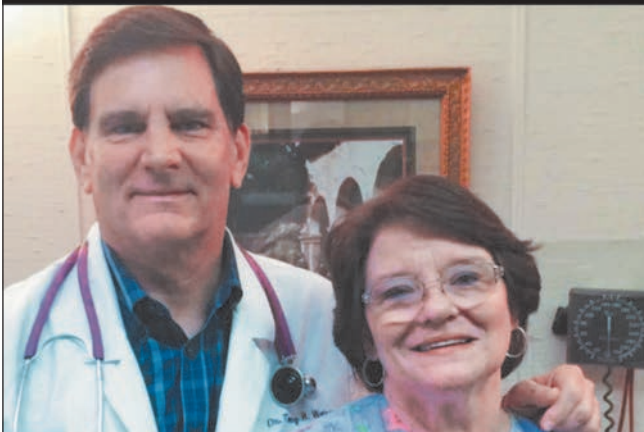
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