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Family LIFE special edition publishes on Friday, July 29, 2016.
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Denise Lee was among the singers who joined the Turtle Creek Chorale for Songs for Healing at Cathedral of Hope on Tuesday, June 14, in memory of the victims of the Orlando massacre.

Dallas MMA fighter accused of gay bashing dies

Mixed Martial Arts fighter Ivan “J.P.” Cole, 25, died Saturday after shooting himself while “playing” Russian roulette in his North Dallas apartment.

Cole also worked at XTC Cabaret. He was the employee who allegedly initiated an incident in which Cory Weddington was punched and kicked. The women Weddington was with were told, “Get that faggot out of here.”

In a statement to Dallas Voice, XTC said Weddington, who’s about 5’4”, attacked MMA fighter Cole.

Weddington filed a lawsuit against XTC on May 1 for damages stemming from the April 2 incident. He alleges assault by four employees that “delivered repeated blows to plaintiff’s head, neck, back, face, shoulder and hips, causing him severe and irreparable injuries including a fractured jaw, broken nose, abrasions, and a seizure disorder caused by trauma to the back of the head.”

He is asking for at least \$200,000 in compensation for damages, penalties, costs, expenses, pre-judgment interest and attorney fees.

Weddington was cleared as a suspect in Cole’s death by Dallas Police.

No charges were filed against Cole before his death or against the other employees. Dallas police weren’t working off-duty at the club, because DPD officers are not allowed to work at XTC.

At the time of his death, Cole had been suspended from competing in his sport.

From a report by the Combative Sports Advisory Board, “On Sept. 4, a default order was entered against Ivan Cole assessing an administrative penalty of \$5,000 and suspending Respondent’s boxer and second license for one year for failing to exhibit sportsmanlike conduct.”

— David Taffet

shooting in Orlando is being organized in Athens, Texas. The event will be held Monday, June 20, at 6:30 p.m. at the Henderson County Courthouse, 100 E. Tyler St.

For information call 903-681-4486 or email Holl-away951@gmail.com.

— Tammye Nash

We can’t continue to send condolences while failing at prevention

My thoughts and prayers go out to all the victims of this senseless shooting. This attack was an act of hate that marred a weekend where millions of LGBT Americans held Pride events in cities across the country. It is outrageous that the LGBT community was targeted with such violence.

There have been reports that the ex-wife of the shooter claims he suffered from mental illness. If this is true, this event provides another example of the need for reform to our mental health system. As the lead Democratic cosponsor of H.R. 2646, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, I recognize the need to be able to identify and treat those with mental illnesses before their illnesses result in deadly acts.

Tragically, news reports about mass gun violence have become a constant presence in our everyday lives. This attack reiterates the need for our country to fundamentally rethink the gun culture and the laws that surround it in America. When one man, with a history of domestic abuse and mental illness, is able to buy a gun, murder 49 people and injure more than 50 others, it highlights the deficiencies in our current system. We must not continue to send condolences to the countless victims of violence without doing everything in our power to prevent more families and communities from suffering from this kind of senseless violence. We must act now to end mass shootings in our country.

— Rep Eddie Bernice Johnson

Vigil for Orlando planned in Athens, Texas

A vigil in memory of the victims of the June 12

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THE GAY AGENDA

Obituary



Billie (Bill) Lee Thames, 85, died of natural causes on June 9. He was born on March 20, 1931 in Cisco, Texas and resided in Dallas for the last 20 years.

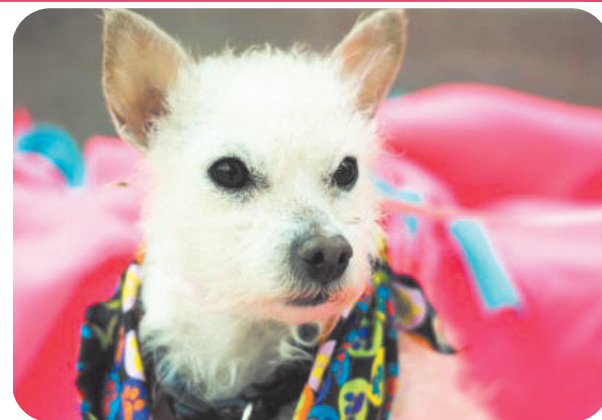
Bill wished to be cremated and to have his ashes spread on his nephew Michael Doyle Marr's 32-acre "place" near Weatherford.

Bill was an interior designer in his professional years and a practitioner of Jin Shin Jyutsu, the ancient Chinese art of harmonizing the life energy in the body, in his retirement years. Bill, at one time, was an active member of OLITA and the Prime Timers social clubs.

A celebration of the life and legacy of Bill Thames will be held on Sunday, June 19 at 2:30 p.m. at Cathedral of Hope, Interfaith Peace Chapel, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. Presenters are his nephew Michael Doyle Marr and wife Sharon Marr, friend Liz Mosesman, friend Al Daniels and any and all of Bill's friends and family. ■

pet of the week / CECE

Cece is a cute little girl who needs a gentle, patient pet parent willing to build her confidence and trust. She will be a great cuddle bug if you have a calm environment and some quiet time to give her. Cece would do best in a home with older children.



Other pets are available for adoption from Operation Kindness, 3201 Earhart Drive, Carrollton. The no-kill shelter is open six days: Monday, 3-8 p.m.; closed Tuesday; Wednesday, 3-8 p.m.; Thursday, noon-8 p.m.; Friday, noon-5 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Sunday, noon-5 p.m. The cost is \$110 for cats, \$135 for kittens, \$150 for dogs over 1 year, and \$175 for puppies. The cost includes the spay/neuter surgery, microchipping, vaccinations, heartworm test for dogs, leukemia and FIV test for cats, and more. Those who adopt two pets at the same time receive a \$20 discount.

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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.

- **Weekly: Lambda Weekly every Sunday at 1 p.m. on 89.3 KNON-FM** with this week's guest is TransGriot editor **Monica Roberts**; **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 3116 Commerce St., Suite C; **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 Treymore Building, 4038 Lemmon Ave, Suite 101; **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.

JUNE

- **June 17: Dallas for Orlando benefit show**

Join some of Dallas' best entertainers as they pay tribute to fallen family members in Orlando. 7-10 p.m. at Dallas Eagle, 5740 Maple Ave.

- **June 17: June Mixer**

From 4-7 p.m. at Bar Louie, 8166 Park Lane, Suite C310.

- **June 18: Beach Blanket Gaybingo**

Monthly fundraiser for Resource Center takes place 6-9 p.m. the third Saturday of the month at Rose Room at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Doors open at 5 p.m. For more information, call 214-540-4458 or email Bscott@myresourcecenter.org.

- **June 18: Turtle Creek monthly clean up**

Join Turtle Creek Association's monthly clean-up of the shores of Turtle Creek. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Beasley steps at Hall Street and the Katy Trail. clarke@turtlecreekassociation.org.

- **June 18: Juneteenth Unity Festival**

Dallas Southern Pride and Abounding Prosperity present a Juneteenth celebration from 3 p.m.-midnight at Bungalow Beach Club, 3221 Ross Ave.

- **June 19: Summer Showcase Fashion Show**

The Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road, presents the Summer Showcase Fashion Show, benefitting the Cedar Springs Merchants Association, and featuring fashions from ES Collection, Skivvies and Outlines. Steve Kemble hosts, and there will be live and silent auctions. 8 p.m. at The Round-Up Saloon.

- **June 19: Men Having Babies**

The first Men Having Babies South Surrogacy Seminar and Gay Parenting Expo features community resources and 20 U.S. and Canadian service providers, as well as information about financial assistance for prospective gay parents. 9 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Wyndham Dallas Suites-Park Central, 7800 Alpha Road. Register at MenHavingBabies.org/dallas

- **June 19: Father's Day at the Arboretum**

Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden, 8525 Garland Road, celebrates Fathers Day with remote control airplane demonstrations and exhibits, with remote control flights by North Dallas RC Club launching every hour on the hour above the Concert Lawn, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. There will also be walk-up sessions with the Perot Museum's TECH Truck Staff in the Children's Adventure Garden, and the Super Hero Dads Craft Corner for children. Admission is free for members; for non-members, \$15 per adult, \$12 for seniors, \$10 for children 3-12, free for children under 3. There is an additional \$3 fee for the Children's Adventure Garden, plus a fee for parking. For information call 214-515-6615.

- **June 21: Volunteer orientation**

Anyone 14 or older may become a library volunteer. At 6:30 p.m. p.m. at the Oak Lawn Branch Dallas Public Library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road.

- **June 22: Commissioner Theresa Daniel's District 1 town hall meeting**

From 6-7:30 p.m. at Garland Fire Department Training Room, 1500 Highway 66, Garland.

- **June 23: Black Tie Sneak Peak Party**

Black Tie Dinner announces some of its speakers and entertainment at Park Place Motors, 6113 Lemmon Ave.

- **June 24: Gay Pride Shabbat**

Congregation Beth El Binah, a Reform Jewish congregation, celebrates the ancient biblical holiday Gay Pride Shabbat. 7:30 p.m. Northaven United Methodist Church, 11211 Northaven St.

- **June 24: Movie time for adults**

The Danish Girl at 2 p.m. at the Oak Lawn Branch Dallas Public Library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road.

- **June 25: Dallas Wings Pride Night**

Dallas Voice and Dallas Wings invite you to come celebrate Pride Night at College Park Center as the Wings take on the Indiana Fever. Come early, cheer loud and have fun! College Park Center, 600 S. Center St., Arlington. Wings.wnba.com.

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- 6:00 PM - SPOKEN WORD/OPEN MIC
Step up & speak your mind with local poets & performers of all types!
- 7:30 PM - PRIDE RALLY
We explode with fabulous speakers, music and more!
- 8:30 PM - PROCESSION
Bring flags, signs, musical instruments, and wild-dress to make a huge queer noise!
- 9:00 PM - QUEERBOMB BALL
DJ DQ & performers turn it out all night long!
- 9:00 PM - FEMMEBOMB
Live music & art celebrating femme folks of all backgrounds, gender & sexual identities. (presented by Planned Parenthood RAIZ at Double-Wide. \$10 benefitting Cicada Collective. 21+ only)



QueerBomb hits the streets of Dallas on June 25th in all of it's glitter covered majesty! The music festival, pride rally and procession, organized in honor of LGBTQIA Liberation Day is FREE and open to the public!

This year's rally and march are dedicated to the LGBTQIA community of Orlando as well as victims and survivors of hate violence worldwide.

- **June 25: Buddies Groupies Night Out, Cowtown Style**

The Buddies Groupies, fans and patrons of the longtime Dallas bar Buddies, meet for the Buddies Groupies Night Out, Cowtown Style. Check the Buddies Groupies Facebook page for details. 8 p.m.-2 a.m. at The Urban Cowboy Saloon, 2620 E. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth.

- **June 25: Houston Pride Festival and Parade**

- **June 25: National Loving Day Sidewalk March**

Join P-FLAG Abilene as it celebrates the 1967 Loving v. U.S. decision that legalized interracial marriage. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at Vera Hall Minter Park, North 2nd and Cypress streets, Abilene.

- **June 25: Rainbow Family Day**

Sponsored by the Mayor's LGBT Task Force. From 4-7 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road.

- **June 25: Queerbomb Dallas 2016**

Free Pride celebration begins with music festival followed by a march and a party. Noon-2 a.m. at RBC, 2617 Commerce St. For more information and to volunteer visit On.fb.me/1Pf81HZ.

- **June 26: Marriage Equality Day**

Celebrate the day that love and freedom won. From 4-6 p.m. at Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road.

- **June 26: Interweave Dallas LGBTQ and Allies fellowship brunch**

LGBTQ and A are invited to a brunch sponsored by Interweave, an affiliate organization of First Unitarian Church of Dallas. From 1-3 p.m. at Truck Yard, 5624 Sears St.

- **June 28: Commissioner Theresa Daniel's District 1 town hall meeting**

From 6-7:30 p.m. at Eastfield College, Pleasant Grove campus, 802 S. Buckner Blvd.

- **June 29: Commissioner Theresa Daniel's District 1 town hall meeting**

From 6-7:30 p.m. at Arlington Hall, Lee Park, 3333 Turtle Creek Blvd.

JULY

- **July 1: Garden Gigs at Dallas Arboretum**

Every Friday night in July, featuring John Lefler with Camille Cortinas, The Ray Johnson Band, Rania Khoury, Matt Tedderand Zach Nytomt. Bring your own picnics, or get food and drink from the food trucks on site. Tickets are \$10, \$8 for members, and parking is free. From 7-9:30 p.m. 8525 Garland Road. For information call 214-515-6500.

- **July 2: San Antonio Pride**

Crockett Park, 1300 N. Main Ave., San Antonio. PrideSanAntonio.org

A place to call home

Promise House offers homeless youth a chance to thrive, including the LGBT youth

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Darron Moore has seen clients come back six, seven, eight years after leaving Promise House to

ber of circumstances. Some have been removed from their homes by Child Protective Services. Others are runaways, often escaping abuse at home. And some have been thrown out of their homes by parents who have religious objections to the youth's sexual orientation or gender identity, because the teen got pregnant or a variety of other reasons.

And others have homeless parents and were lucky enough to be referred to the safety of the

amazing stuff. They're resilient.

"Some of the staff," he added, "become their support system." In fact, one youth, who had escaped from a human trafficking situation, recently invited Moore to attend his high school graduation.

Although Promise House's main objective is to get youth through high school and out on their own with either a full-time job or into college, the agency doesn't just abandon them when they turn 18.

Moore said one resident recently received a

implement — things like using the correct pronoun and having gender-neutral bathrooms, and letting trans youth just live comfortably and explore who they are — just like any teen kid does.

In the two houses, the bathrooms are already gender-neutral, like in the houses everyone grew up in. Stop making a big deal about it when a trans youth uses the bathroom, Bartush advised. He said staff needs to make a concerted effort to connect trans youth to medical resources that can help



Two of the houses operated by Promise House in Oak Cliff, including Wesley House, right, for pregnant teens and new moms. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

say thank you. They tell him, he said, "Hey, you helped me out at a time I desperately needed it."

Moore doesn't just consider his position first as case manager and now as outreach and community relations manager just a job. "We are part of their life," he said of the young people who find refuge at Promise. The facility, located in Oak Cliff, shelters homeless youth and is Black Tie Dinner's newest beneficiary.

Moore called his organization one of Dallas' best-kept secrets, especially when it comes to the LGBT community. That's surprising, considering that when Promise House staff surveyed their clients recently, they discovered 40 percent of them were LGBT.

Moore's current goal is to open another house under the organization's umbrella to specifically address the needs of homeless LGBT youth.

Youth arrive at Promise House through a num-

Oak Cliff sanctuary.

Youth in the transitional living program can either go to the school they came from or switch to a school in the area, if they're Dallas residents. Others finish their schooling at Dallas Can Academy, which specializes in students who have struggled in a traditional high school setting and which is located just a few blocks away from Promise House.

DISD operates two classrooms for youth who can't safely go out into the community.

Promise House operates out of two large houses and a more institutional-styled brick building built in the mid 1990s to serve the growing homeless youth population. The original house that Promise House has been operating since 1984 now houses up to 12 homeless pregnant teens and teen moms with their children.

Moore said he never underestimates homeless youth: "Some of these kids have gone through

PGA scholarship. One Carter High School valedictorian that lived at Promise House is now in UT Law School. While staff helps their youth apply for student loans and financial aid, Promise House also has its own generous scholarship program that ensures its grads will get the education they deserve.

Another program helps youth transition into the community. When they're ready to leave and have a job, Promise House will help them by paying up to \$560 for security deposit or part of the first month's rent. They can also take some of their furniture to get them started in their own apartment.

Zach Bartush is volunteer and community resources coordinator. He's concerned with some of the special needs homeless LGBT youth have. Resource Center recently did a training session with staff that he said came up with a variety of very easy and practical suggestions that cost nothing to

them discuss and make plans for the future.

"We've always been a positive organization," Bartush said. "We just have to equip staff to help."

Bartush is proud of the organization, but couldn't be a case manager, he said, because he gets too upset when he hears some of the young people's stories. One resident, whose mother was active in her church, was thrown out of his house at 16 when he came out. To survive on the street, he did sex work and contracted HIV before he was referred to Promise House. The staff at Promise House got him stabilized, on medication and back into school.

Bartush said once they provide the basic needs — food, shelter, education — they get their residents into counseling and into a program that will prepare them not just for life, but for a successful life. That's the goal with every young person that walks through the Promise House doors. ■



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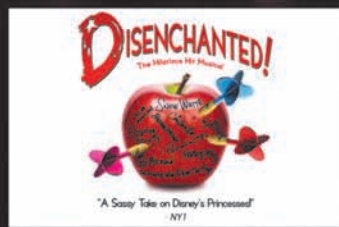
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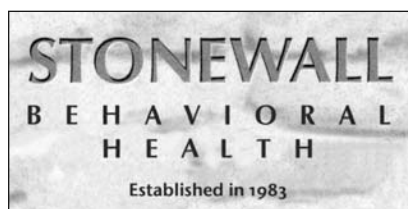
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TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
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Dallas' Lost Souls rugby team is only four years old, but the Souls have already made a name for themselves as a championship-caliber

team with their victory in Division III of the 2016 Mark Kendall Bingham Memorial Cup competition, held Memorial Day weekend in Nashville.

The Division III championship earned the Dallas team the Challenger Cup, according to player/coach Todd Maria.

"This is our first time to compete in the Bingham Cup," Maria said, explaining that the international competition is held every two years. "The first one we could have attended as a team was in Sydney in 2014, but we didn't have the time or the resources to attend that one."

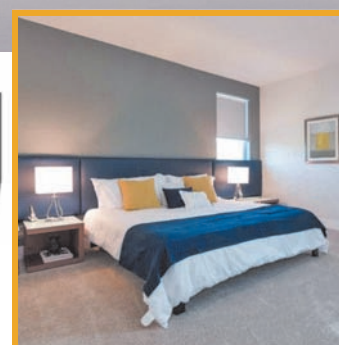
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The Bingham Cup is an international amateur competition open to any team that is a member of the International Gay Rugby Association. The tournament is named after Mark Bingham, the gay former University of California Berkley rugby star who died on United Airlines Flight 93 on Sept. 11, 2001. He was hailed as a hero for being one of the group of passengers who fought with the terrorist hijackers, forcing the plane to crash in a field in Pennsylvania rather than allowing the terrorists to crash it into the U.S. Capitol.

The first Bingham Cup was held in 2002 in San Francisco. It has been held every other year since, in London, then New York, then Dublin, then Minneapolis, then Manchester and then Sydney. This year's tournament in Nashville was the first in the U.S. since 2010.

Maria said teams in the tournament are placed in divisions based on their experience and level of play. He said that the Lost Souls were undefeated in the first two days of pool play to finish as the No. 1-seeded team. They defeated Chicago B 29-5, St. Louis 41-0, Kings Cross Dealers B 42-0 and the New York Gotham Knights B 33-5.

The Dallas team defeated the Nashville Grizzlies B in a hard-fought semi-final match, 19-17, before advancing to the Division III finals, where



they beat the Washington Renegades in another tough match, 12-10, to finish the tournament with a 6-0 record.

"That's pretty hard to do," Maria said, "to go to the Bingham Cup for the first time and win your division." It's an especially impressive accomplishment when you realize that the Lost Souls only practice once a week, for two hours.

"It's pretty amazing when you think about the amount of work we get done in those two hours," Maria continued. "The players all have lives — families, partners, jobs, some are in school. But they come to practice and for two hours on a Saturday, they maintain that laser focus they need to get it done."

Maria said he was proud that the Lost Souls were "able to put together a team and in four years compete at such a high level." But he is also proud of his team's accomplishments off the field, too.

"We do a lot of community service as a team," Maria said. "We collect school supplies for kids, we do a canned food drive and a toy drive."

Lost Souls are on hiatus for the time being, but will resume play in August, continuing through September, October and November. The team takes the month of December off, but then are back at it from January through May. ■

For more information, visit LostSoulsRFC.com.

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Shawn, left, and Michael Wetson became dads through surrogacy.

Fathers know best

Dallas gay father to talk about his experience having children at Men Having Babies conference this weekend

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Michael Wetson and his husband Shawn had been together 10 years before they had their children.

"We waited until it was safe and reasonable,"

Wetson said.

They considered adopting, but they were in their 40s and didn't want to possibly spend years taking in fosters — and then losing them — until a child was available to adopt. So they found an agency in Dallas that connected them with an anonymous egg donor and a surrogate to carry the fetuses.

They thought of having one of their sisters as the egg donor, but Wetson said they were too old. They considered other possibilities before choosing an anonymous donor.

Once the two men decided which of them would be the biological father, they looked for



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the legal parents before they were born," Michael Wetson said.

They did a DNA test ahead of the birth to prove which of them was the biological father and to prove that the surrogate mother was not related to the children.

The original birth certificate only listed the biological dad, but after the marriage equality ruling last year, the Wetsons added the second father to the document.

"Surrogacy laws are very good in Texas for married couples," Michael Wetson said.

Michael Wetson said his children are amazing and that parenthood has "given me great appreciation for my parents." He said he expected surrogacy to be expensive, but what's shocked him is the cost of daycare.

He and his husband have been surprised less by an increase in expenses and more by a shift in spending. Rather than spending money on going out to dinner, they spend money on diapers and formula.

They haven't encountered any discrimination as two dads raising twins in the suburbs, but they've also avoided potential problems. One pediatrician they interviewed might not be as welcoming of children with two dads so they chose another, and their list of possible preschools didn't include any religious schools.

They've heard people say, "Oh, it must be mom's day off," when they've seen the men out with their children.

Michael Wetson will be featured on a panel during an all-day conference on Sunday, June 19 organized by Men Having Babies. A.J. Edge, with Men Having Babies, said the conference is designed for all men thinking of starting a family. In addition to men who have started their families through surrogacy, informational resources from 25 providers will be on hand to discuss the process and answer questions.

Among the issues they'll explore is whether to use a known or anonymous egg donor and the advantages of each.

Cost can be the prohibitive factor for male couples who want to become fathers, but Edge said Men Having Babies encourages cost-saving best practices. There's even an assistance program, discounts, pro bono services and cash grants available.

With a number of agencies from around the country attending, Edge said his organization will even suggest what you should be looking for in an agency and what questions to ask to decide if you're a good fit.

Edge said the information could be useful to people early in the process of becoming parents or those already in the process. ■

Men Having Babies takes place from 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. on June 19 at Wyndham Dallas Suite-Park Central, 7800 Alpha Road. For more information and to register, visit MenHavingBabies.org/dallas. The cost is \$15 in advance or \$20 at the door.

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a complimentary egg donor — someone with physical attributes and interests similar to those of the non-biological father. They chose a younger donor, a college student, because that increases the chances of viability on an earlier try.

Two fertilized eggs were implanted and the Wetsons had twins — a boy and a girl.

"One looks like one of us and one looks like the other," Wetson said. "It's just the way it happened.

Before the children were born, the couple decided to change their name. Michael's was Wetter and his husband's was Thompson. They combined them to form Wetson. Michael Wetson said changing their names so that they'd have one family name was a harder decision than whether to have children.

Although their children were born before marriage equality came to Texas, the Wetsons went to court in Dallas County and received a second-parent pre-birth order — the first issued in Dallas and possibly the first in Texas. "We went to the hospital with a legal document saying we were

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Laying down the law

Dallas County's sheriff and the DCSO LGBT liaison officer don't let their lesbian identity affect their jobs as law officers

MAT SHAW | Contributing Writer
nash@dallasvoice.com

Dallas County sheriff Lupe Valdez is the only out Latina lesbian sheriff in the United States. Still, she said, she should be judged by how good she is at her job, and she has the same standards for her employees.

"Who cares who you are and what color you are?" Valdez said. "I'm sure I have quite a few [LGBT employees], but I don't ask them. I hope we get to a point where we never have to distinguish ourselves like that anymore."

And she's confident in her abilities as county sheriff. "I'm darn good at law enforcement because I've done it for 37 years," she said.

Valdez is currently in her third term as Dallas County sheriff. She was elected to the position in 2004, and re-elected in 2008 and 2012.

She said it was a combination of life experiences that made her who she is today — being born to poor migrant workers in San Antonio and being surrounded by little education, as well as being a lesbian. All those things help her to empathize with other demographics, she said.

"I think, from the very beginning, it has helped me to be more conscious of what people go through in different categories," Valdez said. "And honestly, because of that, I think it makes me a better head of the department, because I am

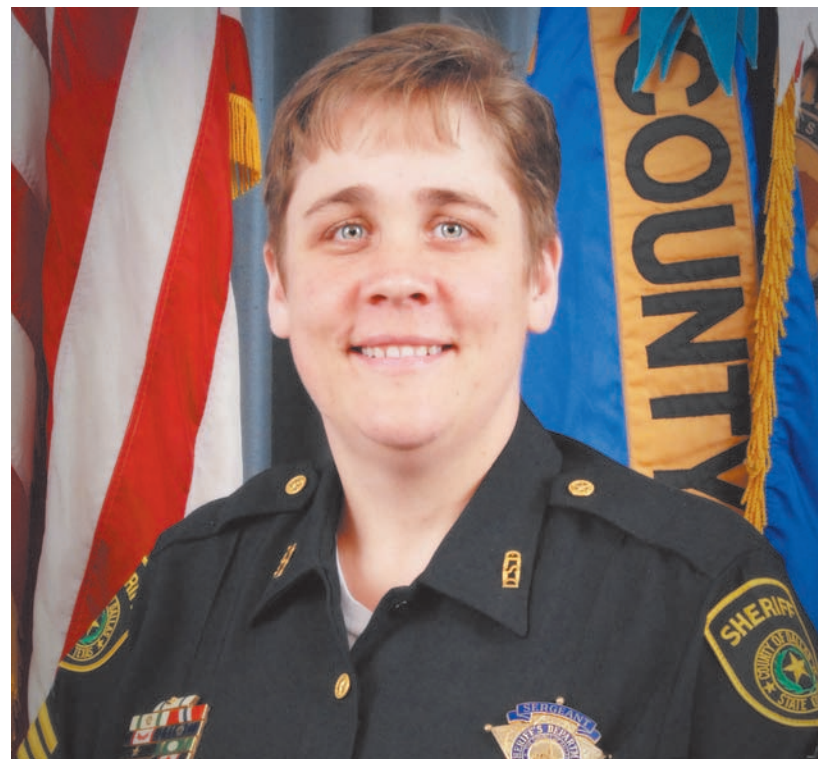
aware of some of the issues [others] have to deal with."

Valdez's career in law enforcement began when she took a job as a jailer after serving active duty in the Army, even though at the time she had no interest in it.

"In any situation that you're in, do the best you can and keep moving up," she said. "If you're a janitor, be the best janitor you can be. I can't remember who said that."

After retiring as a federal agent, Valdez ran for office in 2004 and was elected sheriff.

"When I first started, this department was such a mess," she said. "Every week we were criticized about something. I think we're in such a fast world of fast service, that we expect someone to come in



Shelly Knight

and in 24 hours everything should be straightened out."

It didn't happen overnight but since she took office 12 years ago, Valdez said, everything in her office has changed. "My staff right now is 50 percent non-white," she said. "Fifty percent of my department is run by women."

The 50 percent women statistics includes Shelly Knight, captain over judicial services and LGBT liaison for the Dallas County Sheriff's Department, another out lesbian on the force.

Knight, who started out as a detention office,

will mark her 25th anniversary with DCSO in August. But before she joined the department, Knight said she worked several part-time jobs after being discharged from the Marines on trumped-up charges of homosexual acts.

"My first sergeant that brought me up on charges and told me his job in the Marine Corps is to get rid of as many women Marines as possible," Knight said. "[Homosexual acts] was the easiest thing to get someone out, and who was going to doubt it? My word against his."

In early 1989, Knight said, there was a "witch hunt" in the Marine Corps. "Several Marines were either discharged or sent to the brig for being gay. The brig is jail. It's military jail," she said.

Knight said she had to take extra polygraph questions when she applied for her first position with the sheriff's department because back then, DCSO didn't hire gay people. Then came Mica England. England sued the state of Texas, the city of Dallas and the then-Dallas police chief when the Dallas Police Department refused to hire her because she was a lesbian.

When she won her case, anti-lesbian hiring policies were overturned at DPD, and DCSO decided to follow suit.

Knight said she stayed closeted for about two years after she was hired at DCSO because of her experiences with the Marine Corp. "I was para-

tical joke.' I was like, 'No.' And he was like, 'Okay.'"

Knight's son will be 14 in July, and she and Julie have a 25-year-old daughter and a 6-year-old granddaughter. Still, they don't plan to get married. "We've been this happy couple for 16 years," Knight said. "A piece of paper doesn't make a difference."

Knight and her family like to spend their free time camping, hiking, scuba diving and traveling, she said. But Sheriff Valdez, on the other hand, doesn't get a lot of free time.

When she does find free time though, the sheriff said she devotes it to her partner.

"I have almost 2,500 employees, seven days a week, 24 hours a day," Valdez said. "There's a demand, there's a question, there's something every single moment. So if I do have any free time, she's going to get it, and most of the time she decides what we're going to do with it."

Valdez has been with her partner, a chiropractor, for three years this September. More than likely, they'll get married, she said, if they can survive remodeling the house. "Everybody says that the breakup comes during remodeling, building the house, finances," she said.

Even though she knew she was different as a child, Valdez said, she didn't come out until she was in her thirties. "I always thought that my affection for

women was just, 'Oh, I want to make best friends with them. I want to be their buddy,'" she said. "Until I saw an example, I was able to identify what it was, and that was quite late in life, and then I wouldn't accept that because of my spiritual beliefs."

"I had to make sure it was okay with God before I accepted that, and once I was comfortable that it was okay with God, then it was easier to come

out," the sheriff said.

Knight said she had a good idea she was gay after being discharged from the Marine Corps in March 1990, almost a year after graduating from high school. But she knew she was different in the first grade.

"I just didn't feel the same way the other girls did," Knight said. "I seriously started thinking about it when I was a [high school] freshman. I never acted on it until after the Marine Corps."

SHERIFFS Page 23



Sheriff Lupe Valdez

noid and scared," she said. "Then after a while I met so many people that already assumed it, anyway, and it was not a spoken thing."

But people officially knew when Knight and her current partner became a couple, about 16 years ago. Her partner was the sergeant and worked in traffic, Knight explained.

"When Julie and I got together, everybody knew," Knight said. "We didn't invite one without the other being there. Even when I got pregnant, I went and told my lieutenant, and his reaction was, 'You're joking, right? This is a prac-



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Sister Lawna Jocqui offered offered Leslie McMurray a shoulder to lean on.

I came home from work on Wednesday, June 15, exhausted. It has been a terrible week. I let my dog out to run and flopped on my bed and logged on to Facebook.

There was a picture that had been shared over and over and over. It was taken at the Legacy Of Love monument in Oak Lawn, which has become a make-shift memorial for the victims in Orlando.

The picture was of a Sister of Perpetual Indulgence consoling a grieving woman. The Sister was cradling the woman's head, was holding her close.

That picture was incredibly moving, symbolic and extremely powerful. It is also quite meaning-



Leslie McMurray
Accidental Activist

ful to me. I am the girl Sister Lawna Jocqui was holding. I'm one of those people who feels things deeply. When one of us is attacked, we all are. I was at that monument and spoke at the "Take Back Oak Lawn" rally. I marched in and spoke at the Harvey Milk Day march in 2015. I joined the

1,000 other people Sunday, June 12, at the Resource Center for the vigil for Orlando. I've cried until I thought I didn't have any tears left at the Transgender Day of Remembrance.

This monument is sacred turf.

This has been a particularly difficult week for our community. Emotions and thoughts have been coming at me without end.

I work at Resource Center, and I was asked this week by a member of the media if I was concerned about something happening where I work. I told them we are all aware that we are a potential target, but we refuse to live in fear.

We are doing important work and will not let anything stand in the way.

Being a transgender woman, the past few months have been a non-stop barrage of laws designed to punish us for existing, politicians attacking kids with evil legislation and their own brand of hate speech. It's been emotionally exhausting being constantly asked what I think about some law, or comment on the latest trans woman to be murdered.

Now, in one horrific night 49 beautiful souls were ripped away from us at a place that is supposed to be a sanctuary. Their whole lives were ahead of them.

It all became too much.

Tuesday my partner, Katie, came by my work to take me to lunch. I sat in Hunkey's with tears rolling down my cheeks. I just can't wrap my head around this.

Wednesday, I had a busy morning. I didn't get

lunch until after 1 p.m. and I wasn't hungry. I just wanted to get out for a while, so I drove to Cedar Springs and parked in the Walgreens parking lot and walked over to the monument.

I stood alone and looked at the stuffed animals, the words of love written in chalk, the candles and the flowers ... so many flowers. It was powerful and tragic and it brought to mind the young lives that were lost.

I just sat down and cried, oblivious to what was around me.

I was there for maybe 20 minutes and I felt a hand on my shoulder. It was Sister Lawna Jocqui. She knelt beside me and cradled my head in her arms and told me she loved me. I just put my head on her chest and cried. Raw emotion ... I just couldn't contain it.

It was my first emotional breakdown next to a busy intersection and I was so unbelievably grateful for the compassion, strength and love shown to me that afternoon. I had no idea someone had taken a picture, but I'm glad they did. I didn't find out until I saw it on Facebook later in the evening.

I've seen the Sisters at a lot of events. They seem to be everywhere. The world needs more people like them.

Sister Lawna saw someone who was upset and offered comfort and reassurance. So simple, yet so many of us — me included — might shy away from doing it ourselves.

Being on the receiving end of it, I can say: Please, if you see someone in need, reach out. You might just be pulling them back from the brink.

I love my job; I get to help people every day. It's good work and I often get paid in hugs.

But sometimes even the helpers need help. On Wednesday, I did, and Sister Lawna Jocqui was there. Like an angel.

To Sister Lawna: I am the girl in the picture, and I will never forget your kindness. Thank you for making the world a little less scary, and little more kind. A lot of healing took place on those bricks today.

Dallas is a better place because of you. ■

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

We ARE them

BY SISTER LAWNA JOCQUI

DFW Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence

I came to drop off flowers at the monument in Oak Lawn, my neighborhood, and there she sat alone on her break from work, hurting and grieving for 49 people I assume she hadn't met.

We never had to meet them. We are them.

Many of us still live in fear outside of our gayborhoods. We don't want to hear "FAGGOT!!!" or "TRANNNY!!!" while we do the everyday things

some take for granted. But we often do hear it. We don't want to be threatened with violence just for holding our loved one's hand, or sharing a kiss, just as any other couple would do. We've felt safe in our enclaves for decades.

Now, another deranged American man with easy access to an assault rifle — thanks to the NRA and gun lobbies who continuously fill the coffers of politicians in the United States, has come to our home and murdered us. You have various religious leaders talking about the "dangers of homosexuals" and why they feel we're less human.

It wasn't a "mass shooting." It was a "mass murder" of LGBTQA people in the place they should feel safest. It was an execution of innocence and joy. You have violated us in our own home.

It was not ISIS! It was not some form of "radical Islam," as some talking heads want you to believe. And it was not racially motivated. It was pure hatred for a group of people in a gay nightclub — LGBT people with their friends and families.

Demand change from your city and state's governing bodies. Ask your state representatives to assist you. No child should have to be afraid of getting gunned down in his or her school. No mother should have to worry about a bullet ripping through her body as she dances with her son on a Saturday night. No spouse or lover should have to use their body to shield bullets from the one they hold dear. No person should be afraid of experiencing a hail of bullets in a church as they worship the god of their choosing. ■

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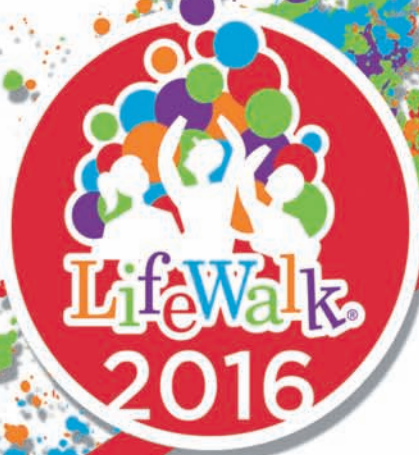
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SHERIFFS, From Page 19

The reason she didn't act on it was because of religion, her family and nervousness over what people would think, she said. But Knight's experiences with the department have been positive.

"I've proven myself professionally and I'm respected," she explained, adding that Dallas is an extremely tolerant city.

"I don't feel the need to look over my shoulder and see if people are watching, whereas other places I have felt that need," Knight said.

When she took the title of LGBT liaison in 2008, she was given activities to do and places to go. Now those activities have dwindled down, she said. "That could be due to the increase in responsibilities," she said. "When I took on the added responsibility, I was a sergeant."

One thing Knight's been working on in the department is creating a new comprehensive and acceptable transgender policy, she said. "We've been working with the Trans Pride Initiative to make sure it meets the needs that we have," she said. "It's been an ongoing project."

But Knight said she would also like to go out and meet other people as part of her assignments. "Just events," she said. "Just going and meeting groups, knowing the dates and times and answering questions that they might have with the department. I have not heard of any complaints."

Valdez, however, expects to see both praise and criticism coming her way.

"I think some people consider me courageous for taking the steps that I took, but there are also people that hate my guts," she said. "When you're set as an example by one group, you'll always have the counter-group that will use you as their punching bag."

But Valdez still sees herself as an elected official for all people.

"Shortly after I got elected, I went to thank all the hundreds of groups that supported me," she said. "I went to the Hispanic group and they said, 'We elected you.' I went to the African-American group and they said, 'We elected you.' I went to the LGBT group and they said, 'We elected you.' It takes all of them."

"Yes, I want to help all those groups. I don't get up and say, 'I'm a specialty person. I only deal with one group.'"



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ORLANDO • 06.12.16

North Texas grieves with Orlando and the world as we remember and honor the victims of the shooting at Pulse

It's **not** OK any more

Remembering the names from Orlando

JASON WALKER | Special Contributor
nash@dallasvoice.com

I woke up Sunday morning wondering why my professor for the summer course I'm taking waited so long to post this week's assignments. He only gives us until Thursday evening to complete them and turn them in and now it's Sunday already and they're just now there. Damn it! Now I'm going to be in a rush to finish!"

I walked in my bathroom and heard the television in the living room. I guess I left it on all night long. Damn it! Now my electric bill will be higher this month.

Staring in the mirror at my puffy bloodshot eyes wondering how long it would take to wake up, I heard something about 20 people dead in Orlando. More bad news. Damn it! I don't even want to know about it.

But, it was too late. I already did know. The whole world already knew.

I try really hard not to get emotionally involved in things that happen to people I don't know. It's not that I don't care about them; it's that I care too much. And when I let myself get emotionally involved I can't separate myself, and that doesn't help anyone.

So, I learned this trick a long time ago where I just turn it off.

But it was too late for that now. I couldn't turn it off. The details started coming in too fast: Some maniac shot up a gay bar in Orlando. Twenty people were dead and more than 50 were injured. They didn't know then if the shooter was alive or dead.

So, I sat and watched and listened and before I knew it two hours had passed. And then three. And then four.

And I didn't really care anymore that my professor was late getting assignments posted for this week.

Then five hours passed and then it wasn't 20 people dead it was 50 people dead. And I started thinking about the days when I used to go to the bars in Oak Lawn.

I thought about standing on the balcony at JR.'s, talking to friends I'd never met before that night. I thought about standing at the back bar in The Round-Up and pretending to drink beer, which I hate, but it just looks better if you have one in your hand. I remember my first boyfriend convincing me to go to TMC and standing with him upstairs looking down at the dance floor, and I remember him leaning over and kissing me right after he'd taken a drink of his gin-and-tonic and thinking how good it tasted.

Then I thought about those people at Pulse in Orlando that Saturday night, and I won-

dered how many of them were at a gay bar for the first time. And I wondered if they were as scared and thrilled as I was my first time.

I thought about the ones who were talking to friends they'd never met before that night. I thought about the ones who were pretending to drink beer because it looks better. I thought about boyfriends kissing after drinks of gin-and-tonic and thinking how good it tasted.

Then I started crying.

I wanted to reach out to someone who understood my tears without having to explain anything. I wanted to reach out and hold someone and have them hold me back and tell me that it was OK to feel the way I felt even though I didn't usually take these things so hard.

I wanted to reach out and hold on for dear life because right then I felt like I was going to fly off the edge of the world.

But there was no one there. I was alone, with no one to reach out to.

And then I realized that was my fault.

It was my fault, because when I had the chance to stand up and be truthful and be proud of who I am, I chose to run away and not speak and turn away from people who loved me and cared for me and tried to help me.

It was my fault because when I heard people saying hateful and hurtful things, I didn't have the courage to stand up to their hatred with the truth.

It was my fault because while those innocent men and women at Pulse were living their lives and laughing and smiling and loving, I was hiding and hoping no one would remember that one time they heard I was gay.

And then 10 and 12 and 14 hours passed and I was still watching. And I felt ashamed.

It's not OK anymore. I no longer have the right to remain silent about this.

It's not OK for me to have memories of a time and of places and of people and of a man who made me incredibly happy, and hold on to them selfishly out of fear instead of sharing them with someone who maybe needs to know that who they are is something good and not something bad.

It's not OK for me to sit back and listen while people spew hatred and not stand up and say, "No more!"

It's not OK anymore.

And 24 hours passed. And 48 hours passed. And I'm still thinking about those people at Pulse. And then I realized it's not OK anymore that this is about me instead of them.

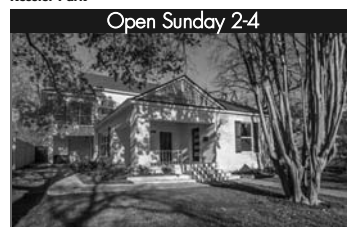
So, I end this with their names. Because it's not OK anymore.



Stanley Almodovar III, 23



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VICTIMS Page 30

Battered, not broken



More than 1,000 marched in Dallas, and at least 500 gathered for a candlelight vigil at Fort Worth's Celebration Community Church, pictured above, to honor the Orlando victims. Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings and Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price, opposite page, participated.

North Texas mourns for Orlando, plans for preventing a similar attack here

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

"We've been screaming from the top of our lungs," Michael Dominguez said. "We're being hunted down in the streets."

Dominguez survived an attack in Oak Lawn last October and co-founded the group SOS-Survivors Offering Support in response.

While the LGBT community around the country has been grieving all week, the Orlando massacre in which 49 people were murdered in a gay bar was particularly difficult for survivors of the Oak Lawn assaults.

"It stirred up residual emotions," Dominguez said.

Dominguez was attacked from behind on Cedar Springs Road with a bat and a knife. He said word of the massacre set him back emotionally to the days right after he was attacked.

"It could easily have been me," he said. "My heart went out. Had he used a gun instead of a knife, I wouldn't be here."

Had the carjacker who attacked Michael Redman outside the Tin Room days later pulled the trigger, he wouldn't be here, Dominguez said.

"My emotions are all over the place," Dominguez said. "I know what the survivors [in Orlando] are going through."

AREA REACTION

More than 1,000 people gathered in pouring rain at Resource Center's new LGBT Community Center on Cedar Springs Road on Sunday night, just hours after the attack at the Orlando gay nightclub Pulse.

Former and current elected and appointed officials joined the crowd, including half the Dallas City Council members who stood with Mayor Mike Rawlings. County Judge Clay Jenkins, County Commissioner Teresa Daniel and County Treasurer Pauline Medrano represented Dallas County.

As flags flew at half-staff at Dallas City Hall,

Rawlings said he secured a \$1 million donation to cover counter-terrorism operations around Oak Lawn and pay overtime hours for police protection around LGBT bars, businesses and community organizations.

Rawlings called the massacre "an illustration of what our LGBT community fears everyday" and said each crime against the community in Oak Lawn is "an individual act of terrorism."

Referring to a tweet sent by Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick condoning mass murder by blaming the victims, Rawlings said, "Words matter. Words that come out of our mouths make a difference."

As word of the massacre was being announced on the news, Patrick tweeted, "Do not be deceived. God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows."

Resource Center CEO Cece Cox responded to Patrick's attack on the LGBT community at the vigil.

"When we hear messages of hate, we must speak up," Cox said. "We need to call out Dan Patrick. We're going to call you out."

"My job is hate," said Alia Salem from the

Council on American-Islamic Relations. "Not to hate but to address hate against all communities. While this day has brought us so much heartache and grief, we spit in the face of criminals and say, 'You only make us stronger.'"

In Fort Worth, about 500 people attended a vigil at Celebration Church on Monday night.

Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price spoke of overcoming the kind of evil that lies at the root of the Orlando massacre. Newly-appointed Fort Worth Police Chief Joel Fitzgerald pledged that his department would take every effort to keep similar attacks from happening there, and asked the community to always contact his department with any concerns.

Fitzgerald also introduced a member of FWPd's Code Blue Training program who then spoke of her nephew, who was killed in the Orlando shooting.

In Dallas, churches with active LGBT membership also responded to the attack.

Episcopal Bishop George Sumner joined members of St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church on Inwood Road for a prayer vigil on Monday.



St. Thomas member Fred Ellis said Sumner has been struggling with the marriage equality issue. In the Episcopal Church, the bishop decides whether or not same-sex marriages may take place in that diocese. Sumner has not allowed marriage in Dallas.

But Ellis said on an issue like the Orlando massacre, the bishop stood with members of St. Thomas to express his own grief over the violence.

Ellis said he heard from other churches in the diocese including the conservative St. Andrews Episcopal Church in McKinney, which sent the message that they lit a candle in memory of the Orlando victims, saying, "We're there with you in spirit."

At Northaven United Methodist Church, the Rev. Eric Folkerth reworked his Sunday sermon

to include information about the massacre. He said for many people in the congregation, it was the first they had heard about it.

On Tuesday, Cathedral of Hope hosted the Turtle Creek Chorale for an evening of Songs for Healing. The concert was put together quickly from material from the Chorale's existing repertoire. The music included "I Love You More" from Tyler's Suite, a piece commissioned by the Chorale about the death of Tyler Clementi, who committed suicide after being bullied on the Internet. The song is about the emotional trauma of a mother who loses her son.

Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology and the SMU Office of the Chaplain and Religious life hosted A Midday

BATTERED Page 31



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Orlando comes together to help, to heal



Southern Poverty Law Center held a vigil for the Orlando victims in Montgomery, Ala.

When Orlando residents awoke to learn the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history took place at a gay nightclub in their city overnight, many reacted with shock and disbelief.

"I was stunned," said Robin Brown, a former Amnesty International official who retired and moved to the Florida community nine years ago from Washington, D.C. "I had difficulty processing the enormity of the whole thing."

No stranger to the phenomena of violence because of her work on Amnesty International education campaigns addressing topics such as brutality against women and LGBT discrimination, Brown and others thought of Orlando as not the type of community where mass violence would erupt.

"It tore me up," said Brown, a Texas native who lived in Dallas for 20 years before she and her husband and children moved to D.C. "I felt anger, but I felt great sadness at the same time."

In the aftermath of the tragedy that occurred at closing time for the bar, members of the community began coming together to heal and help others recover from the shock and bewilderment, Brown said. Thousands lined up to donate blood for the 50-plus wounded in the massacre that left 49 dead on the floors of the nightclub known as Pulse.

"It's not just the gay community responding and attending vigils and offering prayers," Brown said. "It is everyone."

Brown noted her son and two grandchildren, who also live in the Orlando area, posted Facebook messages in support of the LGBT community and in condemnation of anti-gay bigotry and violence. "It's like, 'How dare you mess with our



David Webb
The Rare Reporter

community?" she said. "It's like that for many people."

Southern Poverty Law Center President Richard Cohen said the feelings of horror experienced in Orlando and in cities across the country, in both the LGBT communities

and populations as a whole, come as no surprise. Hate crimes send shock waves through people who share characteristics with the targets of violence as well as their families and friends. He described hate crimes as terroristic events.

"I think America is in shock," Cohen said of the nation's reaction to the number of people gunned down by the shooter, a 29-year-old American citizen whose parents emigrated from Afghanistan and who called 911 after the attack to express his solidarity with radical Islamic philosophy. "It's a good moment for everyone to come together and embrace. I hope that is what happens."

SPLC hosted a vigil at the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Ala., for the local LGBT community and its friends the night after news of the tragedy broke, said Cohen, who has a gay son.

Cohen said the nation's LGBT community is experiencing a backlash as a result of its gains in the area of marriage equality and other civil rights. Conservative legislators across the country are introducing religious freedom bills in their



states in an effort to provide churches the "freedom to discriminate," he said.

In a few hours after news of the gay nightclub deaths broke, white supremacist groups across the nation began online attacks against the LGBT community and all immigrants. One said he hoped for as many casualties as possible, and another said he hoped it would signal the start of a "terrorist/faggot" civil war.

Cohen said the targeting of a gay nightclub represents an attack on all of America. "It's hard to believe this was a random target," he said. "Radical Muslim extremists believe gay bars represent the height of American decadence."

President Obama made the same comparison in his national address to the American public, saying "An attack on any American is an attack on all Americans." The shootings came two weeks after Obama declared June "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month."

Law enforcement officials suspect the Orlando gunman stalked out the nightclub in advance of driving to it from his home in Fort Pierce Satur-

day night to kill as many people as possible.

Curiously, two days after the shootings reports began surfacing in the media about the killer being a frequent visitor to the nightclub and posting a profile on a gay dating site. That led to speculation about internalized homophobia.

SPLC documented an incident in Seattle in 2014 where a Muslim extremist tried to torch a crowded gay bar, Cohen said. "The fire was quickly put out," he said. "There could have been a horrific loss of life."

FBI Director James Comey urged the nation's LGBT community in a national press conference to stay strong but to be aware of their surroundings in the event of more violence. LGBT people are more likely to be the victims of hate crimes than any other group of people, according to SPLC and FBI statistics.

In Orlando, Brown said she is optimistic the community will recover. A retail store near her residence lost three employees in the massacre, she said. "I think it may take a while, but I see it as a chance for us all to come together." ■

Stanley Almodovar III, Amanda Alvear, Oscar A Aracena-Montero, Rodolfo Ayala-Ayala, Antonio Davon Brown, Darryl Roman Burt II, Angel L. Candelario-Padro, Juan Chevez-Martinez, Luis Daniel Conde, Cory James Connell, Tevin Eugene Crosby, Deonka Deidra Drayton, Simon Adrian Carrillo Fernandez, Leroy Valentin Fernandez, Mercedes Marisol Flores, Peter O. Gonzalez-Cruz, Juan Ramon Guerrero, Paul Terrell Henry, Frank Hernandez, Miguel Angel Honorato, Javier Jorge-Reyes, Jason Benjamin Josaphat, Eddie Jamoldroy Justice, Anthony Luis Laureanodisla, Christopher Andrew Leinonen, Alejandro Barrios Martinez, Brenda Lee Marquez McCool, Gilberto Ramon Silva Menendez, Kimberly Morris, Akyra Monet Murray, Luis Omar Ocasio-Capo, Geraldo A. Ortiz-Jimenez, Eric Ivan Ortiz-Rivera, Joel Rayon Paniagua, Jean Carlos Mendez Perez, Enrique L. Rios, Jr., Jean C. Nives Rodriguez, Xavier Emmanuel Serrano Rosado, Christopher Joseph Sanfeliz, Yilmery Rodriguez Solivan, Edward Sotomayor Jr., Shane Evan Tomlinson, Martin Benitez Torres, Jonathan Antonio Camuy Vega, Juan P. Rivera Velazquez, Luis S. Vielma, Franky Jimmy Dejesus Velazquez, Luis Daniel Wilson-Leon, Jerald Arthur Wright

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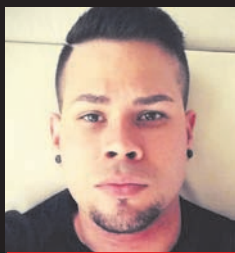
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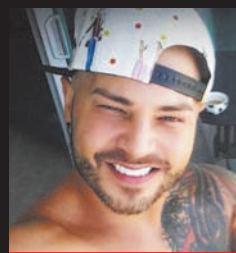
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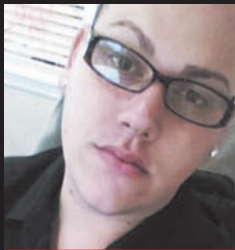
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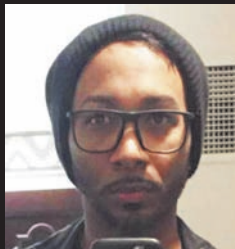
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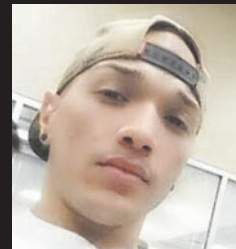
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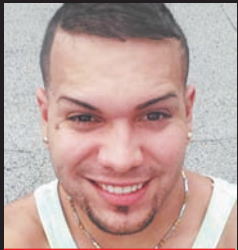
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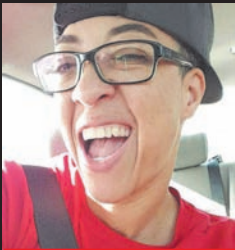
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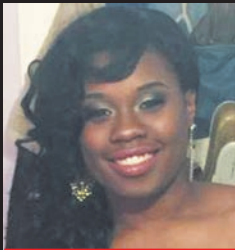
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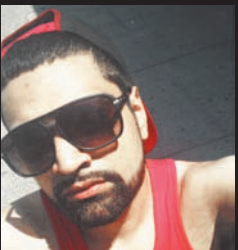
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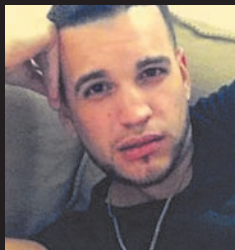
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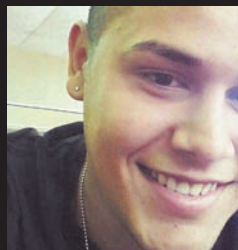
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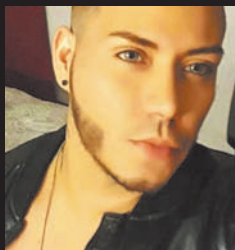
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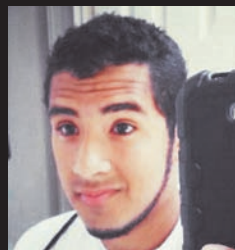
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Service of Lament and Prayer in Response to the Tragedy in Orlando on Wednesday in Perkins Chapel.

Pride at City Hall had already been scheduled for Wednesday by members of the Mayor's LGBT Task Force. Rawlings used that occasion to announce that Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban made the \$1 million donation on Sunday. The mayor said the city will use that donation to leverage more funding for counter-terrorism purposes to protect the LGBT community.

"I know the atrocities in Orlando have created stress in Dallas and across the country," Cuban told Dallas Voice in an email, explaining why he made the donation. "I owe a lot to Dallas and wanted to try to help a little bit."

Omar Narvaez, Jesse Vallejo and Dallas Police Department Sr. Cpl. Brittani Pilcik read names of the dead at the City Hall event that also recognized groups such as SOS and Take Back Oak Lawn for their work to help attack survivors and create a safer Oak Lawn.

Tyler Area Gays, East Texas PFLAG, Pineywoods Voice/Tyler Transgender Support Group, East Texas Islamic Society and Life Covenant Church joined forces to hold a memorial on Thursday in Bergfeld Park in Tyler. That was the site of a 1993 anti-gay murder that marked a turning point in how hate crimes against the LGBT community were handled in Texas when police pursued the murderers and the district attorney prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Target, which lost two employees in the massacre, held a moment of silence in all of its stores on Tuesday.

A vigil is planned for 6:30 p.m. Monday, June 20, at the Henderson County Courthouse in downtown Athens, Texas.

SAFETY IN DALLAS

Michael Doughman, executive director of the Dallas Tavern Guild, said Dallas clubs are already better prepared for an attack than bars in most cities as a result of the Oak Lawn attacks.

"All of the bars have beefed up security, lighting, added cameras," he said.

In addition, the city has placed monitored police cameras at key intersections in the gayborhood.

Doughman said each bar has put an emergency plan into place in case of an armed intruder, explosion, fire or other incident. Those plans include detailed instructions on who's responsible for doing what.

"They're as prepared as they can possibly be," he said of the city's LGBT nightclubs.

Doughman said his best advice for keeping the bars safe is, "If you see something, say something."

Because bartenders may be busy serving throughout the night, patrons are more likely to see or hear something suspicious. Doughman said patrons should report any suspicious activity to a bartender or doorman. They'll know the procedure to act on that suspicion.

"Be prepared to report and point out the person," Doughman said.

He said Dallas bars already ban backpacks, which the Orlando shooter used to bring his weapon into Pulse.

As for this year's Pride parade, Doughman said he's confident security will be in place. Since assuming his position, he said the number of police officers along the parade route and in the festival park has increased from 40 to more than 100. Cuban's donation will allow a record number of officers to protect parade-goers.

Over the summer, Doughman will talk to Homeland Security about recommendations for any additional security needed and plan with

DPD to keep the event safe. Since most Pride celebrations are in June, Homeland Security will have time to learn from events around the country before the Dallas event in September.

DONATIONS


Charles Bassett, AT&T's senior public relations manager, said, "AT&T wireless customers can text 'Orlando' to 20222 to donate \$10 to Orlando Regional Medical Center Level One Trauma Center to help with on-going medical support needs." No text message fees apply.

SOS-Survivors Offering Support collected \$5,000 during the vigil at Resource Center to send to the Orlando LGBT Community Center for victims' families and survivors.


Equality Florida set up a GoFundMe page that had raised \$4.7 million by press time through donations from more than 100,000 people. GoFundMe waived all transaction fees for this fundraiser, so all money will go to the survivors to cover medical expenses or to families to cover funeral expenses.

To make a donation to victims of the Orlando massacre, visit GoFundMe.com/PulseVictimsFund.

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Subscriptions via First Class Mail are available at the following rates: Three months (13 consecutive issues), \$65. Six months (26 consecutive issues), \$85. One year (52 consecutive issues), \$130. Subscriptions are payable by check, cashier's check, money order, Visa, Mastercard, American Express or Discover.

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■ commUNITY voices

Defining moments

It was 1992 and I had just moved to Dallas from a small college town in Florida. HIV/AIDS was a growing issue in my experience, but it had already taken many people in Dallas, including leaders in our LGBT community. I was too young to understand the power of the Stonewall Riots in 1969, so my personal experience with HIV/AIDS was my first defining moment to get involved in the community.

The mind-set in our community was different then. We had lost so many, and ACT-UP was in the streets and angry. Our community was under attack.

I remember making signs for protests and joining the board of DGLA. Lesbians fought to help save the lives of their gay brothers and in the process galvanized our community. Drag queens and transgender people were at the heart of many community actions. The sense of LGBT community was very strong.

Today, HIV/AIDS is still a devastating diag-



Leo Cusimano
Publisher

nosis for anyone, but is viewed by some in our younger community to be a manageable illness. These millennials have not experienced the struggles and death at the same scale. Our sense of community has waned

over the years.

But then

It's 2 in the morning in Los Angeles, where I have traveled for work, and the phone rings. Fifty people lay dead in a Florida gay bar, and more than 50 others are injured.

This is the start of another heart-wrenching, defining moment that unfortunately will make

history and play out as Pride celebrations prepare to march.

The morning stretches on and I find myself sitting in a hotel room in West Hollywood preparing for LA Pride. I feel sick as the stress rises in my body, watching the reports from Florida, then the vibration of my cell phone makes me jump. A text message about an arrest near L.A. that has foiled another attempted attack on our community illuminates the room. My heart drops.

What is next?

We have come so far as a community, and each positive or negative defining moment presents an opportunity for us to come together in a way that makes our community stronger.

My husband Tony and I had been living in Dallas for several years when the Supreme Court invalidated sodomy laws with the Lawrence vs. Texas ruling in 2003. This was a positive defining moment for us that provided hope for our community and empowered our movement.

We experienced a setback in 2008 when California passed Prop 8, but our commitment to stand up and fight just made us stronger. Last year, the Supreme Court's marriage equality ruling legalized our marriages, and as a community we have seen growing acceptance as Love Wins.

But now, once again our community is under attack. We are devastated by this senseless act of violence. As we mourn the victims in Florida, we also march on in solidarity and in honor of those we lost.

This is another defining moment for me. I feel like our community has a renewed fight. Once again, arm-in-arm we march. We stick together and support each other. My hope is that we find renewed strength in this tragedy and we once again become galvanized and strengthened as the LGBT community.

Our life experiences and defining moments influence our choices and how we choose to show up in the world. What is your defining moment? How will you make a difference? ■

Leo Cusimano is co-owner and publisher of Dallas Voice and Voice Publishing Co



Appreciating, protecting our safe spaces

Like many Gaytinos, I began my Pride Month with a visit to Latin Night at Washington, D.C.'s popular gay bar, Cobalt. Every first Saturday of the month, Cobalt dedicates its third floor to Latin music and performances by drag talent that appeal to the small, but growing Hispanic lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender population in the district.

D.C. doesn't have a seven-day a week Latino gay bar like Dallas does, but the city has several spots during the weekend that cater to LGBT Latinos.

During Latin Night, Cobalt is jam-packed with patrons arriving near midnight. Many are in their 20s, just getting off work after putting in long hours to afford living in one of the most expensive cities in the country. They've had just enough time to go home, get dressed, and jump on the metro to head to the Dupont gayborhood, where rent is nowhere near affordable — especially if you're an LGBT Latino immigrant or a Puerto Rican U.S. citizen who left the island because of the economic crisis.

Still, these young Latinos trek back to the hood, and they're ready to party. Some of these individuals are thousands of miles away from home. So Latin Nights have a special place in our community — our chosen family. It's beautiful to see this younger generation expressing themselves, living in a world where being gay or trans is accepted, and more importantly, legal.

And Latin Night is something to behold with all these new freedoms.

Queer people of color dominate the dance floor. Couples elegantly dance in sync to the sounds of Bachata, then transition into Spanish pop with the next song — and lo and behold — the D.J. spins a hit from Tejano legend Selena (which warms my native Texan heart). And without missing a beat, these Gaytinos jump from genre to genre flawlessly.

I saw this fem queen lead his butch date all night — because, of course, he was the better dancer. But these two, like others at this bar, aren't hung up on gender roles. They're living their true selves at Cobalt. This is their safe space.

That's what I pictured when I thought about Pulse this week — an Orlando neighborhood bar where people escaped problems, homophobia, transphobia, racism, poverty and violence.

For the young, it was a place to be themselves, to hear Spanish music that speaks to their souls and makes them proud to be Latino. For older guys like me, it was a safe place to hold a guy's hand or kiss someone without worrying about machismo attitudes that have conditioned us to never act like a sissy in public.

The shootings at Pulse changed everything when it comes to national tragedies. This event forced leaders across the political spectrum and news media to mourn, recognize and uplift some



Jesse Garcia
Contributing Columnist

of the most marginalized people in this nation: LGBT Latinos and Latinas, including immigrants.

After 9/11, we had to seek out stories about Latinos, gays and immigrants who died in that tragedy to remind folks and our own communities

that we suffered loss, too.

In this Orlando incident, the worst mass shooting since the execution of Native Americans in the 19th century, the story cannot be whitewashed. The majority of victims and heroes were people of color.

This past week, people across America have read multiple accounts of those who were killed and injured. For some, it forced them to identify with people they would never associate with or come across in their social circles. This tragedy put

a human face to a community that is often neglected or scapegoated.

The frustration and push back by queer people of color in the aftermath of Orlando is being felt. I attended a vigil where I saw black, brown and Muslim queers lead the event and set the agenda to make sure everyone was heard. I witnessed minorities being ushered to the front of the rally so their voices wouldn't be drowned out.

I looked at the reactions from our Anglo brothers and sisters who were surprised at being relegated to the back, but who, after reflection, understood that another community within our LGBT family was disproportionately affected, and it was their moment to grieve and share.

Speakers need to share the whole experience of what these Orlando victims endured. The amazing lives they lived despite obstacles they may have encountered:

- The undocumented who worried about being deported or losing family in the next raid.
- The transgender person of color who was often a victim of discrimination and crime.
- The Latino youth who was outed in the worst possible way to their family because of his or her

death at Pulse.

LGBT Latinos and Latinas need to process and speak out on this tragedy — and the many tragedies you will never read about.

Last year, a report by the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs showed a 20 percent increase in murder rates between 2014 and 2015. Transgender and gender-nonconforming people of color made up the majority of homicides, according to the report. It was also reported that people of color and undocumented survivors were more likely to experience physically violent forms of hate violence.

Just like Latino Nights across the nation, it is important for the community to allow LGBT Latinos and Latinas to have their own space. We need to speak our own truth during this moment of grieving. And I thank those who have allowed us to do so.

Jesse Garcia is a former Dallasite now living in Washington, D.C. He cofounded the League of United Latin American Citizens Dallas Rainbow Council in 2006, and in 2015 cofounded a second council, LULAC Lambda DC, in the nation's capital to continue the dialogue between the Hispanic and LGBT community.

'Til death do us part

Queer musicmakers Tegan & Sara continue their stylistic evolution with new album

Are Canadian synthpop wonders Tegan and Sara trying to tell us something with their catchy new single, "Boyfriend?" Has one of the openly queer Quin twins switched teams since their multiple award-winning 2013 record, *Heartthrob*?

Tegan — older by eight minutes — assures that the answer is no, and that the song and its title was inspired by her sister's epiphany during a noncommittal dating situation with a woman.

"We always joke that with lesbians, you go on one date and are monogamous and moving in together," Tegan says. "Neither Sara nor I are like that, so she was dating someone and this person was zeroing in on someone else she'd been seeing as long as Sara. So Sara was like, 'you're treating me like a boyfriend here, you're calling me every night, we're going out all the time, let's lock this down.' I love that Sara used the term 'boyfriend,' because I felt like I say that in my relationship, too. Totally, my girlfriend treats me like a dumb boyfriend all the time."

The twins' new album, *Love You To Death* (Warner Bros.), can only be interpreted as sparkling '80s-inspired contemporary dance-pop, a synth-rich marriage of New Zealand's Ladyhawke, Sweden's Lykke Li and Katy Perry, the latter of whom they opened for on the 2014 Prismatic Tour. "Boyfriend" has already been followed up with a bouncy, bona fide earworm, "U-Turn," that seems to owe as much a tip of the hat to Tom Tom Club's iconic '80s ditty "Genius of Love" as Norway's electro-diva Annie.

Every one of the album's 10 songs will be accompanied by a video created in collaboration with "directors and artists who are queer, or transgender, or women, or

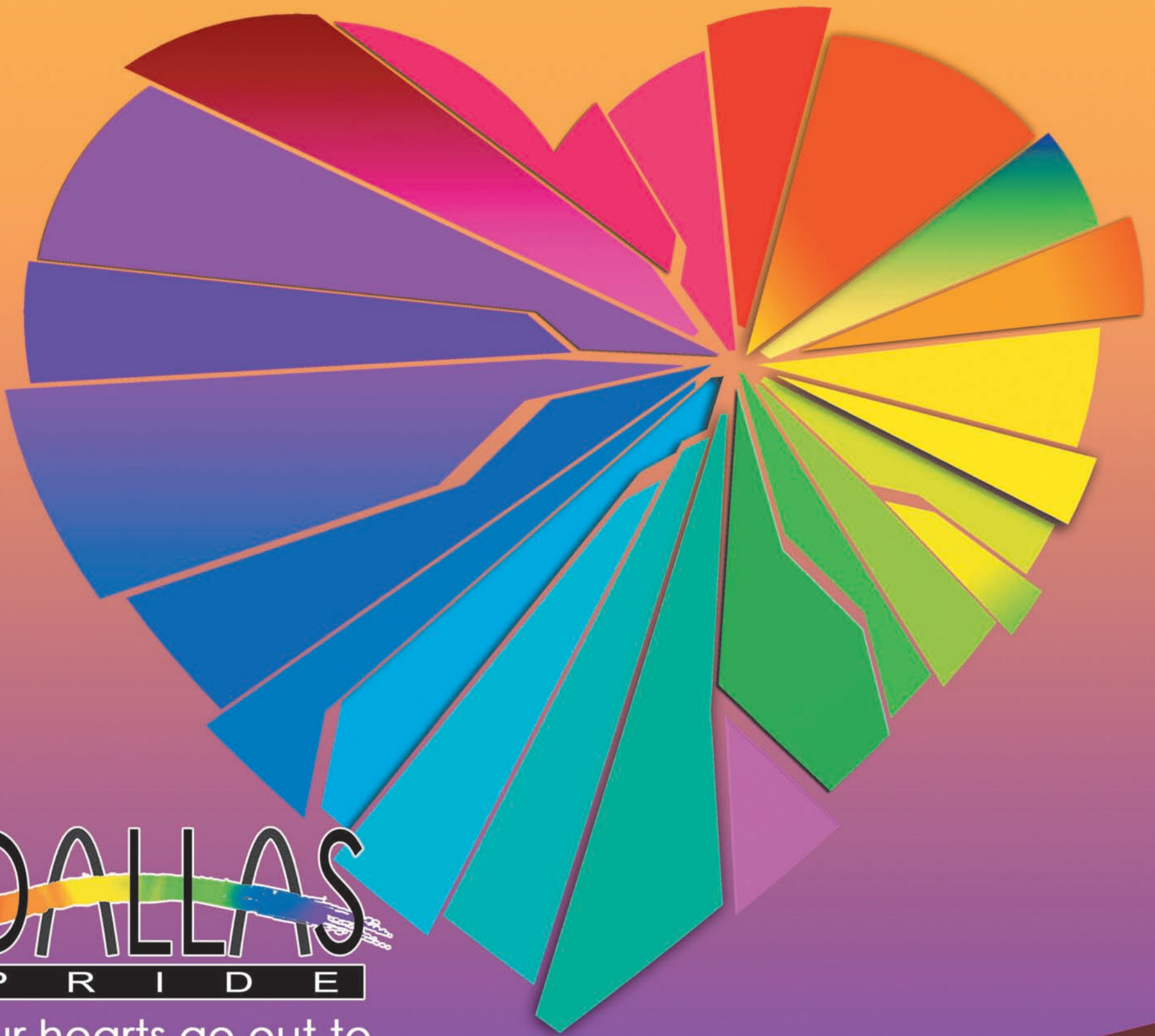
people of color," Tegan says. Gay artist/musician Seth Bogart, of Hunx & His Punx, directed the colorful, part-animated "U-Turn," while actress-turned-director Clea DuVall helmed the humorous, quirky "Boyfriend" clip (Sara composed the score for DuVall's directorial debut, *The Intervention*, which bowed at 2016's Sundance Film Festival).

"We're putting our money where our mouth is," Tegan says, "because it feels like in the past we had been like, 'Diversity, enough of misogyny, sexism and homophobia in the industry!' and then we're hiring white heterosexual males all the time. So it was like, if we're going to do a video for every song, we should try to collaborate with artists like Jess Rona, who has this insanely popular and hilarious dog grooming Instagram, @JessRonaGrooming, for 100x."

Relationships, and the way they have power to either cripple, transform, or both, is the overriding theme of *Love You To Death*. Not just relationships with girlfriends — Tegan has been going steady for six months and counting, while Sara is approaching the six-year mark with her girlfriend — but also their connection with each other.

"Dying To Know" is the fruit of two separate songs the pair was writing separately ("We only had room for one more track and producer Greg Kurstin made the genius suggestion, 'Tegan, you sing the verse and three chords of your song and Sara you sing the chorus of yours.'"), while "That Girl" represents Tegan's revelation that she was the thing going wrong with her previous, failed relationships.

Of course, Tegan and Sara's relationship with their fans has also stirred up some



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Cumming soon

Alan Cumming: Actor, activist, singer ... and lover of sappy songs (as Dallas audiences can soon hear for themselves)

Alan Cumming is the embodiment of a slash-talent — you know: Actor slash memoirist slash cabaret star slash recording artist slash vegan slash gay rights activist. Though Cumming himself thinks in broader terms.

“I sort of think of myself as a provocateur,” he says following a yoga class. “All the things I do, I’m just telling stories — whether my cabaret show or [acting on TV or stage], it’s just trying to connect with people, or change them or make them laugh.”

He does all those things on his recent album *Alan Cumming Sings Sappy Songs: Live at the Carlyle*, his chatting, confessional, moving, funny chronicle of his intimate cabaret. But if you missed the CD, you can catch the actual performance live in Dallas; Cumming will perform two shows June 24 at City Performance Hall. But don’t be daunted that the album was recorded before a hundred folks and CPH is seven times that size — for Cumming, it’s all the same: About that connection.

“I [recorded the album] at the Carlyle because I got started there last summer, so I went back there to do it. I also shot [the cover photo, of him naked in front of the Carlyle] and I wanted to be able to use that. So it is the first album that was dictated by a naked picture. And I wanted to do a show that was intimate and about me, with a café vibe. But I’ve done it in much bigger theaters since then. I truly believe that if you really commit to a song, you could be in a stadium and feel like you’re in someone’s living room. I feel like I know how to engage with people properly. That’s something very Scottish — I don’t worry about the size.”

But Alan Cumming remains bigger-than-life, as he revealed in this spirited interview in which he tackles Trump supporters, the artistry of Miley Cyrus and how people are still surprised that he has a Scottish accent. ■

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Dallas Voice: You’ve said if you had a gun to your head you’d choose theater as your “go-to” enterprise. So what is the appeal of a cabaret show?

Alan Cumming: I don’t have to commit to doing six months on Broadway — I can do little spurts of tours. And there’s a much more of an intense connection for me, just because I’m talking to the audience as myself. In theater, it’s like there’s a veil of the character between you and the audience — when people like you and you’re well-known, they come not just because of the characters you’re playing, but because of you, and that comes through. When I’m being just Alan and not Macbeth or someone else, it takes a while to get used to.

What led to you choosing so-called “sappy” songs for this show and CD? It’s about taking [musical interpretation] to the next level. [In between performing the songs], I talk to the audience about things that are very intense. If you’re gonna do that, the songs cannot be ‘nothing’ songs. I really need to connect with them in a particular way. Hopefully, by my singing them you connect in a different way than you have before. I wanted to challenge people, like [including] the Miley Cyrus song. [I want them to think], ‘Oh my god, he’s singing that song... and he’s not being ironic at all!’

Which one resonates with you most? I think it would be “Dinner at Eight.” I find that really quite difficult to get through some nights because I think about my dad. I do normally shed a tear during that song. Yeah, it’s really difficult, and

you have to go with it and understand that it’s emotional because it’s an emotional song and you’re connected to it and the audience is really with you. I’m not incapable of getting through the song and I am really crying, but I think that’s all right. It makes sense. It’s a song that’s gonna be hard to sing. As long as there’s no falling to the floor into a heap of tears, I think it’s actually all right to show your emotion. In a way, the whole show is about me showing my emotions.

The album’s coda is “The Ladies Who Lunch,” made famous by the late Elaine Stritch in *Company* on Broadway. Elaine was a beloved presence at the Carlyle up until she performed her last show there in 2013. Is your performance of the song in that space a tribute to her? Years ago I did a workshop with John Tiffany who directed me in *Macbeth*. We did this workshop of *Company*, and a lot of the couples’ genders were changed, so I was playing the Elaine Stritch role. I sang that song in the workshop. I thought it worked really well, but ultimately it didn’t go any further. Then when I was doing this show I thought, “I can’t not sing that song at the home of Elaine Stritch.”

When I was doing *Cabaret*, in my dressing room I would always turn on Elaine singing “Ladies Who Lunch” as the last song. Whenever it came on, it was time to go. Everyone would be quiet and listen to the song and then at the end everyone would go crazy and that was the end of the night. So, she has a very special place in my life in a lot of ways. By doing it in that venue, this is very much a tribute to her.

Your résumé is expansive. When a gay guy stops you on the street, which career endeavor of yours are they most likely to compliment you on? It's very difficult to tell nowadays — it really is. You know, some mention the *Romy and Michele* thing. But now it's really hard to tell. It may be my book [*Not My Father's Son: A Memoir*]; it's a variety of things. With lesbians, I know it's always gonna be *The L Word*.

You engage in some pretty frank banter on the CD... I play quite outrageous characters, but I'm not an outrageous person. I'm not shy, but sometimes the characters I play kind of confuses people that I am going to be a bit more of a loudmouth. I speak my mind, which is the difference, but it's not my favorite thing to jump on the table at a party and [starts lecturing people].

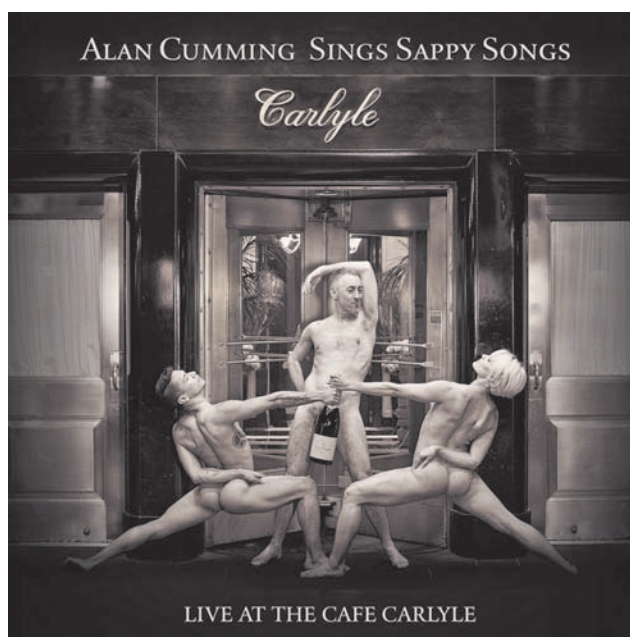
Well, maybe you don't jump on tables, but you do frankly address pretty controversial topics — not just LGBT rights, but also “foreskin” rights. And you incorporate your activism into your act.... Completely. As an artist, you want to change people's mind but there's an essence of who [I am in them]. I play people I don't like, but I would never do something that had a message I don't believe in. My beliefs and what I stand for is completely what my work is like. Authentic people really register because they *get* you. For an actor, that's a really great quality. People see that even though you're playing other people. I think I am authentic, and that registers with people. Unfortunately, so is Donald Trump.

Speaking of Trump, you're unabashedly opinionated about politics. The whole Donald Trump thing [puzzles me]. He's allowed people to feel that it's OK to be violent, bigoted, racist ... and I think that's just terrifying.

I have a driver who said to be, “I just want my country back, Alan.” I said, “Where has it been? When was it last great? I guess since a black man got in the White House. It's a racist anger. Since Obama came in, it's so much better than when George Bush [was in office]. The economy is in a really good place now. We're actually doing all right. But unless you have money you are not guaranteed a good education or healthcare or even justice.

I've lived in this country for 18 years now. It's a xenophobic culture — I don't mean that in a pejorative way, it's just that many people here don't get to know about much of what goes on in the rest of the world, because it's such a big country. Imagine you grow upon a culture that tells you that you are the only free country in the world. I think that's a dangerous thing. People in America are used to the culture being the same. Americans are surprised at people being different from them. Like, even people who've seen me on talk shows say they can't believe I have an accent. People are absolutely amazed, because when you're on television, they all think that's you, and they are gobs-macked that [I'm not Eli Gold].

As a bisexual person yourself, you're known for being outspoken on bisexuality and gender fluidity. How do you explain bisexuality to peo-



ple who still don't get it? I'm not here to change people's minds about whether they believe in bisexuality. All I'm saying is that I think my sexuality and most people's sexuality is gray. And yeah, I like cock. I *love* cock. But I also feel that I have an attraction to women. I've never lost it, actually. I've always been attracted to both sexes, and whether I act on it or not is not anyone's business, really. I'm not going to close myself off to the possibility of experience just because society says we must stick within these rigid boundaries. I find it really self-hating that the gay community, which has

been so bullied, are especially the ones who might be chiding people about their bisexuality. I think, let everyone be who they are.

The point I'm making is that it seems more ironic for a gay person to chide someone about their sexuality — they're chiding all of us at heart. It seems particularly galling that that would be coming from a fellow LGBT person. I really do believe people today, especially young people, have a much more fluid idea about sexuality and gender, and I should think we're in a really great place with the youth of today. It's people who are a bit older who are still struggling with it.

Reflecting on your early days as an activist: Why was it so important for you to start speaking out on LGBT issues? I have a voice. I have a platform. I have a great life. I have a *really* great life, and I live the way I want to live. I am the person I want to be, and I feel like it's my duty to take care of people who don't have those opportunities. I have a personal connection to people who have been prejudiced against who are gay or bisexual or transgender. I'm Scottish and I grew up with fairness and justice. Where I come from, it's very important that we adhere to making sure that everyone is looking after each other. So, it's partly my genetic makeup [*laughs*], but also in the privileged position that I am in, I feel it's my duty to give back and help other people along. Being an artist is understanding other people and wanting to reach and connect with other people, so helping other people is absolutely a part of that. When there's injustice and persecution, I can't really live in a society with that going on and not do something about it.

— Additional reporting by Chris Azzopardi

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Butch is the new black

LIFE+STYLE

interview

'Orange Is the New Black' star
Lea DeLaria — on heroes,
trailblazers and an 'eternity'
in front of the camera

First the screwdriver, then the peanut butter. But Lea DeLaria's love for *Orange Is the New Black* goes beyond the craftiness of her shenanigans with both a hand tool and a classic sandwich spread as a regular on TV's Emmy-winning prison drama. Sure, Netflix has afforded the veteran actress a deep cargo-pocket of outrageous antics, but *Orange* isn't only here for your amusement. More importantly, the series and DeLaria's riotous, randy character, Big Boo, are part of the show's heralded inclusivity.

Breaking ground as the first openly gay comic to perform on American television, in 1993 on *The Arsenio Hall Show*, DeLaria is still carrying the torch on TV two decades later, representing a deeply unsung subset in the queer community on *Orange*: the butch lesbian.

As the show embarks on its icy fourth season, the 58-year-old called in for a tell-all interview about the "lesser known" controversy surrounding her historical TV debut: How the Fox network was not fond of the actress' lavish gayness and wanted to put the brakes on her groundbreaking *Arsenio* appearance. Who stepped in to fight Fox's resistance to the landmark stint? Why has the actress turned down so many gay roles since then? And why does she think we should drop the community's longtime collective acronym, LGBT? Read on as DeLaria reveals all. ■

— Chris Azzopardi

Dallas Voice: *Orange Is the New Black* is now in its fourth season. Is that hard to believe? DeLaria: It's really shocking for me to believe it's our fourth season. I thought I'd have way more money by now!

What about this fourth season stands out from the past three? I think what people are going to find about the fourth season is that it's darker than the other seasons. They really explore some of the shitty things about being in prison. There's a lot I can't talk about. I think it's going to be much darker than you've seen in the past. Still funny, but there's definitely a darkness involved. But Boo is going to be Boo as Boo always is.

You get to do some crazy stuff on this show. What's your relationship like with



peanut butter at this point? Yeah, I can't eat peanut butter at all, as a matter of fact.

Seriously? Yeah, I don't really eat peanut butter.

But yeah, I believe that the writers sit around and go, "What's the fucking most insane thing we can think of? Let's give it to DeLaria!" They know I'll do anything for a laugh.

When it comes to acting, you've been at it longer than most people know. An eternity, right? It feels like an eternity.

You don't look like an eternity. Good genes, I can assure you. It's certainly not from taking care of myself, as anyone who's seen me in the West Village, drunk on my butt at 4 in the morning, knows.

How is post-*Orange* life different from pre-*Orange* life? Are you recognized more often on the streets? Oh yeah, I'm recognized nonstop. Before — first of all, not everybody was carrying their camera with them like they do now, so I would get stopped... I'd get stopped enough. I wouldn't say frequently, and I wouldn't say infrequently; it was somewhere in the middle. Generally, it's "Hey, you're Lea DeLaria; can I have your autograph?" Now I can't even walk out of my front doorstep. It's like, "Oh my god! *Orange is the New Black*!" It just goes on all day.

Can you still even go to gay bars? All the time. I could never go to a gay bar before! I mean, before *Orange* that would be the one place everyone knew who I was. I made the decision very early on in my life that I'm going to live my life, and if people come up to me, I'm going to be friendly and charming the way I am. I don't want to lock myself in my room. I just don't want to do that, so I'm out all the time.

How does the treatment of LGBT characters and sexuality on *Orange* compare to your previous lesbian roles, both big and small? What's different about it more than anything else in the world is that it's real. Believe me, as you've said, I played a lot of them, big and small, and I can assure you I've said "no" more than I've said "yes" to these roles. A lot of roles I say no to are because they're just so completely stereotyped and bullshit that I won't play them anymore.

You say "anymore." What changed? When I started out in the business, I played them because it was work. And then it just got to be ridiculous. I just said, "This is it. I can't do this anymore unless someone is going to give me a real character." Like the chick I played on *Californication*! If you're going to give me a real character, I'm going to knock it out of the park for you. If you're just gonna make it the same ol' stereotypical bullshit butch, I'm not interested.

But that's what's great about our show, and not just with the queer characters but with what it does with women, what it does for trans people — what it does for *everybody*. We're real. We're three dimensional. We're honest. We cry. We laugh. We talk about life, you know? That's the biggest difference. And not to mention the very warm, friendly, three-dimensional positive portrayal of a butch dyke that is incredibly unique and unusual, and so I'm loving doing that.

As a butch lesbian yourself, how do you think Boo is opening doors for the butch lesbian community? I know that she is because I get direct messages on Instagram. I get, like, 150 of them a day from all over the world, from all these different women saying, "Thank god for *Orange Is the New Black*, thank god for Big Boo. I now know that it is OK for me to be who I am," and they're

not just talking about being gay; they're talking about being a butch. I get constant messages about it. Constant! And then people come up to me on the street. I've had really hard-ass butches cry when they talk to me, which is... trust me, it's hard for us to cry. So finally somebody is putting out there who we actually are. I feel like Season 3, Episode 4, which is the Boo backstory episode — I believe that's done as much for butches as Season 1, episode three, did for the transgender community.

Do lesbians send you letters from jail? I don't get letters from people in jail. What I do get are the conversations with them after they're out. I hear from guards, from COs, from wardens, from assistant wardens and from ex-prisoners on the street telling me how much our show hits the nail on the head. It's very real. It's very much like that. I think that's a really intense compliment. I'm not that kind of actor. Like Taylor [Schilling], who is an amazing actor, she went to a women's prison. Kate Mulgrew went to a women's prison. To look at, to get the feel, to get the backbone of their character. I watched *Lockup*.

What's your earliest memory of subverting gender norms? Were you a tomboy? Yeah, I was what we called a tomboy back then. It's very interesting... when I went to a thrift store and got my first suit and put it on for the first time, it was like putting on my own skin. I was 17.

When did you get the "butch" tattoo on your forearm? It must've been the '90s.

What's the story behind it? I like tattoos! I've got a lot of 'em. I just wanted it to say "butch," and I went in and told [the tattoo artist] what I wanted. After we got done, I couldn't see it because of the angle, and he goes, "It's fantastic! It says 'bitch' perfectly!" And I went insane. "*You put bitch on there?*" And he laughed — he got me so good. He laughed soooo hard at me. He totally got me. But he was just messing with me — he knew better than to put bitch on my arm.

So 1993 comes around and you're the first openly gay comic to break through the late night talk-show circuit with an appearance on *The Arsenio Hall Show*. It was more than that — I was the first openly gay comic to perform on *television*, period, in America. I mean, it was late-night, which was really huge, but yeah. Nobody. It was me.

What were you feeling in that moment? Scared as shit! Terrified, just terrified. All I could think was, "What if I bomb?" And I had *20/20* following me. So I wasn't just doing *The Arsenio Hall Show* — I was also doing fucking *20/20*. It was craziness because it was such a big deal. I'm not sure how it happened but the universe aligned and the planets aligned perfectly and I killed. It was nine and a half minutes of television gold, so yeah, I was lucky. Could've gone either way. The audience could have hated me. I was not lightly gay, if you know what I mean. I wasn't gay-lite. I was as queer as it gets.

They did an article in *The Advocate* right after it happened. They taped it and apparently I said the words "dyke," "fag" and "queer" 47 times. I mean, it was the second sentence I uttered: "Hello everybody, I'm Lea DeLaria. It's the 1990s, it's hip to be queer and I'm a big dyke."

We needed somebody to be that person. I think that was probably right. It was the early part of the '90s, so we were having that rift about the words

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Song for an unsung hero

'Genius,' the adaptation of gay biographer A. Scott Berg's portrait of Max Perkins — a giant of American letters — finally makes it to the screen

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
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When scholars talk about literary giants of the 20th century, they tend to concentrate on the accepted canon: Hemingway. Fitzgerald. Faulkner. Joyce. Perkins.

If that last name doesn't sound familiar, that may change with the release of the new film *Genius*. If it does sound familiar, you probably have A. Scott Berg to thank for it.

Like a lot of nerdy kids, Berg was just 15 when he became obsessed with F. Scott Fitzgerald — so obsessed, that he attended Princeton University because Fitzgerald did also.

"I was on campus a total of two days before I was going over Fitzgerald's papers in the library," Berg explains. "But the more I read, the more Max Perkins' name kept popping up. In fact, more books are dedicated to Max Perkins

than any other person." Yet there was almost nothing written about him.

Then Berg really lucked out: Charles Scribner's Sons, the legendary publishing house where Perkins ruled for decades, donated its entire collection to Princeton. "No one had been through the archives before," he says. "There was every letter written to Max Perkins, and a carbon copy of every reply he wrote. I looked at it all and said, 'Oh my god, this is the history of 20th century American literature.'"

Berg turned his research into a college thesis, and that eventually developed into his first book, *Max Perkins: Editor of Genius*.

"When the biography came out in 1978, my editor said, 'I need a quote for the flat. Give me Max Perkins in one sentence,' and I said 'He was the most important person in American literature that is completely unknown.'"

It's taken nearly 40 years, but that biography has finally been adapted to the screen, with

Colin Firth (above right) plays Scribner's editor Max Perkins, whose volatile relationship with Thomas Wolfe (Jude Law, above left) was first chronicled by Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Scott Berg, opposite.

Oscar-winner Colin Firth as Perkins and Jude Law playing Thomas Wolfe, one of the novelists Perkins nurtured.

It's a satisfying capstone for Berg, whose career is scattered with accolades, including a Pulitzer Prize, a National Book Award and bragging rights as the creator of a singularly groundbreaking gay movie. (More on that later.) Berg's bio is a sprawling chronicle on Perkins' influence on a generation of post-World War I writers — the so-called Lost Generation that, by all accounts, was one of the most fertile breeding grounds of literary masters the world has ever seen. Which begs a question: Was it a golden age for writers... or was Max Perkins just that good?

"That's a tough question, because the answer is both," Berg says. "It really was a golden age of writing. That post-war generation was really coming of age on paper — Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Hemingway. There was a lot of great writing going on, but also a lot of great *reading* going on too, and a lot of great publishing. It was a great time to take chances

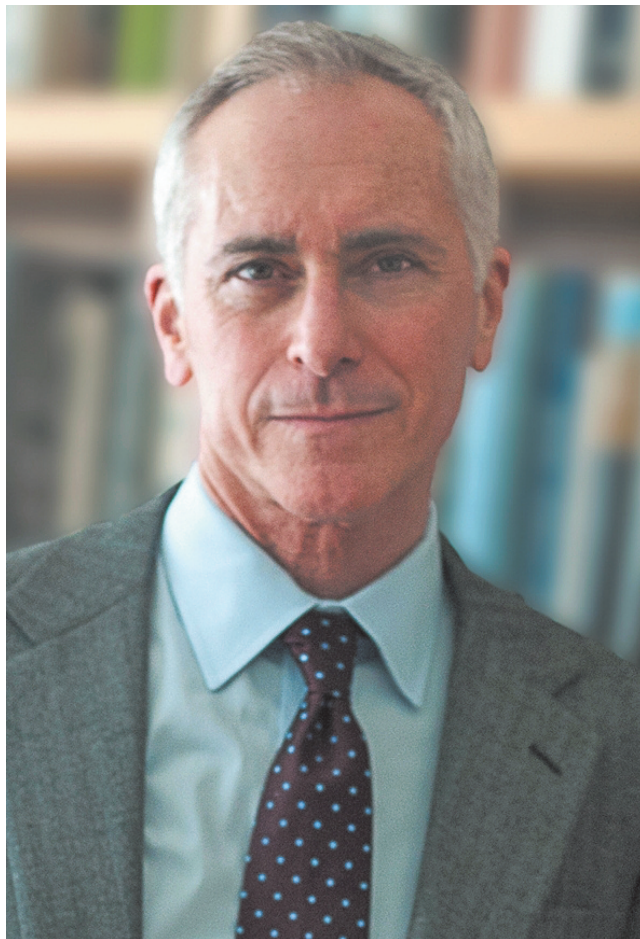
on and invest in writers, which Perkins did. He really gave Marjory Kinnan Rawlings her career, because she had written two books that didn't do much. And he suggested she write a children's book about growing up in rural Florida. She titled it *The Fawn*, and he said, 'What do you think of calling it *The Yearling*?'"

He likewise gave voices to Fitzgerald and Hemingway and James Jones and Erskine Caldwell. But it's his relationship with Wolfe that is the focus of *Genius*.

"You really couldn't tell everyone's story in a single movie," Berg concedes about the decision of screenwriter John Logan (*Skyfall*, *The Aviator*) to pare down the biography. "It's the least known and also the most colorful story in the book — Wolfe is a bigger-than-life character. It was certainly the most intense drama in either of their lives: The ultimate professional challenge for Max Perkins, and Max was the ultimate professional gift to Thomas Wolfe. I think John Logan really captured that — he's scary prolific. In the time we're having this conversation, he's probably written a screenplay."

Wolfe himself, was known for his prodigious output as well, which Perkins encouraged him to hone into more manageable fiction. That has led some revisionist critics to cluck that Wolfe's original work was *better* than what Perkins published — a critique Berg scoffs at.

"The thing I hasten to add [when people make that accusation] is that Perkins didn't *make* Wolfe do anything — he was there to suggest. Now, he had a lot of credibility because of what he had already done, but he never said if you don't make this change we are not publishing it. But if he



hadn't pared it down to something that you could put between two covers," Wolfe's career might not have taken off.

Which raised the question: To whom does the title "genius" refer?

"I think it is ambiguous, as was mine: Was he an editor of great geniuses, or did he edit with genius?" Berg says. He's not willing to give a flat answer.

What we do know is, we have Max Perkins to thank — indirectly — for advancing gay culture in the 1980s. Here's how: Following the success of Berg's book, he was in demand to write another biography. But the process of finalizing the contracts was so time-consuming, Berg became antsy to write ... *something*. His father suggested he write a treatment for a screenplay, and he took up the challenge.

His story soon became the 1982 film *Making Love*, which — before the days of AIDS, but also before marriage equality — gave an entire generation of gay people a kind of hope for normalcy.

Making Love "was basically the first studio film with a gay protagonist, and in which gays were not portrayed as victims or psychopaths," Berg says. "It was Sherry Lansing, who had just taken over at 20th Century Fox, who put it on her slate. She thought it was time and was a great social movement happening."

A lot has changed in the intervening years. Berg has written more biographies — one of movie mogul Samuel Goldwyn, one of his friendship with Katharine Hepburn, one of Charles Lindbergh, which won him a Pulitzer — but Max Perkins and the stars of early 20th-century literature have remained an abiding presence. When you become so intimate with genius, it's not something you easily shake off. ■

GENIUS

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Phoenix rising

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

Downtown Phoenix has enjoyed a recent renaissance, but across the Valley of the Sun foodies, hipsters and adventure lovers can find something to revel in

GETTING HIGH | An early morning hot air balloon ride provides excellent view of the Valley of the Sun before the day gets too hot; in the evening, a cocktail at the artisan pub Bitter & Twisted, below, offers a different kind of mind-altering experience. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

“I came to Casablanca for the waters,” Rick asserts in a classic movie scene. “The waters? But Casablanca is a desert!” his friend replies. “I was... misinformed,” Rick deadpans back.

Something similar could be said of Phoenix. It is in the middle of the Arizona desert, but the misinformation is that that is *all* there is. The sixth most populous city in America (and 12th largest metro area, including Mesa, Scottsdale and Tempe), this sprawling oasis makes up two-thirds of the entire population of the state. That’s enough to bring some heavy cultural weight. So if you think it’s all just cacti and sunsets, you’re woefully misinformed.

Especially in recent years, Downtown Phoenix has undergone a kind of urban renaissance, with new restaurants, bars, hotels and entertainment options proliferating. The Greater Phoenix-Mesa area occupies an unexpectedly rich valley that is both bustling and farm-friendly. This has fed a remarkably vibrant foodie/cocktail/hipster culture in addition to all the outdoor activities and relaxing destinations you’d anticipate. You can go to be active, to unwind or just to eat to your heart’s content. But why not try all three?

Foodie fun

Zagat recently named Phoenix one of America’s next hot foodie cities, and that’s not just bluster. From its active farm-to-table programs and inventive chefs and mixologists, there’s a staggering amount of culinary experimentation to enjoy here.

It never occurred to me before my visit that there was rich farmland within the boundary of Maricopa County, nor that its selection would be so diverse. The Farm at South Mountain is a verdant enclave featuring 10 acres of pecan groves, rows of local vegetables and several on-site restaurants that make use of the produce both here and from neighboring farms. There’s a breakfast spot called Morning Glory (where you can enjoy a marvelous spin on huevos rancheros with chorizo and Arizona tepary beans), lunch at the Farm Kitchen or a Four Diamond dinner at the acclaimed Quiescence fine-dining restaurant.

Just east of neighboring Mesa is the Queen Creek Olive Mill, a working olive orchard that also serves light refreshments and sells all manner of olive-inspired products, from spicy oils for cooking to emolument-rich beauty care items. A few miles down the road lies Agritopia, a visionary development that incorporates farmland within a planned living community.

Chef-driven restaurants proliferate as well. It would be easy to be seduced by the panoramic vistas available from your seat at A Different Pointe of View, a hotel fine-dining restaurant that overlooks the valley. But the cocktails and food make it worth the trip on their own. Downtown’s Nook Kitchen serves popular dishes like poutine (get it with short ribs), gourmet sandwiches and hand-tossed pizzas with house-pulled mozzarella, cooked in an Italian-made wood-fired pizza oven. Local restaurateur Sam Fox has lent his touch to a number of popular local concepts, such as Blanco Tacos & Tequila.

Cutting-edge cocktail culture in Phoenix has benefitted immeasurably from





Mesa embraces the arts, with a new performing arts and museum center, as well as public murals, including ones that pay tribute to the area's past in iconic neon, above. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

the opening a few years ago of Bitter & Twisted Cocktail Parlour. If you think you've experienced high-end mixology, you'll still be amazed at this wonderland of craft beverages. Each April, proprietor Ross Simon releases an annual Book o' Cocktails — a cleverly-designed, 32-page brochure-cum-bar-menu that details for the coming year every available drink recipe (among them a twist on the Negroni, a chocolate Sazerac and an entire section called "Martini and His Bitches") ... all priced from just \$9 to \$16. The food selection from chef Bob Tam is equally inventive; you could spend your entire trip just coming back here and exploring the menus.

For less alcohol — but no less hipster cred — don't miss the Phoenix Public Market Café, a casual hang in Downtown. Located in a converted auto garage, it serves gourmet coffee drinks, approachable, market-fresh breakfast, lunch and dinner items and delicious pastries, like the flavorful macarons, all with a relaxing, contemporary and youthful vibe. (Oh, and there is a wine bar, if you still want something adult to drink.)

Craft breweries are also making themselves known in the area. Mesa's Beer Research Institute sounds like a scientific facility, but it's just a casual biergarten and scratch kitchen serving a slate of mostly Belgian-style ales and lagers, along with sandwiches, fries and other pub grub.

B.R.I. isn't Mesa's only artisanal eatery. This sister town to Phoenix has a vibrant community of quirky, creative purveyors in a spectrum of disciplines, from the cupcakes at Sweet Cakes to the teas and tinctures from herbalist Kathleen Gould's Southwest Herb, an funky apothecary and holistic treatment retailer in a spacious Victorian house. In Downtown Mesa, the still-new Worth Takeaway is wowing diners with its elevated versions of sandwiches, coffees and local

Danzeisen Dairy chocolate milk. T.C Eggington's Brunchery is a popular breakfast and lunch stop with quaint theming and a near endless array of egg dishes. Over at the Hilton Phoenix/Mesa hotel, executive chef Ryan Staroszik has brought an artistic approach to a businessman's hotel.

Outdoor and artsy activities

Because of its year-round warm weather and relatively few rainy days, Phoenix is a popular destination for outdoor activities (in the summer the heat can reach 100, though as they say, "it's a dry heat"). If you opt for a balloon ride, though, you can beat the heat easily and also enjoy a rare and gorgeous experience. Hot Air Expeditions offers trips from your hotel (expect to be ready before sunrise) to a remote departure site, where you will float 6,000 above the Sonoran Desert, taking in the breathtaking mountain terrain and getting, quite literally, a bird's-eye view of the valley in a wicker basket (it's reinforced with steel, but still a heart-pounding few moments aloft). After about an hour, you land, and chase teams meet you and quickly set up a catered champagne breakfast before taking you back to your hotel ... all before 10 a.m. It's a dream for shutterbugs and adventure junkies.

Closer to the ground is a visit to the Desert Botanical Garden, a sprawling arboretum of indigenous flora that you can stroll through day or evening. (A recent light installation by British artist Bruce Munro even offered fanciful after-dark tours of the park.) Of course, you can also just wander around and soak in the prodigious majesty of the saguaro cacti (protected by law, so don't touch 'em!) and colorful rocks and wildlife.

We tend to think of New Mexico, especially Santa Fe, as a haven for craftsmen and artists, but public art has been enthusiastically embraced by Phoenicians. Roosevelt Row reflects part of the Downtown renaissance of Phoenix proper, with repurposed galleries, shops and studios. Over in Mesa, its intimate downtown

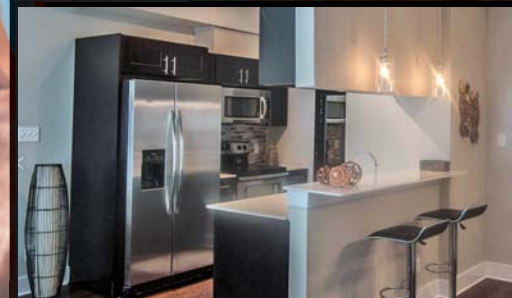
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■ PHOENIX Page 54

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LOVE
IGNITES

LIGHTING THE PATH TO A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

L+S sketches

Name and age: Alberto Garcia Olivares, 26

Occupation: Freelance artist/server

Spotted at: Bowser and Reagan streets

This international bon vivant was born in Dallas to a Mexican/Spanish father and a Hungarian/Italian mother. His interest in arts, history and different cultures lead him to obtain a master's degree in filmmaking in Paris, and inspired him to live in Mexico and Antwerp, Belgium. A world traveler, he says the only continent he hasn't visited is Antarctica.

Out in Paris: Alberto struggled with his emotions and sexuality from an early age, and finally came out at 19 in the City of Lights (what better place is there?). It was there he began dating. His parents knew, but ignored it ... so when he finally came out to his two sisters, it was "official."

His hobbies include painting, writing, dancing and acting.

He has been on a journey to learn how to love himself, which he says connects him more with God. He came to the realization that he was unhealthy with himself, so a year and a half ago he returned to the U.S. from Antwerp to deal with it. Now that he says he has rediscovered his "true self," his goofy, joyful, artistic nature has resurfaced. He says his journey has not been easy. Personal boundaries and life itself have been a challenge but now having a pillar of faith he can face the present for a better future.

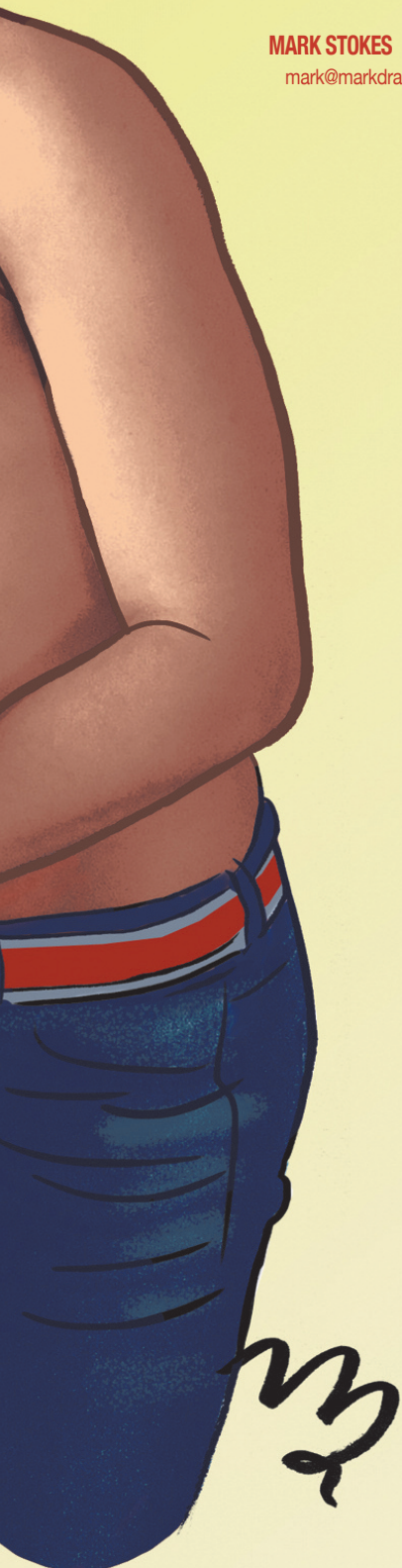
Quote: "You have been blessed, so be a blessing."



Drawing Dallas

International traveler
Alberto Garcia Olivares
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 but now accepts his true self

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Hot new Strip-pers

Peeks at the gayborhood's 3 latest restaurants: Cedar Grove, Zephyr and Street's Fine Chicken

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

In February, the Zephyr blew in. Then last month it was a game of Chicken. And this week? This week has been all about getting our Grove on. In the past few months, Cedar Springs Road — The Strip that really defines Dallas' premiere gayborhood — has been inundated with new restaurant opens, perhaps the most ever in such a short time and a concentrated space. If you haven't had time to check them out yet, well, that's what we're here for. And there's never been a better time to show the community some love.

Cedar Grove

Located in the old Dish space at the ilume, Cedar Grove is a new concept from folks who already know the neighborhood. It's by far the newest entry on The Strip's evolving dining scene — its first official opening day was just this past Tuesday, so this was the



Cedar Grove serves skin-on Alaskan salmon, above; at Street's, even the apps have a chicken theme, like the spicy deviled eggs, opposite. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

firstiest of first looks — but owner Tim McEneny has been doing this a long time. Cedar Grove opens daily at 3 p.m., with Saturday and Sunday brunches starting this weekend. McEneny wants diners to stop by for a quick bite or a drink and still have money to spend at a club that evening.

The redesigned space is meant to be more communal, more casual. The spicy-fresh aroma of cedar wafts even as you walk up to the exterior. Inside, some things remain the same: The large, 360-degree bar dominates the entrance, but it's the tree-like décor that grabs your attention: Long tables that seat upwards of 200 diners, framed by a canopy of abstract tree branches that give the "grove"

part to Cedar Grove.

The menu reflects those changes as well. Executive chef Taylor Kearney has built on classics of the American cookbook, with some sophisticated twists: Swedish meatballs plated as appealing appetizers, not doused in a volcanic chafing dish of sauce; the "meat and three," a daily selection of manly-meal staples like a ribeye and potatoes, only prepared less for the lumberjack than the foodie; sundae desserts gracefully layered with fluffy brownies, ice cream and fudge, yet presented in a retro soda-fountain-style glass that Marty McFly's parents might have shared.

The McFlies would not recognize some of the brunch items,

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with elevated takes on eggs benedict (with a lobster hollandaise sauce over cured folds of country ham), or cinnamon-sugar dusted donut "holes" larger than most donuts. But even they would probably be pleased by a drink menu that includes select \$2 drafts and \$4 wells every night.

4123 Cedar Springs Road at the ilume.
CedarGrove-Dallas.com.

Street's Fine Chicken

Beating Cedar Grove by a month is this other reconsideration of a local institution. For 40 years, the Cedar Springs Black-eyed Pea was a fixture of restaurateur Gene Street's culinary empire — really, the one that launched it. Gene himself hadn't owned the BEP concept in decades, but he still owned the property as he expanded his reach to other gayborhood eateries, including Lucky's and the recently-departed Snookie's and Good Eats. In fact, losing his own leases on those area cornerstones may be what triggered his decision to reconfigure his flagship restaurant space into something he had long wanted: A gourmet chicken concept.

Street's Fine Chicken is what its name suggests: A chicken shop in every possible way. You'd be hard-pressed to find an item on the menu not poultry-related, in name if not genetics. (Remember that Monty Python sketch where



every item at the restaurant included Spam? ... Kinda like that.) There are chicken lollipops. Chicken sandwiches. Chicken salad. Devilled (chicken) eggs. And, of course, fried chicken, grilled chicken and roasted chicken. (There's also steak ... chicken-fried, of course.)

Largely absent are the extensive veggie side dishes that the 'Pea was so revered for. (No fried okra?! Heavens!) Instead, there are thoughtfully devised gourmet alternatives: Mac and cream

■ STRIP Next Page

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L+S dining

■ **STRIP**, From Previous Page

brie, maple-roasted Brussels sprouts, garlic-ginger snap peas, slaw. The chicken is meant to be the star here. (The décor includes huge murals of hens and roosters. "That's a lot of cock, even for Oak Lawn," my friend Valentine observed).

The space is brighter than before, but the bones are recognizable: Same entrance, same bar, same slanted-tile walk to the dining room. But it seems homier, more refreshed. The space might not be a spring chicken, but this concept has a lot to crow about.

3857 Cedar Springs Road.



A burbling bowl of French onion soup sets the tone at Zephyr.

Zephyr Bakery Café

Zephyr has been around the longest of the three newcomers, and in many ways, it's also the greatest departure from its predecessor. From the cocoon of the serviceable Zini's Pizzeria has pupated this amusing take on a Parisian bistro. The décor is whimsical but precise, from the dandy-dressed waitstaff to the eclectic and colorful dishware. It's café society with a Texas twist.

The food is a mix of country French standbys (onion soup, for instance) and bravura updates of Texas favorites (bold empanadas, elaborate deviled eggs) and classic desserts. Indeed, dominating the space is the pastry case, a kind of treasure chest from which rich baubles emerge — not necessarily rich with jewels, but with butterfat and sugar and carbs ... even a little bacon on a cupcake. (Yeah... that.)

4001 Cedar Springs Road.

FIRST LOOK: STEPHAN PYLES FLORA STREET CAFE

Although Stephan Pyles hasn't had a restaurant on The Strip since his game-changing Star Canyon, the superstar chef got his start in the gayborhood 40 years ago when he started working at the now-shuttered The Bronx. Since then, he's become one of the acknowledged masters of high-end cuisine (the James Beard Foundation even created a Southwestern category for its awards due to his pioneering work).

Last month, he officially closed his namesake Downtown restaurant — because it was time. "I don't miss it one bit," he tells me. "It was time."

But he didn't have to go far to feel creatively revitalized. Already, he has emerged a few blocks away with a whole-new concept ... of sorts.

Stephan Pyles Flora Street Cafe, across from the Meyerson Symphony Center, takes its name and inspiration from his Routh Street Cafe, which was launched in 1983 as his first solo venture. Old-school fans still remember its appeal, which included classical music wafting on the airwaves. Flora Street pipes in a combination of classical and '80s trash rock as a kind of tribute to its roots in the 1980s.

The menu takes a few cues from past Pyles concepts as well (including the deliriously dextrous blue corn muffins), but it's so far-reaching and ambitious as to seem like nothing we have seen before. Pyles is famous for traveling the world extensively, incorporating new techniques, ingredi-



ents and flavor profiles into his culinary creations. The menu descriptions read more like poetry than components. "Poblano infladito, black bean mousse, Tennessee wild paddlefish caviar" could be a new form: haikusine.

He divides the offering into raw bar, starters, mains and a chef's tasting, but even the desserts sound like a seduction of sweets. Equally beautiful are the platings of dishes and the space itself, whose 70 seats are bathed in soft natural light. All the details promise to make Flora Street Cafe the most talked-about restaurant of the summer.

2330 Flora St. FloraStreet.com.

— Arnold Wayne Jones



Lena on me

How 'Girls' created Lena Dunham was inspired by her genderqueer sister to produce the trans documentary 'Suited'

Suited is the perfect fit for Lena Dunham.

As producer of the thought-provoking documentary about the powerful relationship between fashion and identity, Dunham knows firsthand that bending the gender rules by wearing a suit can be a transformative experience. During this year's annual Met Gala, the multi-hyphenate — actor, author, director, social activist, feminist, out-and-proud proponent of the word “no” — rocked an androgynous look, sporting black-tie attire and slicked-back hair as if she were a GQ cover model. The masc moment was classic Dunham — meaning, yet another strong statement. Known for her Emmy Award-winning HBO series *Girls*, the 30-year-old has made it her life's mission to tear down societal standards.

Backing *Suited* only seemed natural, then. In Jason Benjamin's directorial debut, airing on HBO this week (see sidebar on Page 53 for a review), transgender and genderfluid suit-buyers uncover a deeper sense of self as they find garments that speak to their identity at Bindle & Keep, a Brooklyn-based bespoke men and womenswear company.

Dunham's genderqueer sister, Grace, appears in the documentary while on a quest for a “dark wool suit ... to run around in.”

Dunham recently phoned for a candid conversation about how Grace's gender subversions have influenced her to challenge Hollywood norms. During the interview, the actor also elaborated on the “strength” she gained from wearing her own tailored suit, seeking to break stereotypes with her zeitgeist coming-of-age dramedy *Girls*, and being so gay adjacent she calls her significant other, fun.'s lead guitarist Jack Antonoff, her “partner.”

— Chris Azzopardi

Dallas Voice: I'm gonna try not to cry again just thinking about one of the doc's subjects, 12-year-old Aidan Star Jones. I'm not transgender, but I felt like I was watching a version of myself. Lena Dunham: That makes me so happy! And by the way, I've seen the movie a million times and I still weep every time I watch it. I weep every time my sister comes onscreen. I just weep because I love that it's kind of a feel-good

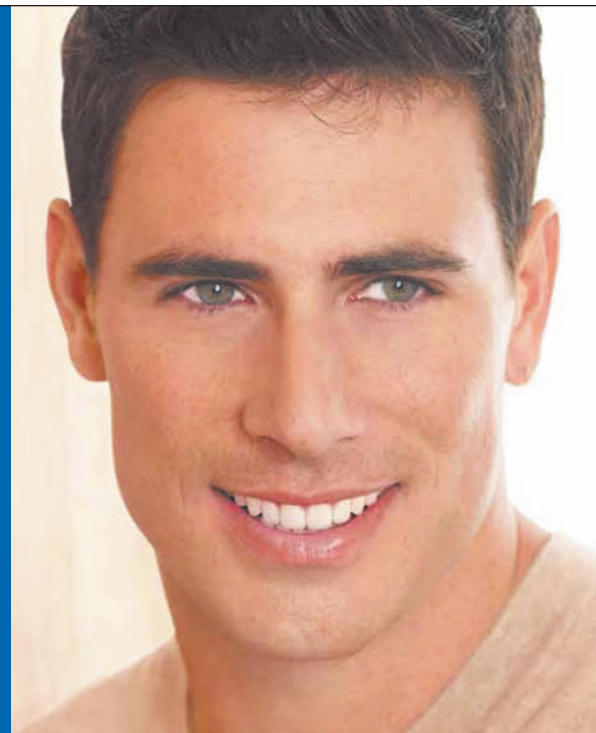
movie. People are expecting this gritty documentary and I'm like, yes, there are moments of that, but really it's the family movie I would want to watch if I thought that queerness was more accepted in the world of family movies, which I hope it will be soon.

In what ways did you find yourself empathizing

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■ DUNHAM, From Previous Page

with some of the people who visited Bindle & Keep? I don't identify as queer in my sexuality, but I have a lot of really close relationships with queer people, and queer culture has been hugely influential. Like so many disenfranchised women, queer culture has been a huge part of my coming of age.

Like I said, I'm a straight girl, but what I really empathized with was the need to find yourself in fashion when there aren't representations of you. I know that when I entered high school and became a chubby girl — I'd always been a little skinny kid and then suddenly I gained 40 pounds in four months and didn't know what to do with my body and didn't feel like there was a place [for me]. I could either walk into a Lane Bryant and sheath myself in something that didn't make me feel like myself at all or I could continue to wear my too-tight hot pink sweatpants. I didn't feel like there was a place for my body to be seen or known or understood.

So, for me, what's been really powerful as an adult has been having my clothes tailored, which is something I only started doing once I started going to red-carpet events, and even though I've had that experience, I actually had a Bindle & Keep suit made for our Sundance premiere. The experience of putting on something that just fucking fit was so remarkable, and I looked in the mirror and there was this strength that came from not trying to hide any part of myself. So, I think we can all relate to that feeling of trying to find the look — of fashion being a way to try and express yourself, and not feeling like there's any place to turn in the

commercial marketplace where your identity's being accepted. In that way, fashion turns from something that is very superficial to something that is extremely emotional.

I finally fit into a shirt that I'd been wanting to fit into for a long time, so I get it. It's amazing. It's so subtle but it's so important. My dad has always been into tailoring. He's a real suit guy. My friends will be like, "I saw your dad and I knew it was him from far away because he was wearing this super sharp suit at 10 a.m. on a Wednesday heading to the grocery store," and this made me really understand that part of the reason my dad does that is because it makes him feel that he can own his identity. Something that I love in our family is, my dad has all these suits and then my sibling, Grace, who's in the movie, will take his old suits and tailor them to her body.

It's funny, when we were little girls, my dad always wanted to dress us in a super androgynous way. If we were alone with him for the day, it was a plaid shirt, jeans, sneakers; he just thinks androgynous fashion on women is super cool. One of the first presents that he bought each of us: He got me a suit in eighth grade; he got my sister a suit in high school. He would really push the-ladies-in-suits angle. My mom came up in New York in the '80s wearing a power suit, so the idea of suiting as something that kind of already defies gender lines, I already felt like I had an understanding of. This [movie] obviously takes it to a whole new level.

How do you hope the stories that you are a part of telling, such as *Suited* and your work as creator of *Girls*, can enrich and embolden the lives of the LGBTQ community? I think my biggest hope — and my [creative] partner Jenni



A scene from the Lena Dunham-produced documentary 'Suited,' which debuts Monday on HBO.

Konner's definitely coming from the same place — is just that these stories make people feel seen. That was always our goal with *Girls*. I went into HBO and said, "Hey, I don't see any shows that represent my friends." And then when we put it on, and we got our own critiques about what we were representing, we were going, "Wait, a bunch of other people feel that way too," because I didn't see kind of my weirdo, anxious chubby self on television. Other women didn't see complex women of color represented on television; other women went, "Hey, I'm Asian and I've never seen a character who doesn't just have her nose in a book and is playing the violin." We're always just trying to push back against stereotypical representation or play with it in an intelligent way.

And what I loved about *Suited*: This is about an aspect of queer life — we spend so much time thinking about, and rightfully so, these huge issues like

marriage equality, raising families, job discrimination; this is a much more seemingly mundane issue. For the queer community and members of the gender nonconforming community, it actually ripples to every part of their life. Because you see, if [doc subject] Everett [Arthur] doesn't get a suit then Everett doesn't feel confident and Everett's not gonna get a job and Everett's not gonna show that, hey, a gender nonconforming trans lawyer is an option in the South. It goes so far. I just hope people see it and go, "I'm seeing myself represented whether I'm queer or not in these characters, and this is a version of the queer story that I haven't seen before."

How has having a sister who identifies as a gender nonconforming person changed your perspective on yourself and your sexuality? This is an overused word, but Grace is a really brave person. Grace very much came into the world —



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age 3 — being like, “I don’t wanna wear a dress and I’m being myself.” Grace always makes a joke that she was briefly straight from the ages of 7 to 10. She very much came into the world with this radicalized approach to being a woman. She did an interview recently in the New York Times in which she was having a conversation with her friend Nicole Eisenman, who is also a queer woman, and they asked Grace about her pronouns and Grace was like, I’m a gender nonconforming person but I’m OK with being called “she” because I like to really push the boundaries of what “she” can be, and that really resonated with me. Because even though I consider myself female and I have a more binary approach to my sexuality, I think that Grace’s idea about expanding the definition of what “she” can mean has really opened me up.

Before Grace became so deeply embedded in her identity, I think that I was still thinking of the world as... I accepted the idea of transness but I felt like I didn’t understand the idea of a person whose gender and sexuality could contain elements of everything that they’d seen. It’s funny: You know, I wore a tuxedo to the Met Ball this year and it was such a great feeling to go to a big fashion event where you’re surrounded by girls in gowns and feel this kind of strength that comes from being feminine while owning some masculine attributes.

How did it feel to be the odd man out, so to speak? It’s this very ineffable thing where you’re like, “I feel cool, I feel sexy, I feel like myself.” I felt a little bit at the Met Ball — I’d go up to ladies and be like [deepens voice to resemble a man], “You look great!” [Laughs] I was owning these kind of

masculine clothes I had on and it felt really good, and I feel without Grace in my life I wouldn’t. I think, especially when you’re working in Hollywood, there’s a real pressure to conform to femininity in a traditional way, especially if you don’t look like what people think a TV star should look like. When I was first getting styled I’d go, “I just wanna wear a really pretty dress and really pretty makeup, so when I go to an event people think, ‘Oh, she’s way prettier in person than I thought she would be.’” That’s all I wanted. And now, Grace has made me feel like I can go in with a fucking suit with my hair messed up because the rules have changed.

I love that you’ve taken her lead. Speaking of people who’ve influenced your world, I talked to Jack a few years ago. My partner.

Is that what you call him? I use partner because I like it. We’re not married, but also, he’s not my boyfriend. I feel like it’s another one where I’m like, I’m kind of down with the queer community. I have my partner! He’s my partner!

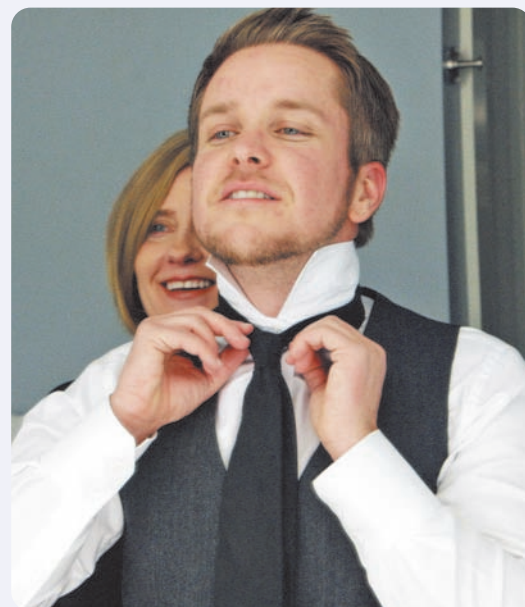
Your refusal to marry until your sister could was admirable, and you wrote a wonderful essay after the Supreme Court ruling last June. It’s been a year since the ruling. Have you thought about what you might have the queer people in your wedding party wear? That’s an amazing question, and actually, Jack and I have talked about it and we’ve always said that when we get married we want our wedding party to just be our two sisters in tuxedos. Jack has a straight sister, I have a queer sister; they’d be our best men / women and we’ll call it a day. That’s our dream.

HBO doc ‘Suited’ shows how clothes really can make the man

As most people know, trans men are born biological women, and alter their gender identity in a variety of ways: Through hormones, name-change, grooming and surgery. But as much as can be accomplished by science and ingenuity, “there are curves on this body that don’t make sense,” as one trans man observes. Another pre-surgical genderqueer man “binds” to look more flat-chested ... but can’t hide everything. Buying off-the-rack suits for a body with structurally wider hips or narrower shoulders is a compromise option that rarely offers a precise fit.

Suited, a new documentary (produced by Lena Dunham) that premieres on HBO Monday night, purports to be about Rachel, a trans man, and Daniel, a straight man, who team up to make custom clothing for members of the trans community. But really, the film is about their customers: The personal stories of men and boys who feel complete only when wearing clothing that they are comfortable in. (The cast includes one male-to-female trans attorney who wants a conservative business suit before an oral argument before an appellate court.) It gives real weight to the aphorism, “Clothes make the man.” Rachel and Daniel are not so much tailors as confidantes, therapists, counselors and bartenders. (It feels less like *Project Runway* than another HBO show — *Taxicab Confessions* with needle and thread.)

Many of the stories are compelling, to be



sure, but the weak spot is the payoff. You really want to see these men’s bodies transformed by masterful tailoring. But some of the suits actually seem a bit dowdy or ill-fitting. There’s no Cinderella moment that the audience sees. Then again, that’s not totally the point: Their customers’ self-images are enhanced, if not by bespoke couture, then by a patient ear and a concern for making them feel comfortable about who they are. “You have a right to be handsome,” Daniel says at the end. And beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

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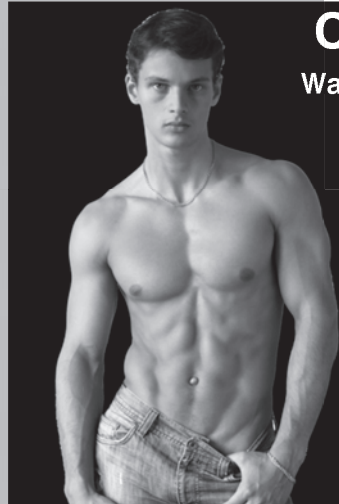
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L+S travel



■ PHOENIX, From Page 45

area is filled with restoration efforts. Recently, local artists were tasked with painting a variety of colorful murals, some even recreating long-gone neon signage that helped define the desert landscape in the 1940s and '50s.

The city center also benefits from the Mesa Arts Center, a gorgeous, modern and welcoming facility that combines four performing arts theaters with an art gallery as well as classrooms where you can learn crafts such as glass-blowing.

Relax and refresh

Choosing your accommodations can really affect the experience you hope to have. To be in the heart of activities, Downtown Phoenix's recently-opened Hilton Garden Inn has renovated an historic 1931 bank building into a charming 12-story Art Deco hotel. It offers comfortable and well-priced rooms, and is in walking distance or a short Uber ride of Bitter & Twisted, the Phoenix Public Market Café, the artsy Roosevelt Row gallery district and even the Phoenix LGBT Pride Center. (Nook is located in the ground floor of the Garden Inn.) The Hilton over in Mesa provides a central base for that side of the city.

If you wanna go old-school the Arizona Biltmore is a storied hotel that's so rich in history you can practically feel

the ghosts of folks like Clark Gable stalking the hallways. Built in 1929, it was designed by a disciple of Frank Lloyd Wright (Wright himself consulted on the construction, and also built Taliesin West, his home and school, in Scottsdale). A \$30 million renovation was completed at the end of 2015, so modern updates accentuate its preserved glamour. (Imagine: Its famed Aztec Room boasts tons of ornamental copper and thousands of square feet of gold leaf.) It's two swimming pools provide ample opportunity for get-away-from-it-all sunbathing and cooling, and you can even book a treatment at the Spa Biltmore: Luxu-



The foodie experience in Greater Phoenix provides unexpected delights, from sophisticated entrees from chef Ryan Staroszik at the Mesa Hilton, top, to the cool coffee-and-cookie shop Phoenix Public Market Café, above; opposite, the gardens at The Farm at South Mountain demonstrate a thriving farm-to-table scene. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)



riating in a hot-stone massage, facial, aromatherapy session, facial or even couples treatment.

For an entirely different experience — one that brings you totally into the environment of Phoenix's rich landscape — the Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs Resort is an adventure in itself. Virtually carved in a mountainside, it's conjures life

as a Pueblo Indian with the addition of modern amenities. The views offer unparalleled vistas of the Valley of the Sun from the all-suite facility. You feel entirely removed from the world, ensconced in warm, authentic décor. It's yet another way you can tailor a trip to Arizona to serve whatever adventure you wish to enjoy. ■

LITTLE BLACK BOOK

Food and Drink

Beer Research Institute, 1461 S. Staple Drive, Mesa. TheBeerResearchInstitute.com. **Bitter & Twisted**, 1 W. Jefferson St., Phoenix. BitterAndTwistedAZ.com. **A Different Pointe of View at Tapatio Cliffs**, 1111 E. 7th St., Phoenix. **The Farm at South Mountain**, 6106 32nd St., Phoenix. TheFarmAtSouthMountain.com. **Nook Kitchen**, 15 E. Monroe St. NookKitchen.com. **Phoenix Public Market Cafe**, 14 E. Pierce St., Phoenix. PHXPublicMarket.com. **Queen Creek Olive Mill**, 25062 S. Meridian Road, Queen Creek. **Southwest Herb**, 148 N. Center St., Mesa. SWHerb.com. **Sweet Cakes**, 21 W. Main St., Mesa. SweetCakesCafe.com. **T.C. Eggington's Brunchery**, 1660 S. Alma School Road,

Mesa. TCEgg.com. **Worth Takeaway**, 218 W. Main St., Mesa. WorthTakeaway.com.

Resources

Desert Botanical Garden, 1201 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix. DBQ.org. **Hot Air Expeditions**, HotAirExpeditions.com. **Mesa Arts Center**, 1 E. Main St., Mesa. MesaArtsCenter.com. **Phoenix Pride LGBT Center**, 801 N. 2nd St., Phoenix. PhoenixPrideLGBTCenter.org. **Roosevelt Row Arts District**, RooseveltRow.org.

Accommodations

Arizona Biltmore, 2400 E. Missouri, Phoenix. ArizonaBiltmore.com. **Hilton Garden Inn**, 1 E. Monroe St. **Hilton Phoenix/Mesa**, 1011 W. Holmes Ave., Mesa. **Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs Resort**, 1111 N. 7th St., Phoenix. TapatioCliffHilton.com.



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■ ORANGE, From Page 41

queer and dyke and fag. The lesser known story is that they almost didn't air it *because* I said queer and dyke and fag. The lawyers called Arsenio in and said, "We don't think you should let this go out." They were trying to pull it and Arsenio — again this is the lesser story that people don't know — had a fit and said, "She's a dyke. If she wants to call herself a dyke then it's none of your fucking business." He fought for it and got me on the air. The lawyers at Fox were saying, "Noooo."

It was a big deal at the time; now it's ho-hum. But back then it was huge. You gotta remember, Ellen [DeGeneres] wasn't out yet. Rosie [O'Donnell] wasn't out yet. None of these guys were out yet.

Shifting gears: Let's talk about your cameo in one of the gayest classics of all time, *First Wives Club*. What's an onscreen scolding from Bette Midler like? Just like an offscreen scolding!

Wait wait, there's a story there. I gotta say, you must be about my fiancée's age because everybody of her generation — she's 31 — loves that movie. That's her favorite movie. I'm like, mine's *Rebecca*. I'm just saying, *First Wives Club* is your favorite movie?!

The best thing about *First Wives Club*, though, beyond the fact that I got to be in it and beyond the fact that Paul Rudnick wrote that for me, which was very cool, was getting to work with Bette, who is my hero and one of the reasons I went into show business. But more than that was becoming friends with Goldie Hawn. Goldie is just an absolute unbelievable doll. Talented. Brilliant. Charming. Just a lovely human being. I had a blast doing *First Wives Club*.

More recently, you called out a preacher while on the New York subway. That guy? It's an insult to preachers to call him a preacher. He's just a homophobic asshole.

It went viral. It went viral so fast I couldn't believe it, in fact. I was on TMZ within a half hour. That was the thing: I was on a subway on my way to the stu-

dio — we were filming — so what had happened, I got out of the subway and I called my manager. I said, "Look, I had a confrontation. Somebody pulled out their phone and they videotaped it soooo there might be something on social media." Twenty minutes later, he called me and said, "You're on TMZ." It was hilarious! It just went nuts.

You famously dropped out of Michigan Womyn's Music Festival in 2014 because of their womyn-born-womyn stipulation, which discourages transgender people from attending. And you've spoken many times on the topic of "infighting," saying once, "We queers need to find a way to stop this fighting and work together towards our common goal." In the years since canceling your MichFest appearance, have you seen any noticeable change regarding the unification of the queer community? Absolutely not. I speak at universities now because apparently I'm a role model. It just makes me laugh. Like, honey, if I'm a role model, queers are in a lot of fucking trouble. I speak about it a lot, but when we come together and don't infight we get a lot done. That's how we defeated DOMA, that's how we defeated Prop 8, that's why the SCOTUS decision happened.

But in the midst of all that I still find myself constantly dealing with the more conservative queers and the more radical queers like myself, and as I said in the statement when I pulled out of MichFest: How fucked up is it when I'm the voice of reason? You've got to be kidding me that you guys can't see this. When Lea DeLaria and Larry Kramer are the voices of reasons, people are fucked. 'Cause we're the two biggest bitches on the planet! We're little brats. We scream and yell until people listen to us, that's who we are.

This is the biggest issue we have in the queer community to date and will continue to be the biggest issue until we learn to accept our differences, and that's the issue. And part of me believes that this inclusivity of calling us the LGBTQQTY-whatever-LMNOP tends to stress our differences. And that's why I refuse to do it. I say queer. Queer is everybody.

ERIKA JAYNE

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■ T&S, From Page 34

complicated feelings the past few years, as evidenced by the comment threads on their Facebook page. When Tegan and Sara's first release on a label, 2000's *This Business of Art*, came out, their music had a sort of Indigo Girls-meets-Le Tigre indie sound. Over the years and albums, the guitars were increasingly joined by synths. When 2013's *Heartthrob* came around — which featured the Billboard No. 1 Hot Dance Club song "Closer" — they enlisted producer Greg Kurstin (who brought us Adele's "Hello") and became a downright synth-driven outfit with irresistible hooks and zeitgeist appeal. "Yeah, its

been a shift," Tegan admits, "but over a long period of time and feels natural. I think if you heard us in 2004 and tuned out until *Heartthrob* it gave you a bit of whiplash, but we're stoked."

Tegan and Sara 2.0 rose to international stardom, global tour dates, and most important, played music more in the vein of the '80s bands they grew up loving, like New Order, Cyndi Lauper and Depeche Mode. Tegan also confesses that guitar was never the easiest instrument for her to connect with or handle — both she and Sara were classically trained on piano between the ages of 5 and 16.

In September, Tegan and Sara embark on a three-month tour of the U.S. — they will play at

Dallas' Majestic Theatre on Sept. 15, and eventually stop at Asheville, N.C.'s Orange Peel. While a famously progressive city, some would say the Portland of the Southeast, Asheville has nonetheless suffered in the controversies and boycotts resulting from the state's reprehensible HB2 bill, which dictates that men and women must use the restroom corresponding with their birth certificate gender (this legislation, like so many transphobic and fear-stoking "bathroom bills" sweeping the country, is actually a clever albeit vile method of packing in a Trojan horse's-worth of other measures that, in this case, caps the state's minimum wage and strips workers of the right to sue employers for



discrimination on a state level).

The pair has kept an eye and ear on this wave of transphobia, and will be donating a dollar from every tour ticket to charitable organizations with a focus on transgender rights and protections. However, when asked if they will boycott the NC appearance if HB2 isn't repealed by then, Tegan replies that they would not. Instead, they feel their appearance would in fact serve as a meeting place and joyful space for those against the bill.

"If Sara and I chose not to play the Orange Peel it would make zero impact. We see it as sort of what we did when we toured countries in Central Europe and Asia that have really fucked up [anti-LGBT] laws, and that is try to bring hope, be a meeting place, and say your fighting is worth it. Everything that's happening now, all the major boycotts like Springsteen's are important, but as gay artists we're going to go there and reward the people of North Carolina. We've had the most amazing shows there. Things are changing and this is just a bunch of old, fucked-up people acting as if they are protecting someone who doesn't need protection. This is just the next fight."

Speaking of fighting, one aspect of relationships not addressed on *Love You To Death* is whether either of the twins has a predilection for chick magnets — the type of girl who makes them beat off competitors with a bat when out in public. What does it take to win the eyes or heart of Tegan and Sara, anyway?

"Our girlfriends are very different," Tegan laughs, "and we always dated very different people. We have different taste in women. The person I'm dating is a total babe. I constantly find myself out and I'll see her but don't know its her, and check her out and be, like, 'Oh my god that's the girl I'm dating!' And I think Sara's partner is wonderful, she's a total babe and so smart and so ambitious and hilarious. But we both date pretty private people. That's the price to pay for dating Tegan or Sara. You've got to lock down your life. Our fans are hungry for details and we've been hacked a few times and had breaches of privacy. When you enter our closed circle, even the people who work for us, it's like, 'OK everything goes private, you can't post anything about where we are or what we're doing, no photos of us with you.' It's not that fun, honestly. We're not a good time." ■

For more information on Tegan and Sara, visit TeganAndSara.com



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Sunday 06.19

Summer Showcase
features fashion & fun

The Cedar Springs Merchants Association wants you to feel the Pride as only Texas can do it, and will pull it all together with a Summer Showcase. The runway show (including swimwear from ES Collection, pictured), live and silent auctions and all-around party will be hosted by lifestyle guru Steve Kemble. Come out and enjoy the Pride of Dallas along The Strip.

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



Friday 06.17 — Sunday 06.19



Oak Cliff Film Festival
continues

The Oak Cliff Film Festival is still young (this is its fifth year), but it treats audiences to dozens of older films (among them works by Brian DePalma and Terrence Malick), as well as newer ones, including a short documentary with the shocking title *When AIDS Was Funny*, that features joking press conferences during the Regan Era when AIDS was mocked. It's a true film lover's potpourri.

DEETS: Texas Theatre, 231 W. Jefferson Blvd. For a full schedule, visit OakCliffFilmFestival.com.



Wednesday 06.22

Sharon, Violet, Jinkx headline
Battle of the Seasons tour

Sure, it's easy to root for one queen on *Ru Paul's Drag Race* over another in the same season ... but what happens when drag superstars from different seasons compete for the title of best? That's what you can find out this week when former victors like Sharon Needles (pictured), Jinkx Monsoon and Violet Chachki go up against also-rans like Ginger Minj, Ivy Winters and more, in a show hosted by Michelle Visage.

DEETS: South Side Music Hall, 1145 S. Lamar St. 9 p.m. AXS.com.



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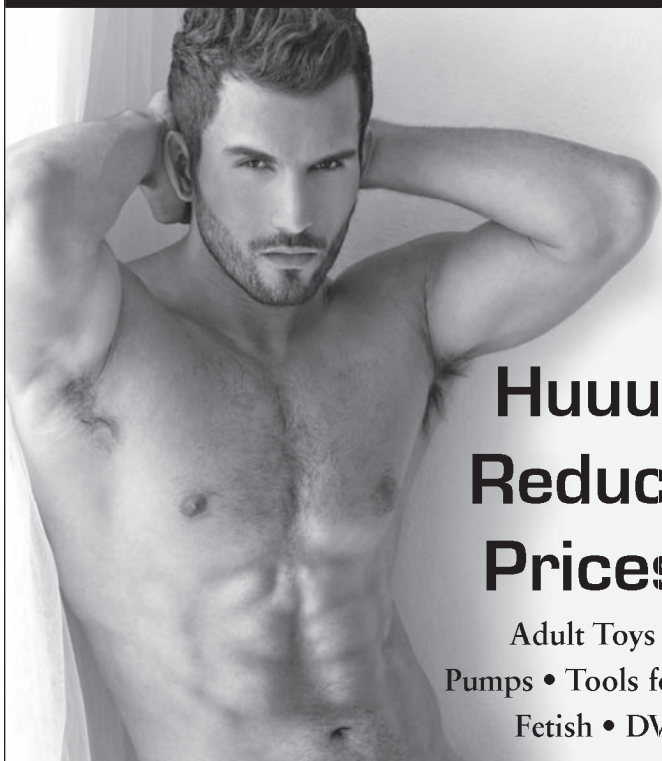


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calendar highlights



The Bruce Wood Dance Project opens its sixth season at City Performamce Hall this weekend with a program called, naturally, Six. (Photo courtesy Brian Gulliaux)

ARTSWEEK THEATER

Anything Goes. Cole Porter's infectiously madcap musical closes out Lyric Stage's 2015–16 season. Carpenter Hall of Irving Arts Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd., Irving. June 17–26. LyricStage.org.

Blackberry Winter. A daughher finds ways of coping with her mother's slide into dementia in this funny, poetic play about Alzheimer's and myth. Runs in repertory with **The Thrush and the Woodpecker**, both by Steven Yockey and part of the New Works Festival from Kitchen Dog, which moves (temporarily) into the space at Undermain Theatre, 3200 Main St. Through June 26. KitchenDogTheater.org.

Beautiful: The Carole King Musical. The engaging and overly story of one of the great pop music composers of our age. *Final weekend.* Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. ATTPAC.org.

Bullets Over Broadway. National tour the adaptation of Woody Allen's Oscar-winning comedy film, set in the world of gangsters and theater trash. Music Hall at Fair Park, 901 First Ave. Through June 26. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

Dreamgirls. The hit rock musical, a thinly-disguised version of the making of the Supremes and Motown, becomes the Dallas Theater Center's summer family show ... for funky, open-minded families. Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through July 29. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

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Living' Fat. A college-educated man is forced to take a job as a janitor in a bank, and happens upon \$20k in cash dropped by bank robbers and unnoticed by the cops in this comedy. Jubilee Theatre, 506 Main St., Fort Worth. Through June 26. JubileeTheatre.org.

Mothers and Sons. The first of two Terrence McNally plays being staged this summer by Uptown Players, this one revolves around the mother of a gay son who died, who visits his surviving lover. *Final weekend.* Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. UptownPlayers.org.

Outside Mullingar. *Doubt* and *Moonstruck* author John Patrick Shanley's quirky romance, set in Ireland. Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Through June 26. WaterTowerTheatre.org.

Wait Until Dark. Frederick Knott's tightly-wound suspense thriller, about a blind woman terrorized by criminals looking for a doll filled with heroin. Stage West, 821 W. Vickery Blvd., Fort Worth. Through June 26. StageWest.org.

DANCE
Bruce Wood Dance Project: Six. Two world premieres, plus a Dallas premiere, make up this season opener. City Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. June 17–18. 8 p.m. BruceWoodDance.org.

FINE ART
Rebecca Warren: The Main Thing. A mid-career retrospective of the British visual arts and sculptress, in 20 diverse pieces. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through July 17. DMA.org.

Vermeer Suite: Music in 17th Century Dutch Painting. A lovely original Vermeer is among the seven paintings in this intimate exhibit exploring themes in Dutch art. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through Aug. 21. DMA.org.

Eye of the Collector. An exhibition of the quirky tchotchkes and unusual trinkets of nine people prove the axiom that every object tells a story. Perot Museum of Nature and Science, 2201 N. Field St. Through Sept. 5. PerotMuseum.org.

FRIDAY 06.17
COMMUNITY
Panoptikon. The weekly retro disco dance party, presented by Lord Byron. Red Light, 2911 Main St. Doors 9 p.m.

SATURDAY 06.18
COMMUNITY
Gaybingo. It's Pride Month, so celebrates yours with Beach Blanket Bingo at Gaybingo. Station 4, 3911 Cedar Springs. 5 p.m. doors, 6 p.m. curtain. \$25–\$45. MyResourceCenter.org.

FILM
Oak Cliff Film Festival. More than 70 screenings of new and classic films, among them the cult hit from Brian De Palma, *Phantom of the Paradise*, Terrence Malick's masterpiece *Badlands* and the documentary short *When AIDS Was Funny*, which unearths mocking recordings of press conferences during the Reagan Administration. Texas Theatre, 231 W. Jefferson Blvd. June 17–19. OakCliffFilmFestival.com.

SUNDAY 06.19 — FATHER'S DAY

MONDAY 06.20
CABARET
Mama's Party. Local singer Amy Stevenson hosts her ongoing cabaret series, always with special guests and a good time. Uptown Theatre, 120 E. Main St. Grand Prairie. \$10.

TUESDAY 06.21
FILM
Bonnie & Clyde. A landmark film, that helped introduce a "modern" era of cinema, about the notorious gansters from Oak Cliff... shot in Texas. Screens as part of the Tuesday Big Movie New Classic Series at Landmark's Magnolia Theatre in the West Village, 3699 McKinney Ave. Screens at 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m.

WEDNESDAY 06.22
THEATER
Beauty and the Beast. A special one-week-only performance of the Disney classic. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. June 22–26. ATPAC.org.

COMMUNITY
RuPaul's Drag Race of the Seasons Extravaganza Tour. Michelle Visage hosts this drag event, featuring Ginger Minj, Ivy Winters, Jinkx Monsoon, Sharon Needles, Violet Chachki and more. South Side Music Hall, 1135 S. Lamar St. 9 p.m. AXS.com.

THURSDAY 06.23
CABARET
Judy Chamberlain Jazz. The jazz vocalist's weekly cabaret performance in the back room of Zippers Hideaway, 3333 N. Fitzhugh St. 9 p.m.

THEATER
Psycho Beach Party. Coy Covington stars in this campy Charles Busch play. Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. June 23–July 10. Theatre3Dallas.com.

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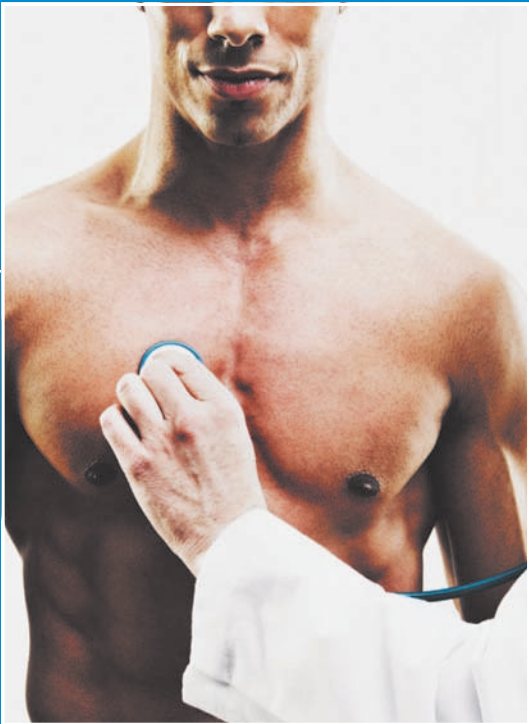
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Cassie Nova

Let your Pride flag fly — gay or nerd

Howdy, y'all! As most of you know, June is National Gay Pride Month. So I say we celebrate by being super gay all month. Wear rainbow clothing every chance you get. Even if you are in business attire, I want you to have on either hot pink or rainbow underwear. You can pick up all your Pride accoutrement at the shops on The Strip or at Target. I am going to need you to yell "Yaaasssss Kween!" at least 30 times a day or anytime you see someone on the street with a fierce walk. Snap your fingers and chant "Werk" for no apparent reason. Drop it like it's hot and twerk before and after lunch. Quote random Beyoncé lyrics for no reason. Ask every woman you see if she is Becky with the good hair.

I am kidding, of course. You don't have to act like you just came out a week ago to show your Pride. I do know quite a few people that act "that way" all the time — that's just a phase many of us go through. I remember how awesome it felt when I first came out and found my tribe. I wanted the world to know I was full of gay Pride. I was a loud nelly homo years before Cassie Nova was born. Young James went through what I call my "faggot phase." Yes, I know that word is horrible and I shouldn't use it, but that is how I acted.

I had spent years trying to hide who I really was, so when I first came out and could act however I felt, I flamed. Looking back, I got on my own damn nerves. I wore short-shorts and combat boots everywhere and my ensemble was not complete without

my freedom rings necklace. I think I still have that necklace here somewhere. To this day, when I hear jewelry jingling together I have fond (and sometimes embarrassing) memories of being a proud gay youth.

One year, on Oct. 11 — National Coming Out Day — a big group of us young guys and gals went to the Galleria for the sole purpose of letting the world know we were gay. From the parking garage to the food court we chanted, "We're here, we're queer and we're not going shopping!" or "We're gay, get used to it!" This was the early '90s and it felt like a big deal at the time. We got a lot of eye rolls and strange looks, but a few people even joined us. One woman that looked like Ann Richards told us "Good for you!" and high-fived each of us.

I like to think that because so many of us did things like that back then, today's gays have it easier than we did. I had it easier than the generation before me, and so on. But the fight for gay rights is nowhere near over. Sometimes it seems like we take two steps forward and three steps back ... but the truth is, we are making progress. Slow, sometimes infuriating progress, but progress towards acceptance, nonetheless.

The truth is, now I show my Pride in more subtle ways. I introduce my partner Jamie as my husband no matter where we are. We were at a funeral a few weeks ago in Corsicana, surrounded by varying degrees of redneckedness, and I'd say "This is my husband" like it was the most normal thing in the world. We received no strange looks or double-takes. Everyone was very nice to both of us. Sometimes you go further with baby steps than you do with a jump.

Show your Pride however you want. Whether it's loud and covered in glitter or just holding the hand of your partner, there is no wrong way to show your

Pride. Be you and be proud of who you are. If I could go back in time to my younger gay self and slap the shit of him for being so loud and in your face, I wouldn't. I was who I was for a reason, so I could be the very subtle, low key gay that I am now. Winky face!

Speaking of Pride, as most of you know, I am also a proud geek and last weekend I got my nerd card stamped big time. I went to Dallas Fan Days. It was a little overwhelming, but in a good way. My friend Ben won a Facebook contest and received two VIP passes and a meet-and-greet with Todd McFarland. He's a brilliant comic book artist, founder of Image Comics, creator of Spawn, toy designer and all around badass!

The day started early for me (10 a.m.). I hadn't been to the remodeled convention center yet but knew about where it was so I paid to park near what I thought was the entrance. I figured all I had to do was follow one of the many costumed attendees to the right door. I should have followed a couple dressed as Team Rocket from *Pokémon*, but I went with a girl dressed as a Jedi and carrying light saber. I chose poorly. That Jedi bitch took me the longest possible way to get to the entrance. She did not use the force at all and instead took me half a mile to the left when we should have gone half a block to the right.

I knew I was in for some great people-watching as soon as we entered and saw a Spiderman sporting a better tuck than even I can get. Nice body, but no bulge at all. There were people dressed up in the most random costumes. I saw a guy in a white chef coat and fake mustache carrying a spatula. I guess he



could have been the Soup Nazi, but then I guess he would have had a ladle. I have no idea who he was supposed to be. There were two huge bearded bear-looking guys in pink tutus, fairy wings, colorful wigs and sparkling lashes. They both carried signs that read FREE HUGS. I swear I saw them hug 40 people in 10 minutes. Little kids, old people and other big men all wanted and received hugs. It was really cool.

Game of Thrones was big at this convention. Jack Gleeson, the kid that played the asshole King Joffrey, was there just walking around with friends when he wasn't at his booth signing autographs. I saw a bunch of gals dressed as Khalessi. There was a chubby Khalessi, a black Khalessi and a few spot-on Mothers of Dragons. I learned that the plural of Khalessi is Khalessi. They take their shit serious.

I waved at George Takei and Stan Lee but they didn't wave back, probably because they didn't recognize me. I almost bumped into Chewbacca Mom. She was there signing autographs and I got to meet Peter Mayhew, the man that played Chewbacca. She was charging 20 bucks for an autograph but said that the money she made went to a charity at her church. Talk about making the most of your 15 minutes of fame. I think she's awesome.

My favorite costume of the day was a guy dressed as Spock from *Star Trek* with tentacles coming out of his uniform shirt. Many people looked at him confused but I knew immediately, he was Spocktapus! I have a feeling if I didn't have drag as a creative outlet, I would be at every convention dressed as something fabulous. I love that these conventions are a way for others to find their tribe and be with people that appreciate their creativity and showmanship.

So whether you are gay, a geek or both, be proud! Let your rainbow freak flag fly!

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

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

Photo courtesy Krisofer Reynolds



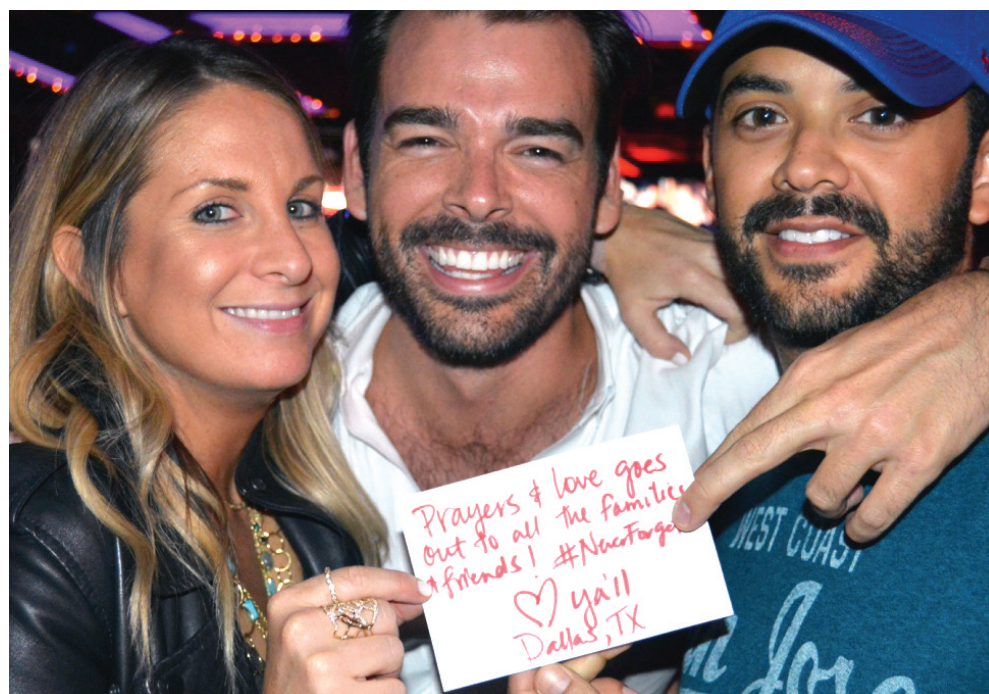
Messages, from Dallas to Orlando

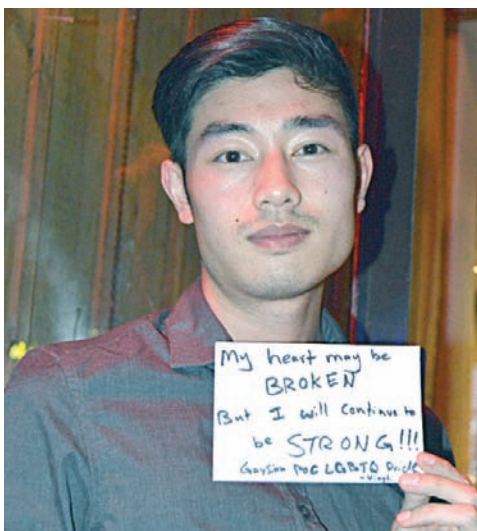
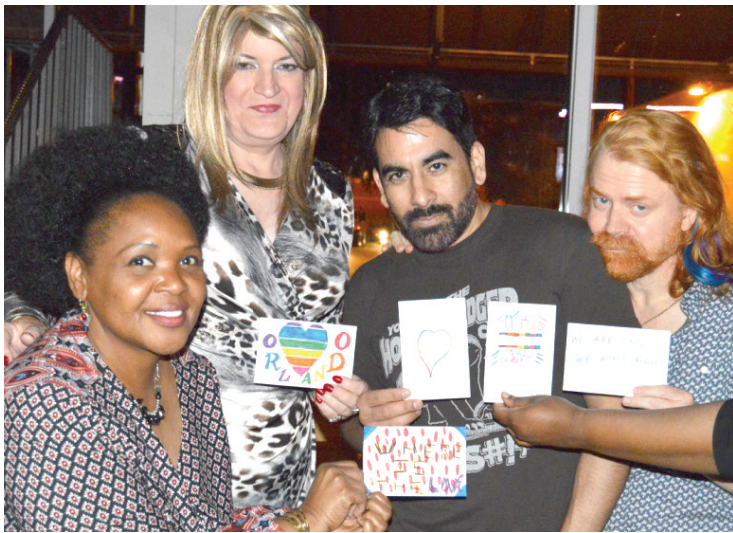


Making the SCENE the week of June 17-23:

- **Alexandre's:** Ashleigh Smith on Friday. Chris Chism and the Band on Saturday. Voice of Pride at 8 p.m. on Tuesday. Illumin on Thursday.
- **BJ's NXS:** Dallas to Orlando bracelets available for \$5 with proceeds going to Orlando victims' families and to survivors. A portion of Trashy Tuesday sales also going to Orlando.
- **Brick/Joe's:** The Black Carpet Affair presents 50 Shades of Black featuring performances by Arquez on Friday.
- **Club Reflection:** TGRA Cowtown Cookoff II Dessert and Picnic Delights at 4 p.m. and Terry Covington's Birthday Bash and Show at 7 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Dallas Eagle:** Dallas for Orlando benefit from 7-10 p.m. on Friday. MasT Dallas meeting from 1:30-4 p.m. on Saturday. BearDance and celebration from 5-7 p.m. on Saturday to celebrate TBRU 21 and distribute checks to GDMF, Resource Center and AIDS Services of Dallas. DFW Leather Corps club night on Saturday.
- **JR.'s Bar & Grill:** The Show with No Name! with Asia, Alexis, Tara St. Stone and Sassy on Monday.
- **Round-Up Saloon:** Cedar Springs Merchant Association: Summer Showcase with Steve Kemble at 8 p.m. on Sunday. Mr. and Miss Round-Up 2016 at 8 p.m. on Wednesday.
- **Sue Ellen's:** Party Raid on Friday. Ciao Bella on Saturday. Kathy & Bella at 3 p.m. and Lauren Alexander at 6 p.m. on Sunday.
- **The Rose Room:** Miss Gay Briar Park America on Thursday.
- **Two Corks and a Bottle:** Show Tune Night with David Carpenter on the piano from 7-10 p.m. on Wednesday.
- **Woody's Sports & Video Bar:** Does Your Father Know turnabout show at 7 p.m. on Sunday.

Scene Photographers: Kat Haygood and Chad Mantooth.







“ And love is love is love is love is love is love and cannot be killed or swept aside. ”

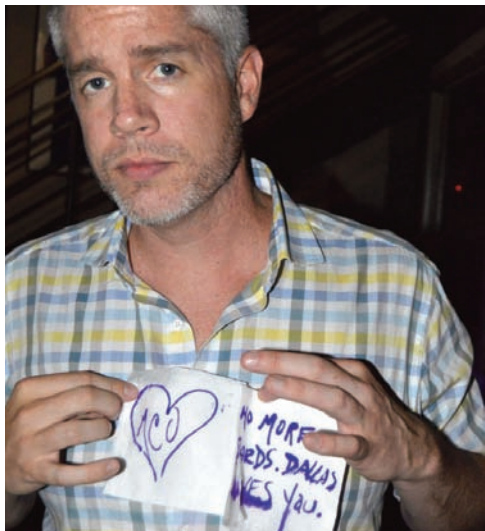
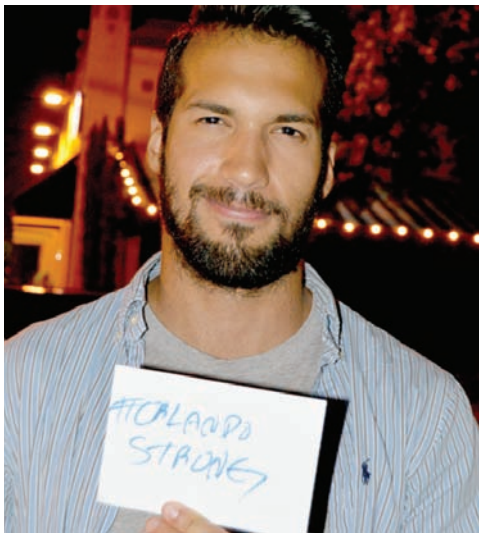
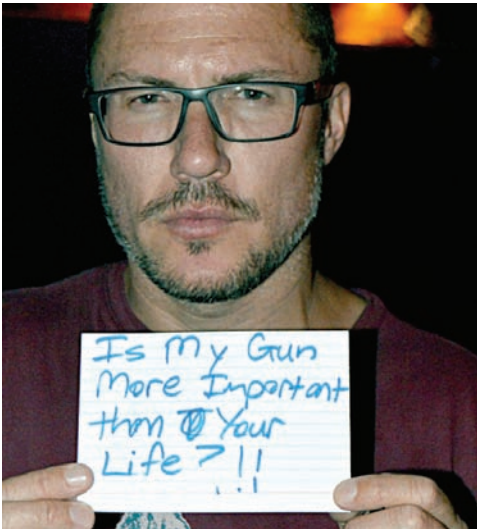
Lin-Manuel Miranda
at the 70th annual Tony Awards

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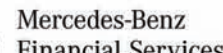
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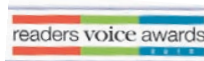
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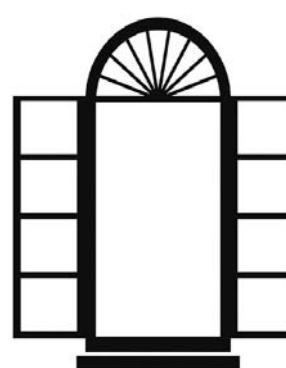


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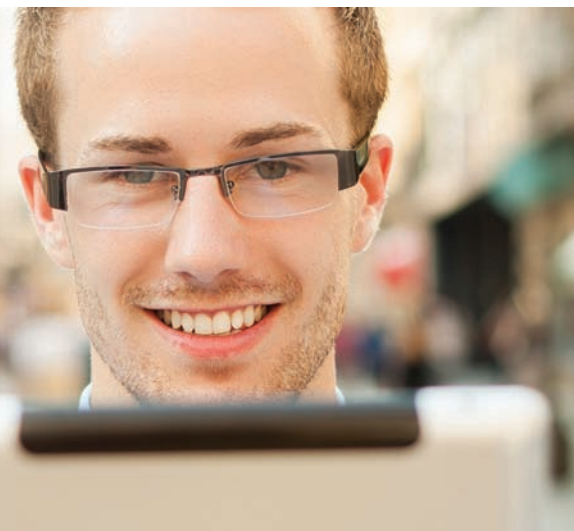
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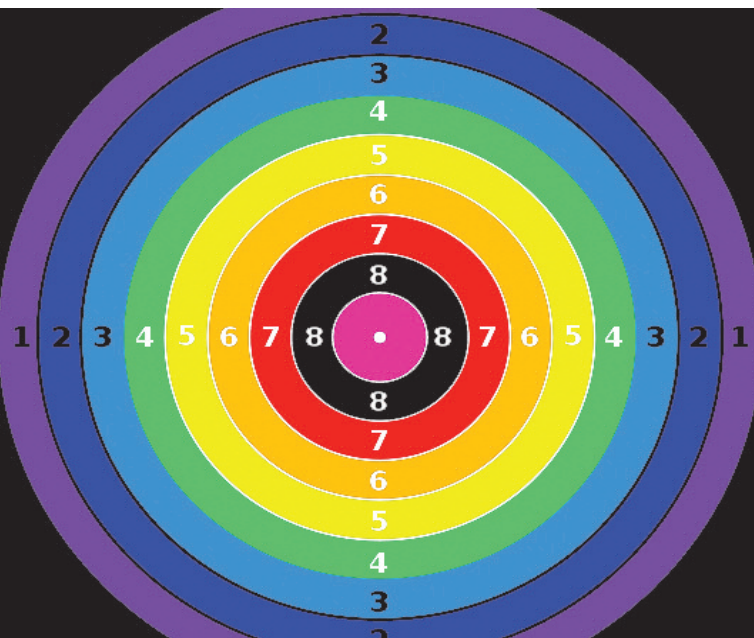
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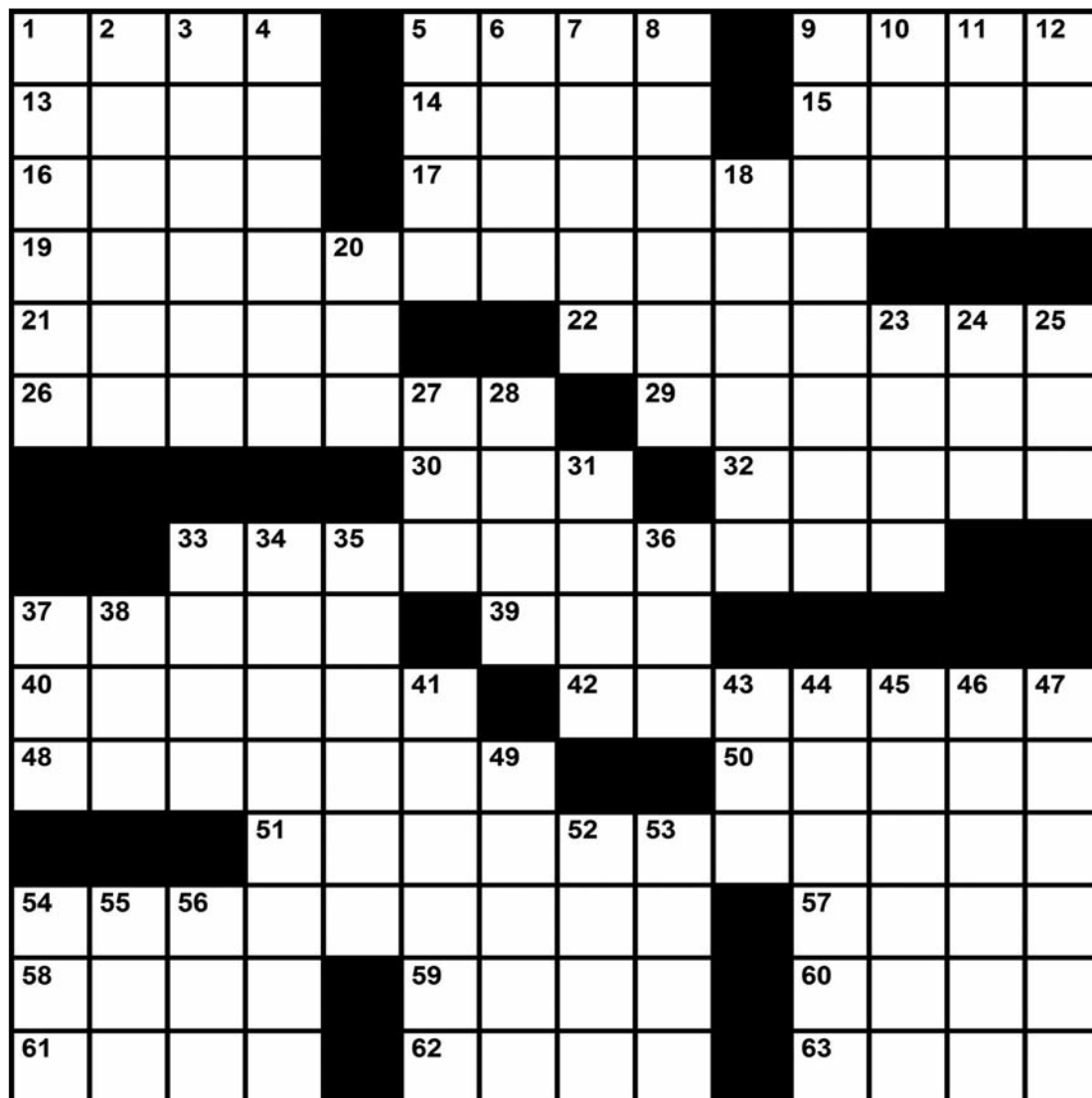
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Orange Alert

Solution on page 61

Across

- HHH, to Sappho
- Military cross-dresser Jeanne ____
- Pick up
- Marcel Duchamp's style
- Genesis brother
- In the year, to Nero
- Scores
- What Brando was doing on the Bounty
- She debuted as 51-Across recently at Shakespeare in the Park in New York
- Former NFL player Tuaolo
- In the zone
- Mississippi Sissy author Kevin
- Buff stuff
- The Simpsons storekeeper
- Readies for publication
- Reaction of 51-Across to 19-Across, perhaps?
- The Sound of Music name
- Coming Out Under Fire, for short
- Crude carriers
- Matthew of Wyoming
- Deep throat tissue

- "Fiddle-___!" (Tara expression)
- Orange candidate
- Can you diagnose this? It isn't hard
- Narrow opening
- Ancient Roman poet
- Bi
- Problem for skin
- Sentence unit
- Place for your drawers
- Pops the question

Down

- "My Cup Runneth Over" singer
- Thy Neighbor's Wife author
- Is nuts over
- Well-endowed old goats?
- Oral sex protectors
- Go to the edge of
- Like bell-bottom jeans
- Paying customer
- A rainbow flag symbolizes this
- Folk singer DiFranco
- Lodging place
- Drink with fruitcake
- Closer to Holly?
- Batting coach Charlie

- Latin poet
- Eng. class about Wilde
- Article of Frida
- Mardi Gras mo., often
- Moved one's ass
- Sources of anal probes?
- David Hyde Pierce alma mater
- Welcome indication
- Force to leave
- Rilke's I
- Vidal's Visit ____ Small Planet
- Unburden
- Singer O'Connor
- Summer hrs. in NY
- Alexander conquered it
- "Mature" viewers
- Lee of The Long, Hot Summer
- Low points
- Activity of Isadora Duncan
- Some watch faces
- Pack with queens
- Frigid
- West of Hollywood
- Mom-and-pop org.

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