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Freedom, finally

**Veterans talk about the impact
of the military lifting its ban on
transgender servicemembers**

by Tammye Nash, Page 8

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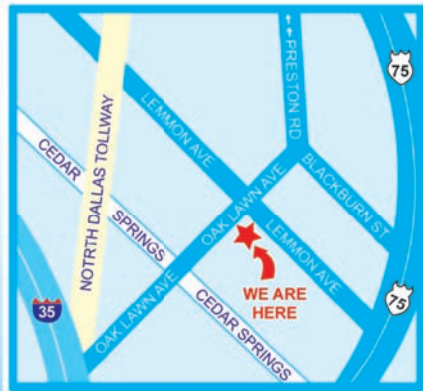
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Arnold Wayne Jones

Jones, Russell win in Houston Press Club's Lone Star Awards

Dallas Voice Executive Editor Arnold Wayne Jones came home from the Houston Press Club's Lone Star Awards with three trophies this past weekend, and former Voice news writer James Michael Russell won one.

Arnold won first place in the “Newspaper Under 50K Circulation, News or Feature Story” category with Soup 2 Nuts, his profile of Pink Magnolia restaurant owners chef Blythe Beck and Casie Caldwell. (Judges praised the piece as “a fun story ... It felt as if I knew Blythe and Casie by the end ... full of sass and wonderful quotes.”) Second place in that category went to Michael Duke with the Jewish Herald-Voice for his story, “Bereaved Family Focuses On Lives After Deadly Flood.”

Arnold won second place in the “Newspaper Print Journalist of the Year” category, behind Dianna Wray of Houston Press in first place, and ahead of third place winner Leif Reigstad, also of Houston Press. Arnold's moving tribute to his mother following her death last year helped win him Journalist of the Year honors.

Arnold won third place in the “Newspaper General Commentary” category for his review of the restaurant “Uchi, Uchie coochie, could she cook!” Michael Duke at Jewish Herald-Voice won first place with his story “Israel Was Reborn Despite The Holocaust” and Houston Press' Margaret Downing won second place for “The Rise and Crashing Fall ...”

(Had there been a category for most creative headlines, Arnold would no doubt have won hands-down. Matter of fact, he would have won first, second and third place.)

James won second place in the “Internet Opinion” category for his “Bought and Sold” series of blogs on Texas lawmakers who have proven to be more beholden to big bucks than to Texas voters. First place went to Houston Press' Cory Garcia.

— Tammye Nash

Mississippi blocked from enacting anti-gay law

U.S. District Judge Carlton Reeves has struck down a recent Mississippi law that discriminated

against same-sex couples. He ruled that Mississippi circuit clerks can't cite their own religious views to refuse to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

Roberta Kaplan, the attorney who represented Edie Windsor in the case that found parts of the Defense of Marriage Act unconstitutional, also represented two lesbian couples in the state's marriage equality lawsuit in 2014. She filed a motion in the marriage equality case. Reeves found in favor of marriage equality and after the Obergefell decision, his ruling was certified by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The new “religious liberty” law would have gone into effect on July 1. Kaplan argued the law would create uncertainty for same-sex couples who wouldn't know which clerks would stand in the way of their constitutional right to marry. The state shouldn't be able to continue to create new legal barriers to marriage, she argued.

According to the Jackson Clarion Ledger, Gov. Phil Bryant recently received an award from the Family Research Council for signing the bill into law.

— David Taffet

Two trans women win congressional primaries

Two trans women won primaries on Tuesday, June 28, and will be on the ballot for a U.S. House and a U.S. Senate seat.

Oddly, both are named Misty.

Utah Democrats chose Misty Snow to run against incumbent U.S. Sen. Mike Lee. Democrats in Colorado's 5th Congressional district, which includes Colorado Springs, chose Misty Plowright as their nominee. The district includes the headquarters of the anti-gay hate group Focus on the Family.

Snow won by 20 points after her opponent came out in favor of restrictions on abortion rights. Plowright is an army veteran who beat her opponent by 16 points.

Both are considered long shots in the general election. Outside of Salt Lake City, Utah is a solidly Republican state and the Colorado Springs area is extremely conservative, even if the rest of the state is not.

— David Taffet

McAffrey in runoff for nomination in Oklahoma U.S. House race

Former state Sen. Al McAffrey is in a runoff for the Democratic nomination for Oklahoma's U.S. Representative District 5. Although he received the most votes, Oklahoma requires a majority to get the nomination.

McAffrey received 10,009 votes or 36.81 percent of the vote in a three-way race.

In the runoff, he faces Tom Guild who got 9,996 votes or 36.76 percent of the vote.

The third place candidate was Leona Leonard with 7,187 votes or 26.43 percent.

McAffrey represented a portion of Oklahoma City in the state legislature, first in the House and later in the Senate. When he was elected, he was the first openly gay person elected to the legislature in Oklahoma. Both his House and Senate seat are still represented by LGBT legislators.

The runoff is on Aug. 23 with early voting on Aug. 18-20.

— David Taffet

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THE GAY AGENDA

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

• **Weekly: Lambda Weekly every Sunday at 1 p.m. on 89.3 KNON-FM** with this week's guest is playwright **Buster Spiller**; **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 Trey more 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.

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: Teen Pride Volunteer Orientation**
Real Live Connection, which hosts "Teen Pride: A Celebration for All" each September as part of Dallas' LGBT Pride weekend, will hold two volunteer orientations for anyone interested in helping with this year's event on Sept. 17. Orientation sessions will be held July 2 from 4:30-5:30 p.m., and July 9 from 10-11 a.m., at Oak Lawn Library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road. Participation in one orientation is required to volunteer with Teen Pride. Participants must pay \$10 for a background check. For information call 469-666-REAL(7325) or email volunteer@rlc365.org.

• **July 2: San Antonio Pride**
Crockett Park, 1300 N. Main Ave., San Antonio. PrideSanAntonio.org

• **July 2: Viva Dallas Burlesque**

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pet of the week / BUD

Bud is an Anatolian shepherd/Great Pyrenees mix and a really big boy. At just over 3 years old, he weighs in at 104 pounds, so he will need a home with plenty of room to play and to relax. He will do best being an only dog, and in a home with no children under 12. But he is a smart guy and has a heart as big as his body. So make room in your life for Bud and he'll be your friend forever.

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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Celebrate Independence day with tributes to Michelle Obama, Rosie the Riverter, baseball and more at 8 p.m. at Viva's Lounge, 1350 Manufacturing St. Suite 120. Doors at 8 p.m. Curtain at 9 p.m. Tickets at VivaDallasBurlesque.com.

• **July 6: Painting to Benefit Orlando**

1851 Club in Arlington and Poured restaurant and wine bar host a special glass painting night to benefit the victims of the June 12 shooting at Pulse nightclub in Orlando, at the restaurant, 1601 E. Debbie Lane, Ste. 1105, in Mansfield. Cost is \$35 per person, and includes all supplies, instruction and food, with house wines for \$5 a glass and \$1 off all beers all night. 6:30 p.m. RSVP by email to bridget@pouredtx.com or call 817-453-7919 to choose a wine or beer glass.

• **July 8: High Tech Happy Hour**

Open to everyone. From 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Maracas Cocina Mexicana, 2914 Main St.

• **July 9: Teen Pride Volunteer Orientation**

Volunteer orientation "Teen Pride: A Celebration For All" volunteers from 10-11 a.m. at Oak Lawn Branch Library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road.

• **July 10: Holocaust survivor speaks**

If you have never heard survivors tell their stories, this is your chance at 12:30 p.m. at Dallas Holocaust Museum, 211 N. Record St #100.

• **July 16: Quinceanera 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.

• **July 17: Drag Star Divas for Orlando**

The North Texas GLBT Chamber of Commerce partners with The Rose Room and Drag Star Diva to present Drag Star Divas for Orlando, a benefit for the victims of the shooting in Orlando, a drag extravaganza featuring an all-star cast, 6-9:30 p.m. in The Rose Room at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. There is a \$5 suggested donation at the door, and the event is open to those 18 and over. Visit bit.ly/Divas4Orlando for more information.

• **July 20: Holocaust survivor speaks**

If you have never heard survivors tell their stories, this is your chance at 12:30 p.m. at Dallas Holocaust Museum, 211 N. Record St #100.

• **July 21: One Night Only: Songs and Stories from the Turtle Creek Chorale**

The Dallas Way fundraiser with a program of Turtle Creek Chorale stories and songs at 7 p.m. at The Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road. Tickets \$10-25. Sponsorships available.

• **July 23: Summit on LGBT Aging**

Second annual summit is a joint venture with GALA North Texas. From 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Southern Methodist University Plano Campus, 5326 Tennyson Parkway, Plano. cfa.lgbt.

• **July 24: The Brick Closing Party**

The Brick/Joe's, 2525 Wycliff, will close after 25 years with a Farewell Party, and owners Howard Okon and Greg Parrish are retiring.

• **July 25: High Tech Happy Hour Christmas in July**

Benefits The Senior Source. A \$50 gift card to Target or Walmart will help a senior purchase personal items and a \$100 check will purchase and install an air conditioning unit. From 5-7 p.m. at Two Corks and a Bottle, The quadrangle, 2800 Routh St. #140.

• **July 31: Holocaust survivor speaks**

If you have never heard survivors tell their stories, this is your chance at 12:30 p.m. at Dallas Holocaust Museum, 211 N. Record St #100.

AUGUST

• **Aug. 10: Black Tie Sponsor Appreciation Party**

Black Tie Dinner holds its sponsor appreciation party at Brendan Bass Showroom, 2001 Irving Blvd.

• **Aug. 10: Holocaust survivor speaks**

If you have never heard survivors tell their stories, this is your chance at 12:30 p.m. at Dallas Holocaust Museum, 211 N. Record St #100.

• **Aug. 19: Cabaret & Cabernet**

Sammons Center for the Performing Arts, 3630 Harry Hines Blvd., presents Cabaret & Cabernet, featuring emcee Tracy Fulton along with Denise Lee, Linda Petty, The Larry Petty Combo, Teddy and Lorena Davey, Jay Gardner, WT Greer, Sheran Goodspeed Keyton, Keran Jackson, LaLa Johnson, Carolyn Lee Jones, Shelley Kenneavy, Pam Musgrove and Diana Savage. Wine tasting at 7:30 p.m., performances at 8 p.m. Admission is \$400 for a table of eight; \$300 for a table of six, available by calling 214-520-7788 and online at bit.ly/CabaretAndCabernet.

• **Aug. 20: Turtle Creek monthly clean up**

Join Turtle Creek Association's monthly clean-up of the shores of Turtle Creek. Meet at 8:30



Poured restaurant in Mansfield and 1851 Club team up for a glass painting night to benefit the victims and survivors of the Pulse massacre in Orlando on July 6 at 6:30 p.m. RSVP to bridget@pouredtx.com or call 817-453-7919 to choose a wine or beer glass. The cost is \$35 per person.

a.m. at the Beasley steps at Hall Street and the Katy Trail. clarke@turtlecreekassociation.org.

call 214-540-4458 or email Bscott@myresourcecenter.org.

• **Aug. 20: Flame Games 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,

• **Aug. 21: Holocaust survivor speaks**

If you have never heard survivors tell their stories, this is your chance at 12:30 p.m. at Dallas Holocaust Museum, 211 N. Record St #100. ■

Obituary



Mikal Jones, 53, died at his home in Oak Lawn on June 10, with his husband, Rick Roan, their little boy Bichon, Asta, by his side. He passed calmly and for the first time in more than six years looked peaceful and free of pain, thanks to help from hospice that allowed him to remain at home.

Mikal and Rick were together 22 years and were married in Ontario 12 years ago.

In April 2010, Mikal fell from a large tree in the front of their house in Oak Cliff. He had been cutting down broken tree limbs caused by a winter snowstorm. He broke his right leg, smashed his ankle and fractured his back in the fall. Mikal wanted the surgeon to amputate the leg, but the surgeon chose to rebuild it using metal. Within six months, Mikal's body rejected the metal, forcing doctors to amputate the leg anyway. Another surgery was required to remove debris from his knee.

The fall and subsequent surgeries caused an uncommon syndrome called Complex Regional Pain Syndrome, or CRPS, and Mikal spent his remain-

ing years in horrific, burning pain.

In September 2015, Mikal's doctor discovered a malignant mass around his trachea and esophagus. The cancer — an aggressive form called adenocarcinoma — had already metastasized to his kidneys, lungs and liver. Because he faced such a poor prognosis, Mikale chose to let the disease run its course, giving himself the chance for more quality of life in his last days.

Mikal was born in Oklahoma City but his primary residence was his family's compound in La Jolla, Calif. He was fortunate to have traveled the world. Mikal came to Dallas in the 1980s and always considered it to be home. When the AIDS pandemic struck, he and some close friends started delivering meals to the sick and dying men. All of Mikal's friends were taken by AIDS.

Mikal met his husband in Pennsylvania while he was staying with a cousin there. From Pennsylvania, the couple moved to High Springs, Fla. for a year, then to Dallas.

Mikal worked as a psychotherapist for 15 years. He also worked in Dallas as the director of an outpatient drug and alcohol facility and as a case manager at DSSW, working primarily with handicapped individuals.

In addition to his husband, Mikal is survived by his mother, Hellen Jones; his brother, Monty; and his uncle, Steve, all of Oklahoma City; an aunt, Louise, of Hawthorne, Okla; and various other family members. He is also survived by his family of choice, Sree Hameed of Dallas, Barb and Ben Sample of Atlanta, Norman Ussery of Iowa, Scott Sarandis of Missouri, Roslyn Scott of Plano, Jill Zeagler of Dallas and Richard Beach of Williamsport, Penn.

As per Mikal's wishes his body will be cremated. No services are scheduled.

Authentic life

Trans veteran fights past the pain to live openly at last

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

"They are already making changes," retired Air Force Master Sgt. Brenda Lawrence said this week of the U.S. military's stance on transgender servicemembers, just days before Defense Secretary Ash Carter announced Thursday, June 30, that the Pentagon is officially lifting the ban on open service by transgender people.

She held up her military ID card: "See? That's my female photo right there on my ID. In 2012, when I left the Air Force, that wouldn't have been possible."

The card still bears the male name Brenda was given at birth, the name she was known by during her military service and which remains her legal name. But, she said, as soon as her divorce from her wife is final, she will be legally changing her name and the gender marker on her identification. And thanks to the changes in Department of Defense policy, she expects to be able to change the information on her military ID then, too, without any problems.

Brenda began transitioning publicly

only a little more than a year ago. But she has known all her life that who she was on the side did not match the body she had to wear on the outside.

"I've known since I was very little. This did not happen suddenly," Brenda said of her gender identity. "I remember, when I was little, having a conversation with some adult — I don't remember who it was — and they said something about me growing up to be like my daddy. I said, 'No. I'm gonna grow up to be like Mama.'"

"But I learned pretty quick to keep my mouth shut about those things," Brenda continued. "I tried to be a good child, to listen and do what I was told, to do 'the right thing.' I learned to hide it, to hide who I really was, to not let anyone know who I really was."

After signing up in late 1983 for delayed enlistment, Lawrence — then still identifying and presenting as male, even to herself — joined the Air Force in February 1984 and headed off to basic training. Four years later, while stationed in South Korea, she finished her enlistment term and separated from the service. But she chose to stay in Korea for awhile, working with missionaries at a Baptist church there.

Upon returning to the States, Brenda spent a semester at Bob Jones University — "one of the most conservative schools in the country; they didn't even allow interracial dating when I was there" — but she couldn't stay. She worked for Eastern Airlines for a while, but like other employees, was left high and dry when the airline closed. She ended

up in Mobile, Ala., when her father got her a job with a company he had worked with. That job didn't work out well, and she moved on to teach at a private Christian school. In the meantime, she met, fell in love with and married the woman she would spend almost 25 years with. They were married Dec. 15, 1990. In November 1991, their first child was born.

In 1992, while still teaching, Brenda joined the reserves, working as a combat arms instructor and armorer. In 1996, she cross-trained into the security forces, and in 1997, she went back on active duty. She was stationed in Massachusetts for a year and then her whole unit was moved to Carswell Joint Reserve Base in Fort Worth.

In 2002, Brenda was transferred to Robbins AFB in Georgia for three years until, in 2005, "I was given the chance to go anywhere I wanted. I chose to come back to the Dallas-Fort Worth area," she said. "I just really liked it here."

Back then, Brenda said, "I was presenting very conservatively. I am the last one anyone would have expected to transition."

In fact, she added, like many other trans women, "I spent all those years doing everything to deny who I was. I became just hyper-masculine, trying to change. Most trans women who go into the military before they transition go in to prove they are men. Most trans men who go into the military go into the prove they are men."

She said that while she had always been slight of build with a relatively high-pitched voice, she fought hard to change that, working out hard to build muscle mass, to beef up her slight frame. She also worked hard to lower the pitch of her voice, and ended up being so successful at it that today, she can't even hit that higher register when she tries.

Brenda said that during those years of fighting her identity, she was "really very fierce and adventurous." She boxed. She wrestled.

She trained in martial arts and earned a black belt in Tae Kwon Do.

"When we trained, nobody wanted to go up against me," she said. "Nobody wanted to get on my bad side. I was just fierce."

But through it all, the reality of her identity remained. "I was always fighting it," Brenda said. "I hate it. My wife hated it."

Brenda said that her wife has known since before they were married that she struggled with her gender identity. She said she told her parents about her battle in 1992. But as long as she continued to fight it, they didn't turn against her.

And she kept her secrets carefully hidden from those at the conservative Baptist churches she and her family attended. One of the hardest parts, Brenda said, came "when we would see somebody who was obviously gay, or a trans person. I'd have to say that it was wrong, tell my children those people were wrong. It hurt me inside every time."

"I tried to balance it out by telling them it was wrong, but at the same time tell them we must treat every person with respect and that it wasn't our place to judge someone," she added. "But still, it hurt."

While she was in the military, Brenda said, it was easier to tamp down her inner self as long as she was in an all-male environment. "I could just focus on doing my job then," she said.

But when she worked with women, it was harder. "I would see these women, and I would get so jealous, especially when they were very feminine women," Brenda said.

"I joined the military to prove how manly I was, to do these masculine jobs [like being a mechanic]. But then I would see these women who were totally feminine and could do these jobs just as well. I was there to be a man, but even with grease on their hands and mud on their faces, they were still feminine women, doing the job as well as any man."

"I would see them, and all I could think was, 'I want to be like that. And I can't,'" she added. "I think, really, that when I was promoted and

started having more office jobs and being around more women, that's when my career really stagnated — when I finally began to realize that I am just wired this way, that this need inside me wasn't just going away, and that I could not be my authentic self and still be in the military."

"I think that if they had lifted the policy earlier, I might still be in the military. I might have gone further."

In 2012, Brenda retired from the Air Force. And the pressure to stop hiding continued to build. Last year in March, she attended a meeting of the support group DFW Trans-Cendence. It was the first time she presented in public, to anyone, as female.

On July 27 last year, she said, she began medically transitioning. "That's when my wife cut me off emotionally. Things between us went downhill from there," she said.

In October, although they had agreed to file jointly for divorce, Brenda said her wife surprised her by having her served with divorce papers at work, and Brenda had to find somewhere to stay. She came out to her supervisors at work — she works at a call center — and "we hammered out a plan then" for her to transition at work.

"I came out to my coworkers just before Thanksgiving, and then my bosses gave me the rest of the week off. I had that time to go and get my hair done, get my nails done, things like that. And when I went back to work the Monday after Thanksgiving, I went back as Brenda. I have been



Brenda Lawrence served in the Air Force and Reserves for 28 years total. She was discharged in 2012 and began her transition last year.



Carter: Trans ban is lifted



Laila Villanueva Ireland and her then-fiance, Logan Ireland, left met President Barack Obama during a June, 2015 reception at the White House. (Photo courtesy Logan Ireland)

Declaring that it is the right thing to do, U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter announced Thursday, June 30, that transgender people will be allowed to serve openly in the U.S. military.

"Our mission is to defend this country, and we don't want barriers unrelated to a person's qualification to serve preventing us from recruiting or retaining the soldier, sailor, airman, or Marine who can best accomplish the mission," Carter said during a Pentagon press conference.

"Americans who want to serve and can meet our standards should be afforded the opportunity to compete to do so," he added, laying out the year-long plan that will clear the way.

By Oct. 1, transgender troops should be able to receive medical care and begin formally changing their gender identifications in the Pentagon's personnel system. A year from now, Carter said, the military services will begin allowing transgender individuals to enlist, as long as they meet the required standards and have been stable in their identified gender for 18 months.

Laila Ireland, who separated from the U.S. Army last December and now works with SPARTA (Servicemembers, Partners, Allies for Respect and Tolerance for All) as an advocate for trans men and women in the military, said earlier this week that lifting the ban would be "no big deal, really," for the military, but that it will be "a huge deal" for the trans men and women already serving, and those who plan to serve.

"The repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell [the policy that kept lesbians and gays from serving openly] allowed people already in the military to breathe, to be themselves," Ireland. "It wasn't a big deal for the military. It was just business as usual for the military. But for the people who could finally relax and not have to hide anymore, it was amazing."

"It will be the same way for transgender people in the military," she continued. "There's still a ton of work to do. It's an ever-changing situation. But at least it will allow trans people to serve, to stop hiding."

Ireland, a trans woman, chose to separate from the Army on a medical discharge, rather than risk being discharged for being transgender. In May, she married DFW native Logan Ireland, a transgender man serving in the U.S. Air Force, who is the first person to have his gender marker changed while serving in the military. The couple area currently in the middle of a move to Petersen Air Force Base in Colorado.

Laila Ireland said this week that while lifting the ban wouldn't have any immediate effect on her or her husband, it could change the future.

"This gives me an opportunity to actually revisit the idea of wanting to be in the military," she said. "I could re-enlist now, and serve openly, without having to worry about being discharged because I am transgender."

—Tammye Nash

Brenda, 24-7, ever since," she said.

It has been, Brenda said, "the hardest thing I've ever done. I went to Army sniper school and that was hard. But not nearly as hard as this." She has lost her home, her wife and her children — both her daughters and her son are "following their mother's lead" in turning their backs on her.

But, she said, "I'm still happier than I have ever been, because I finally get to be me."

She continued, "I had always lived with this inner frustration because I knew I wasn't being my authentic self. But when I walked into that Trans-Cendence meeting the first time as Brenda, well, I looked awful, I know. I can look back now and I know I looked awful. But I felt beautiful. I

hate looking at photos of myself back then, because I know I looked awful. But I loved looking in the mirror — I still love looking in the mirror — because I could see that part of me that was finally alive! I am alive! Finally, I am me!"

Brenda said she is thrilled to know the ban on transgender people in the military is lifting, because although it is "too late for me, it clears the way for those in the military now and those still to come. I am so glad for my trans brothers and sisters that they no longer have to hide who they are. They can be their authentic selves, and when people are authentic and don't have to hide, they perform so much better. And when they perform better, our military overall performs better."

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IMAGE: Irving Penn, Nude No. 58, New York, about 1949–1950, printed 1976, platinum-palladium print, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of the artist. © The Irving Penn Foundation

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LGBT organizer and mentor Jack Evans dies

Dallas is known for its organizations and Evans started many of them

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
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Jack Evans made international news a year ago when he and his partner of 54 years, George Harris, legally married, the first same-sex couple to do so in Dallas County. Their wedding picture, taken at the Dallas County Records Building, appeared on the front page of the New York Times and in People magazine, Paris-Match and other newspapers around the world.

Evans died June 24, just two days shy of his and Harris' one-year legal wedding anniversary. He was 86 years old.

At the time of his death, Evans had been in a rehab facility for several months. He went in to recover from a fall that left him with a broken hip, but then began having lung problems that led to his death.

Earlier this year, on Jan. 19, their 55th anniversary as a couple, Sweethearts Candy named Evans and Harris the company's "sweethearts" for 2016, and released a video featuring them talking about their more than half a century together.

The couple have been members of

Northaven United Methodist Church since an incident in 1989 at Oak Lawn UMC caused many of that church's LGBT members to look for a new church home. In 2014, when Northaven's retired minister, the Rev. Bill McElvaney, said he wanted to perform a same-sex wedding, he asked Evans and Harris to be the first couple he married.

Because of a prohibition within the Methodist Church, the ceremony was held at nearby Midway Hills Christian Church. But a large reception for the couple took place at Northaven.

Northaven's senior pastor, the Rev. Eric Folkerth, called Evans a large figure with a gregarious nature who took his role as a mentor to the LGBT community seriously.

Folkerth said Evans was always looking to do more. After the wedding at Midway Hills, that included a whirlwind local media tour and the exhausting work of setting up two churches for the event, the couple showed up early in church the next day. Folkerth asked him how he was doing and Evans said, "Doing great. So what's next?"

Evans often ushered in church.

"He was incredibly gifted at meeting new people and making them feel comfortable," Folkerth said.

When he heard someone had lost a job or had been ill, he would check up on them to make sure they were doing alright.

"He loved being around younger people," Folkerth continued. "On Sundays, when younger gay men would come, you could see the admiration in their faces that Jack and George would talk to them and care about them."

In a 2011 interview, Evans said he was 32 before he admitted to himself he was gay. He said

then he had been with men before, but always told himself he wouldn't do it again. Before coming out, Evans served in the U.S. Coast Guard, stationed first at USCG headquarters in St. Louis and then in Honolulu.

Evans met Harris on Jan. 19, 1961 at the Taboo Room, a bar across the street from where the Oak Lawn Whole Foods now stands. Evans had recently moved to Dallas after being fired from the Houston Neiman Marcus store for being gay. He had managed the antique furniture department for the high-end department store, and he became department manager for a Dallas savings and loan, where he worked for 14 years.

Evans and Harris bought their first house together in Oak Lawn in 1964. When they bought another house, Evans approached their broker about sponsoring him to get his real estate license.

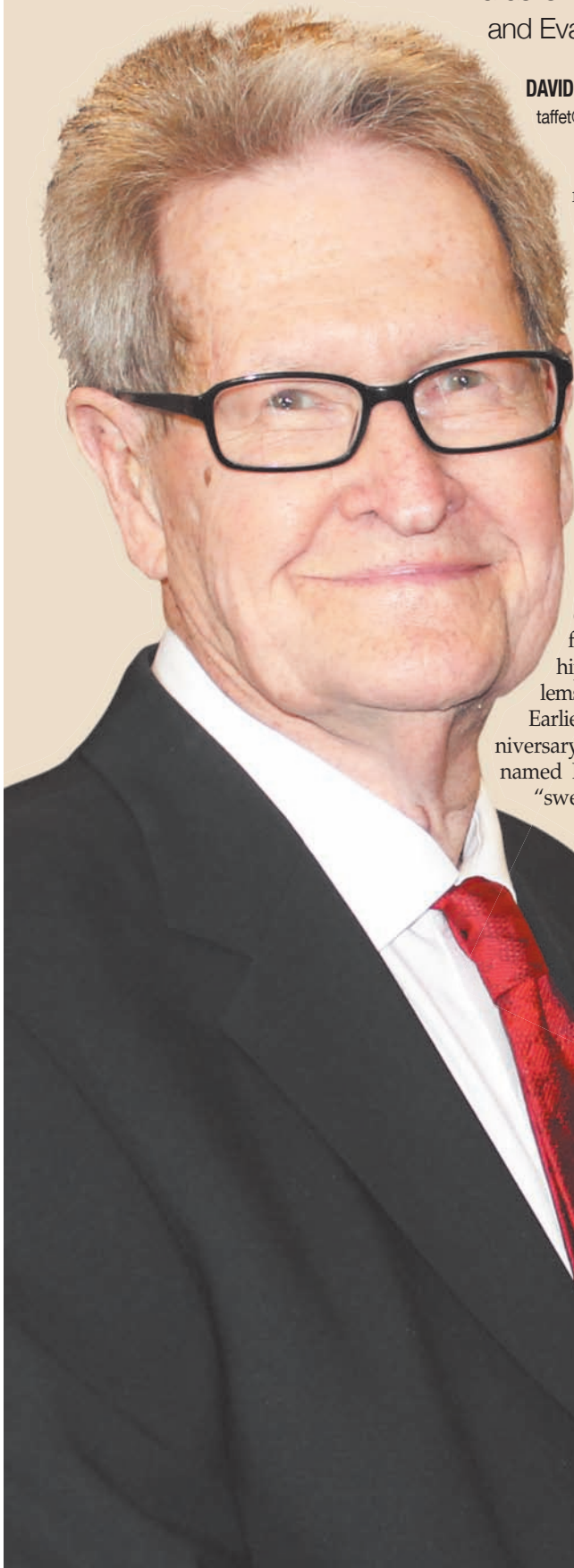
In 1976, Evans and Harris opened an office in a small building facing Lemmon Avenue, in the same shopping center as the Taboo Room where they had first met 15 years before. Within a few years, Evans-Harris Real Estate became one of the largest real estate companies in Oak Lawn.

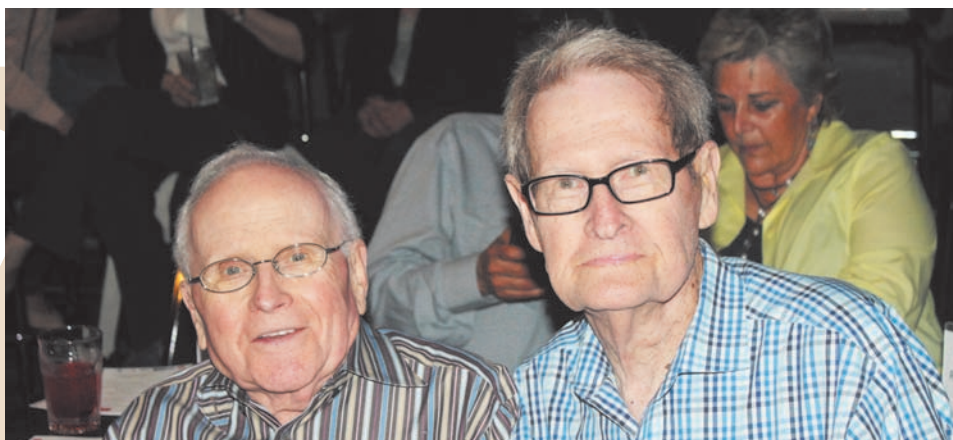
In the early 1990s, the couple regularly had lunch at Wyatt's Cafeteria, across the street from their office, with John Thomas, executive director of the agency now known as Resource Center. Other community members began to join them.

Tavern Guild Executive Director Michael Doughman commented once, "Now this is a power lunch."

Prompted by that comment, Evans suggested the group become the Stonewall Business Association.

Stonewall Professional and Business Association met monthly for more than a decade until





George Harris, left, and Jack Evans regularly attended Outrageous Oral, the oral history project of the Dallas Way. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

Evans, Harris and Leo Cusimano, then advertising director for Dallas Voice and now the publishing company's publisher and co-owner, suggested they form an LGBT Chamber of Commerce and affiliate with the national LGBT chamber.

A group of seven community leaders — including then-Stonewall Professional and Business Association President Mark Shekter — met and decided to form the chamber. They appointed Harris to the new organization's original executive committee.

"Jack offered the stability and experience we needed as a board," Cusimano said. "We chose Jack because he was one of the most trusted people in the community."

Evans also served on the board of the Turtle Creek Chorale in the 1990s and on the founding board of the Fort Worth Men's Chorus, which performed from 1993 until 2006.

Turtle Creek Chorale Executive Director Bruce Jaster said unlike his involvement in other organizations, Evans wasn't a founder of the chorale; he became involved during season 14.

"He was incredibly reliable, supportive and irreplaceable," Jaster said.

He described Evans' board role as mentor, fundraiser and support for the staff. But he was best, Jaster said, at talking about and promoting the chorale.

"He excelled at that," Jaster said. "Jack and George strongly supported whatever they threw their support behind."

Evans' most recent project was The Dallas Way.

After telling stories about gay life in Dallas in the 1960s to Dallas Voice for an article celebrating their 50th anniversary, Evans suggested an organization should collect the history of North Texas' LGBT community.

He sent an email to community members explaining the idea and asked, "Will it fly?"

Harris' reaction to the email was, "Oh, no, not another group." But Evans brought the right people together, and The Dallas Way took off.

"That's what Jack was best at," said Robert Emery, a founding board member of The Dallas Way. "He knew how to bring the right people together to fulfill his vision."

Emery said Evans would take an incredibly simple idea — like collecting Dallas gay history or having a monthly business community lunch — and turn that into a powerhouse organization.

The Dallas Way connected the right people, Emery explained. The archives are now stored at University of North Texas' cold storage facility. Photos and other artifacts are being digitized. Copies of all issues of Dallas Voice and other LGBT publications have been made available online. Resource Center's Phil Johnson Collection has been added.

The archives have been used for everything from background research for films such as *Dallas Buyers Club* to academic research by students in UNT's LGBT studies program.

All of that resulted from a simple email Evans sent that put the right people together, Emery said.

Evans and Harris received a number of honors for their work together in the community. They received the Texas Human Rights Foundation's Robert Schwab Memorial Award in 1996, given to community members who worked toward equal rights in Texas. In 1997, they were the first men granted the Extra Mile Award. Black Tie Dinner honored them in 1998 with the Ray Kuchling Humanitarian Award. And in 2008, DIFFA named the couple Legends in the Fight Against AIDS.

But it was their power as a couple, rather than their role as a power couple, that made perhaps the biggest impact on the people around them. Their love for each other and their love for their community helped transform that community into one known nationwide as a bastion of successful organization and progress toward LGBT equality.

Evans' death prompted Mayor Mike Rawlings to issue a statement mourning the loss.

"Dallas mourns the loss of Jack Evans, a former bank employee, real estate agent, gay rights activist and, most of all, a loving husband to George Harris," Rawlings wrote.

"Over the course of their 50-plus years together, Jack and George went from losing their jobs and being forced to hide their love to celebrating last year as the first same-sex couple to legally marry in Dallas County," Rawlings continued. "I consider it an honor to have spent some time with Jack and I hope it gives George some comfort to know that his city and many across the country are mourning with him." ■

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, July 2 at Northaven United Methodist Church, 11211 Preston Road. Donations may be made to the North Texas GLBT Chamber of Commerce, The Dallas Way or the Northaven Youth Fund.

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Dallas Elite headed for the playoffs

Women's professional football team ends 2nd season regular play unbeaten

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Dallas Elite, DFW's undefeated women's professional football team in the Women's Football Alliance, plays for the Western Division championship on Saturday, July 9. If they win, Elite then faces off against Eastern Division champions for the WFA championship on July 23 in Pittsburgh.

Coach and team co-owner O.J. Jenkins this week said the team began the season by beating the DC Divas, avenging Elite's only first-season loss. The team just finished regular season play with a 70-14 victory over the Kansas City Titans.

Jenkins said women's football has been played for about 30 years. Although few schools have a women's football team, most of the players on the Elite

come from some Division 1 college sport — anything from volleyball to basketball.

But what drew them to the Elite?

"Some athletes excel at contact sports," Jenkins said. So when some women see a women's full-contact football game, "they come running."

She compared the game to the WNBA and Dallas' new women's basketball team, the Dallas Wings: At a Wings game, players and coaches regularly challenge calls by the refs, but it's rarely in anger or as aggressively as in the men's game.

"In a women's sport, there's a bit of civility," Jenkins said.

Jenkins added it wasn't quite like that in her league, agreeing that the Wings are much more civil with opposing teams during a game. "In football, there's so much aggression," she said. "It's closer to NFL behavior. Our product — once people see it, it's fun. People say — whoa! That's football! It's high intensity. Highly aggressive."

But the women's league has developed some of its own traditions in its seven years of play. At the end of the game, both teams greet each other on the field. "There's a high level of respect," Jenkins said.





Opposite, Amber Kimbrough, Janice Mitchell and Renee Fruean dominate the line on defense. Above, Janice Mitchell breaks loose with help from Rachel May and KeLanna Spiller. (Photos courtesy of Dallas Elite)

Jenkins played Division 1 basketball at Cal Poly. When she moved to Dallas with her wife and daughter in 2008, she began playing football for the Dallas Diamonds.

"I won a couple of championships with them," she said. But, she added, "No one knew."

Jenkins wants that to change that with this new team and new league.

She's always played sports over the years. But she has also always been a business owner. With the success of the 44-team Women's Football Alliance, she saw her opportunity to own and coach a team. But her role, she said is actually "building a team."

"Women can be empowered to build a sport, if given the recognition," Jenkins declared. In fact, the co-owner/coach has built an impressive team in just two years. She put together a roster of 50 players, and the team has only lost that one game — the first season opener — in two regular seasons. This season, the Elite averaged a most impressive 60 points a game.

Dallas Elite team members are responsible for finding their own sponsorships. In addition to raising money that mostly pays for travel and hotel expenses, they're heavily involved in community work. In Dallas, they

volunteer with Girls Inc., and in Fort Worth with the Boys and Girls Clubs.

Their message for little girls as well as boys — you can be who you want to be.

And Dallas Elite team members are encouraged by Coach Jenkins to be proud of who they are.

"I'm a lesbian and so's my quarterback," Jenkins said. She said she counts about 20 team members as lesbian, but her star wide receiver is straight, and she has a transgender lineman on the team.

If the Elite win next week's game and go on to the final game, they begin fundraising efforts in earnest to raise the money to fly 50 women to Pittsburgh, to pay for hotels and meals and get in enough practice to win the championship.

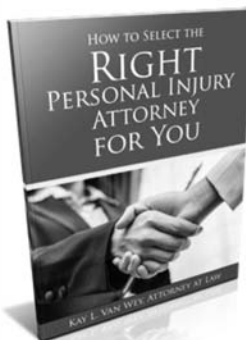
How does she raise \$25,000 in that short a time and also manage to squeeze in the practice time? "I get quite creative," Jenkins said. ■

On July 9, the Dallas Elite face the Central California War Angels at Bishop Lynch High School Stadium, 9750 Ferguson Road in Dallas. Tickets are \$15.

In the Eastern Conference championship game0, DC Divas play the Boston Militia.

The two conference champions play for the WFA championship on July 23 in Pittsburgh.

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'Safe' spaces?

In the wake of the mass shooting at Pulse, LGBT people are re-evaluating what 'safe space' means to them

MATHEW SHAW | Contributing Writer
nash@dallasvoice.com

When Orlando resident Jordan Allison first heard of what happened at Pulse, the first person he reached out to was the guy he went on his first date with there.

"Me and him, we hadn't talked in a long time," Allison said. "I reached out to him and said, 'Hey, did you hear about what happened at Pulse? I just want to make sure that you weren't there.'"

Pulse had sentimental value for Allison, so the first thing he felt was shock. "You never think of that happening in your backyard," he said. "You don't think of it being a place you've been to multiple times that you have emotional ties to."

Because it was one of only two gay bars in Orlando, Allison said everyone there had ties to Pulse. "Even though I didn't know anyone directly, I had a lot of friends who knew people who had died," he said.

Two people Allison used to work with at Universal Studios, including 22-year-old Luis Vielma, died at Pulse. "Orlando, it's a really big city, but it has a really small gay community," he explained. Describing Pulse as being the size of his living room, he added it would be easy for a massacre to occur there.

"I could just imagine someone just sitting in the middle of the dance floor and just making a 360 and you could easily just hit everyone," he said. "You wouldn't have anywhere to run."

Allison, a Dallas native, said Orlando's gay scene is smaller than what he knew back home. "Since Orlando doesn't have a designated gayborhood, I think we struggle to find a gay identity," he said. "We don't necessarily have a 'safe space.' In Dallas, I felt safe going to the gayborhood."

But the only place Allison said he feels safe in Orlando is the theme parks because of the "million metal detectors." His idea of a safe space is somewhere he can be himself, surrounded by people like him, without fear of backlash, he explained.

"On top of that, [a safe space] definitely needs to be secure, and in case of an emergency, there's a way to get out," he said.

Allison said he is optimistic the shooting will encourage the Orlando community to build a proper gayborhood, and suggested Pulse be demolished and a park or monument built in its place.

"That would be the perfect centerpiece for a gayborhood," he said. "It's crazy because Orlando is a really gay-friendly city. It's crazy that this city does not have any kind of gayborhood."

Orlando is too spread out for bar-hopping,

with 15 to 20 minutes between each bar, unlike Dallas, Allison said. "Sometimes I don't want to have to search for gays. Sometimes I don't want to have to go to Disney, use my coworkers, figure out who's gay," he added.

The weeks since the shooting in Orlando have been difficult for many LGBT people. But long-time Dallas-Fort Worth resident Seamus McManus said he has seen darker days for LGBT folks, notably the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and '90s.

"It was a feeling of despair, having to bury your friends either every other day or every other week," McManus recalled. "There was a group of 30 of us that always hung around together back in those days, and I'm the only one that's still here."

The shooting in Orlando was a wake-up call for him on several levels.

"Number one, you're not going to live forever," McManus said. "Number two, it's important to make your voice heard, and I guess number 3, love yourself and be proud of who you are, and don't be afraid to show it."

McManus said his safe space these days is the Rose Room at S4, where he goes to watch the drag shows. But having lived in Dallas-Fort Worth since the '70s, McManus said he has seen venues come and go over the decades.

"Where Hunky's is now used to be a huge bookstore called Crossroads Market," he said. "It was sort of like being in your own gay Barnes and Noble in the '80s. It was a safe space and also a place to go get information, especially in the beginning of the AIDS epidemic."

There were more clubs in Cedar Springs back in the '80s than there are now, like the Cave, which was where Skivvies is now, and Village Station, once located where S4 is today.

"The club scene was really active and vibrant," McManus said. "Once AIDS started taking its toll in the '90s, it was a lot more somber."

Now, in wake of the Orlando shooting, McManus said he feels a mixture of anger and pride.

"It really re-ignited the activist spirit in me that would want to go out and march, go to a rally, protest, volunteer, things of that nature," he said. "It brought new realization of how important it is to get out there and make your voice heard."

McManus recalled a specific encounter with homophobia at a Miss Gay America pageant in the 1980s: "I remember having to walk through all those hateful religious people with their signs protesting outside," he said. "When you're trying to walk into a simple venue to watch a show, and you come face-to-face with hatred verbally spewed at you, as well as the look of utter hatred in their eyes when they're looking directly at you, it's something you never forget, and it changes you forever."

Now, McManus has resolved not to accept such animosity. "I'm at the point where I don't take crap from anybody," he said. "If they don't like it, they can go screw themselves"

Even though Dallas has a thriving gay scene,

Denton resident Ash Milam's only safe space on the strip is Sue Ellen's. "I went to S4 once, but I didn't feel as safe there," Milam said. "I just felt that the clientele was primarily white gay men. It's great that they have a safe haven, but at the same time, I just didn't fit into that group."

Still, Milam is a little bit disappointed that Sue Ellen's is the only lesbian bar on the strip. (Milam, who is attracted to women, is gender-fluid, so doesn't feel the term "lesbian" is accurate.)

"When I went to S4, even though it is a gay bar, I got hit on by a lot of straight men," Milam said. "It would be nice to have variety, but Sue Ellen's is still my home bar."

Sue Ellen's and Mable Peabody's, Denton's only gay bar, are Milam's only safe spaces. Still, after the Orlando shooting, even those spaces don't feel as safe anymore. "It definitely makes me hesitant and it makes me more cautious, but I also feel like we need to be a community now more than ever," Milam said.

For El Paso native Victor Santana-Melgoza, communities tend to be safe spaces. "Any place can be considered a safe space as long as I have the numbers with me," he said. "If I'm not in those designated safe spaces, the place I'll find a safe space is in numbers, is in groups."

Santana-Melgoza has lived in El Paso, Phoenix, Oregon and Massachusetts. He said he

selves with what the world might think of us. It's the place where we can hold hands without threat."

But since the Orlando attack, "I think that many of us felt that our safe space has been violated," he added.

Cathedral of Hope, the world's largest predominantly LGBT congregation, also serves as a safe space. The church, founded 46 years ago by 12 people in someone's living room, now has a worldwide congregation of 4,000, with about 2,000 of those in Dallas. Weekly attendance at the church averages about 1,500, Cazares-Thomas said.

The church, he said, has performed a majority of the AIDS funerals, and also participated in the reclaiming of Christianity. "I think that, as a cathedral, we collaborate as much as we can with the other organizations, and together we certainly create a hub of both spiritual and secular life in Dallas in the LGBT community," he said.

Like other places in the LGBT community, Cathedral of Hope has increased security in light of recent assaults in Dallas, he said. The evacuation on Sunday, June 19, due to a bomb scare came after several other Dallas venues had received threats on Facebook.

When security personnel walked the church



Guest performer Willam Belli wows the crowd at The Rose Room, one of the places Seamus McManus considers 'safe space.' (Chad Mantooth/DallasVoice)

felt safest in Phoenix because of its racially-mixed environment.

"There's a large Latino community there, but it's also very white, so it's a nice balance between the two," he said. "It feels at least much more community-oriented rather than racially oriented."

Santana-Melgoza described himself as a non-traditional Latino because he doesn't speak Spanish, so he's more "white culture-oriented." For him, his safe spaces are violated when intruders come in for selfish reasons.

"I've been to Latin nights in clubs in Phoenix. While it might just be other brown people around, also there's a tinge of exoticism when there's white people also there kind of examining us," he explained. "I've been in situations where white men will go to a Latino night specifically because they're looking for a brown body."

Bars and clubs have long been safe places for many in the LGBT community, said the Rev. Neil Cazares-Thomas, pastor of Cathedral of Hope in Dallas. "They've been our sanctuary," he said. "It's our place where we can not concern our-

Sunday morning, they discovered three packages wedged inside construction work, one package emitting what sounded like ticking. The police were called, and the building was evacuated.

It turned out the packages contained clothing, and one of them was a laptop bag, with the audible ticking coming from a cell phone with a low battery, he said.

Over the years, the cathedral has been picketed by several fundamentalist churches, including the Westboro Baptist Church.

Despite feeling like their safe spaces have been violated, Cazares-Thomas said the community will persevere.

"Like most of us in the LGBT community, we've faced this before, and so we decided that fear is not going to be our compelling emotion, that we will band together as a community and that we will respond with love, and love always wins," he said.

"The world is a safe space for me," he said. "I don't live my life in fear. I'm an out professional queer person, so I create safe spaces where I go. I don't need people's permission to live." ■

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I went ape — and loved it

Plano nature preserve is home to a new zip line park

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Deep in the jungles of Plano, Go Ape has created a zip line attraction that's a whole barrel of fun.

The attraction is designed for people who've never zip lined before, but is strenuous enough to be fun for those who have.

Park and Nature Preserve. Once you're in the trees, you'll forget you're in Plano and even take back some of those terrible things you've said about the city (OK, some of those terrible things I've said about Plano). The setting is truly spectacular.

Who knew Plano had trees?! Mature trees, tall trees with sturdy, thick trunks that could support zip lines and Tarzan swings.

The courses get progressively trickier and rise higher up in the trees as you move along.

You walk from tree to tree along hanging planks, pads and hammocks attached to wires connecting the trees. Then, in front of you is nothing more than a wire. Imagine walking a high wire. But rather than a pole that an aerial artist would use to maintain balance, your harness is hooked to another wire and you can hang on to the wire as you inch across the one beneath your feet.

I got over my dislike — OK, fear — of heights pretty quickly. How? Well, I was just having that much fun.

It's pretty damn scary the first time you step off a landing 20 or 30 feet above the ground. But just relax, ease down into the harness and swing in mid air on the Tarzan swing or zip line. The wire's secure and the harness will hold. Just enjoy the ride across the creek from a treetop to a soft landing pad of shredded bark.

Instructors are with you along the way. After you sign a waiver, they'll strap the harness on you — as they offer a full refund with the warning this is a high-risk activity. The best advice is follow the instructions you're given and when you have a question, shout down from the treetops and make sure you're doing it right.

"Attach the green hook first?" I kept asking. Green goes on first and comes off last.

One of the best things about Go Ape, especially for a beginner, is that no one's rushing you along. The full course takes two to four hours. We took a little less than three hours and that included resting between each of the five courses and drinking plenty of water in the heat.

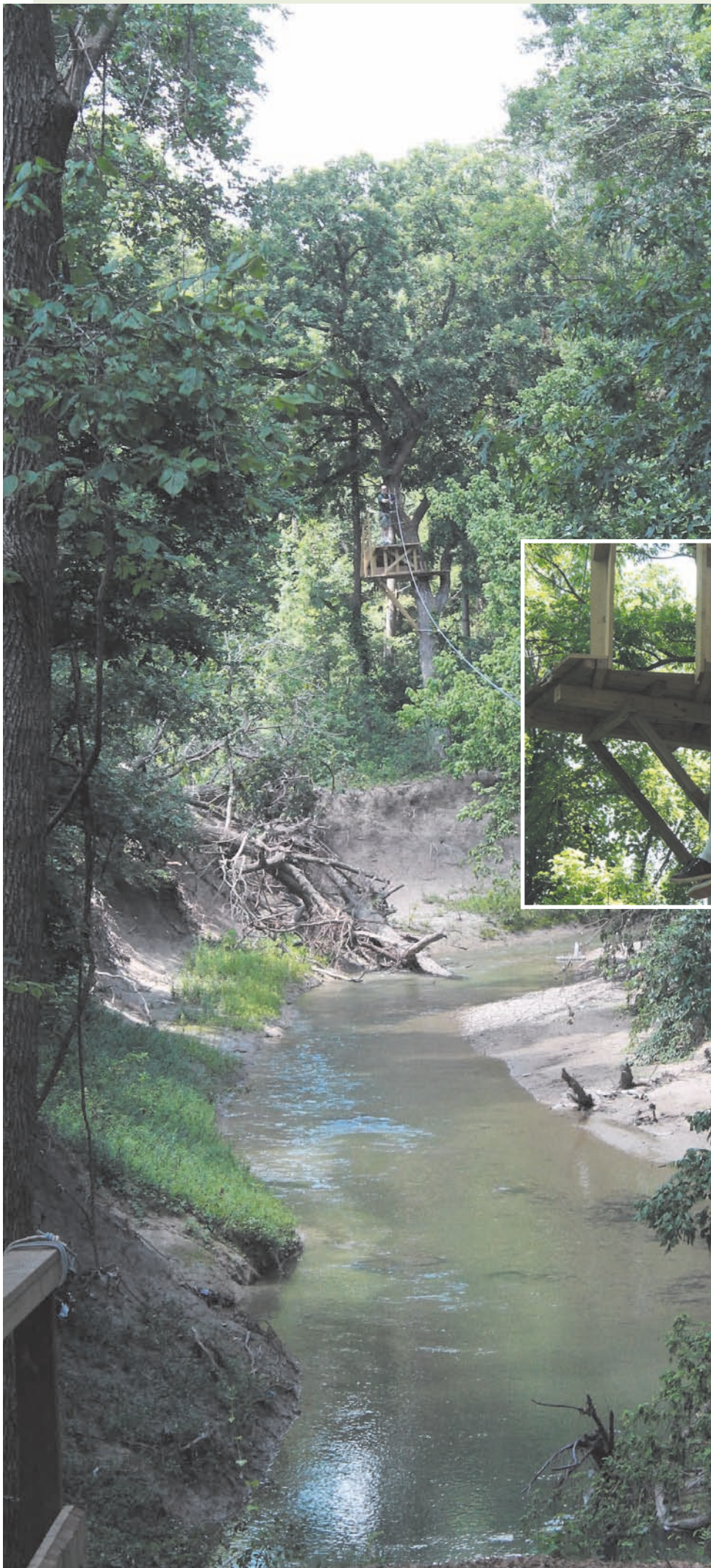
(If you can, go during the week, when there are fewer people and even less rush.)

The setting is beautiful 800-acre Oak Point

The view is awesome and the feeling is like — well, I was going to say like flying, but since I've never actually flown except in an airplane, I guess I don't actually know that. But, yes, it's like flying.

On one landing, an instructor clocked me coming in at 16 mph, faster than I average bike riding. On another, I came in at 17 mph. The cables are strung so that you reach a higher speed in the middle of the zip and slow as you approach landing.

On the first and last courses are Tarzan





The longest zip line crosses over Rowlett Creek in Oak Park Nature Preserve in Plano where I recently learned to love zip lining. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

swings: Attach the cable and rather than zip across to the target area, step off and swing into a rope net. Bounce off the net once and then swing back into the net. Catch the net and climb up to the landing in the nearby tree to connect to the next zip line.

By the last zip line, taking that step off the landing, sinking into the harness, steering the line to face forward, enjoying the ride down and making a soft landing all felt completely natural. If I wasn't so sore — I did mention that this is actually very strenuous, didn't I — I would have been ready to go again.

Strenuous? Even if you work out, you're probably not regularly using muscles to hold yourself up as you hang from a wire.

Tiring? Yup.
Exhilarating? Completely. ■

Go Ape is located at 5901 Los Rios Blvd., Plano. Take the Spring Creek Parkway exit of Central Expressway. Go east to Jupiter Road, north to Los Rios and east to Oak Point Park & Nature Preserve. \$125 per person.

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Art imitating life



The plot of 'Independence Day — Resurgence' is played out every day in America

There has been a drought of interesting movies to see lately, so it's been a while since my partner Katie and I have been to the theater. This week, we decided to see *Independence Day — Resurgence* — in spite of the terrible reviews it's gotten.

As a courtesy let me say this: SPOILER ALERT!

If you haven't seen the movie, and don't want to hear about the plot, maybe you should skip this column until you've seen the movie.



Leslie McMurray
Accidental Activist

There is frantic discussion on what to do

There, I've fulfilled my part of the social contract.

But really, we see this movie every day in real life. The plot should be eerily familiar to many of us:

There is a ship that approaches. It displays no obvious or even subtle menace. It's just there, ob-

serving. There is frantic discussion on what to do about it. Cooler-headed experts say to leave it alone. Others play the "fear card" and urge "decisive action" to keep us safe.

But all too quickly, arrogance and fear win out and combine so that the U.S. president gives the order to blast the crap out of it. And blast it they do.

Only later, do we realize we blasted to pieces our only intergalactic friend, thus opening the door for the real threat to come in and nearly wipe human existence from the earth.

It's a familiar theme. Political leaders see or hear about something they don't understand — like, say, transgender people, or Muslims, or "aliens" from Mexico or wherever — and instead of reacting peacefully, extending the hand

of friendship and making an effort to understand, fear takes over.

War is declared: Keep transgender people out of the bathroom! Ban Muslim immigration! Build a wall and make Mexico pay for it! Blast the crap out of them all!

Fear and arrogance are ugly things, in the movies and in real life. It was kind of weird sitting in the theater rooting for the aliens.

I love my country; I really do. When I was a little kid, the TV stations would sign off every night, sometimes at midnight, with the national anthem. I was super young, maybe 2 years old. But my mom said when the "Star-Spangled Banner" would come on, I would get very quiet and a tear or two would come from my eye.

That song still moves me.

And this concept of freedom, the promise of the pursuit of happiness being guaranteed to all, is precious to me. But equal protection under the law, the rights guaranteed in our Constitution — with those rights come great responsibilities.

To preserve our rights, we must also preserve and respect the rights of others. After all, we are all equal, right?

Lately though, it seems like some folks are a lot more equal than others.

The America I grew up loving seems in danger of losing its way. We need a longer attention span.

I was in the grocery store and at the checkout line I saw a row of magazines. On the cover of each of them was either Muhammad Ali or Prince. I turned to Katie, and with a note of sarcasm observed: "Finally, Black lives matter."

It's a shame Freddie Gray isn't on any magazine covers.

It's time to set fear and hate aside. Those things are fight-or-flight reflexes. We're better than that.

Let's be strong enough to learn about people and things we don't understand. I speak to groups all the time about being a transgender woman. Every time when I walk in, there are those who don't understand at first. But when I get done, we end up exchanging hugs.

We share a whole lot more in common than we do differences. It's high time we started acting like it.

I spoke last week and someone asked how they could best help support the LGBT community in the wake of the mass murder in Orlando. I said they could just stand up for us. If they hear hate speech, put a stop to it. Don't just walk away. Say something. If someone is being bullied, step in.

We are your brothers and sisters.

I often quote Albert Einstein who, in reference to WW2 Germany, said: "The world is a dangerous place not because of those who do evil. It's a dangerous place because of those who see evil, and do nothing about it."

Let's all do our best to do something about it. Happy Independence Day. ■

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

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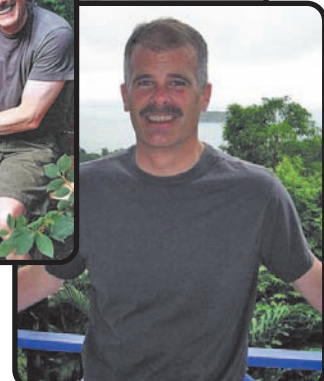
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A memorial fund has been established in Mike's name at the Nasher to support educational programs that make the museum more welcoming to visitors with physical disabilities or cognitive challenges, connecting with design, engineering and the history of the automobile in honor of Mike's lifelong love of car culture. Make donations to Nasher Sculpture Center, attn: Mike Jensen Memorial Fund - 2001 Flora St., Dallas, TX 75201.

*In the end, it's not the years in your life that count.
It's the life in your years*

- Abraham Lincoln





Nearly 25 years after I first heard her voice on cassette, my phone rings. It's Mariah Carey, the sales-crushing icon with a whopping 18 No. 1 singles, the five-time Grammy winner and the outspoken LGBT ally. We talk about Las Vegas, where she's headlining The Colosseum at Caesars Palace with her show Mariah No. 1 to Infinity, and how now armed with more confidence, she says she can go on vocal "tangents." Naturally, her lingerie collection comes up. Carey also elaborates on the "unconditional love" she's experienced from the LGBT community, which she emphasized when GLAAD recently recognized her with an Ally Award for all the lives she's changed ... an honor she received, in part, and most admirably, by changing her own. ■

— Chris Azzopardi

Vision of love

Wherein we reflect with music goddess and queer ally Mariah Carey on her artistry, her new Vegas show and her love for the gay community

Dallas Voice: Let's start with the GLAAD Media Awards, because what a big moment to finally see you honored for being an ally. You acknowledged the "unconditional love" from the LGBTQ community. What did you mean when you said you haven't experienced much unconditional love outside of the gay community? And why do you think the gay community in particular has stuck by you through thick and thin? Mariah Carey: What I was trying to express — and it was all so fast and it wasn't the world's greatest speech 'cause I just wanted to try and speak from my heart and, you know, sometimes there's so much going on and it's not the best representation of what I really wanted to say, which would've been simpler. Which is basically: Some of the songs that I have written, like I have a song called "Outside" that a lot of people from the gay community have always said they grew up listening to and were like, "That helped me come out to my family." Different things.

And so, as a songwriter, I wrote that song about me feeling like an outsider, about being biracial and a lot of other things in my life. I like to leave it open so people can relate it to their own lives, and a lot of my fans tell me, "This song helped me get through having to talk about being gay with my family and with my friends," and stuff like that. There are other songs, too, because I kind of come from that place of feeling different or not accepted, and so that's what I meant.

As a teenager, the lyrics for "Outside" really resonated with me. "Looking In" as well. When were you first aware that you were kindred spirits with the gay community? The whole thing in terms of me feeling really comfortable around all different types of people, including different races, religions, gay, straight, whatever, started as a kid. Most kids that I grew up around had never even met anyone gay, but my mom was always very theatrical and she had a lot of gay friends, so I grew up with her two best friends who were guncles be-

fore people knew what that was. And yeah, they were great to me. They really treated me well as a little girl. Obviously gay marriage wasn't, you know, like it is now — it wasn't legal — so they weren't married. But they lived together and they were my example of a really great couple. They stayed together for as long as I knew them, and so to me, that was just normal. I wasn't like, "Oh, wow, this is weird; my mom's friend is gay."

I guess I was just always comfortable because they were kind to me, and cool. And so then when I grew up I would always naturally gravitate toward the fun gay guy in school, you know what I mean? You know! It's just like different moments. Even a friend of mine when I was growing up, her mom was in a relationship with another woman and they lived together and the whole thing, but she didn't know —

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L+S screen



The dachshund and the fury

Indie filmmaker Todd Solondz talks about revisiting Dawn Wiener in his hilariously twisted squirm comedy 'Wiener-Dog'

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

Todd Solondz is the undisputed master of squirm cinema: the kind of movies that make you feel uncomfortable for peculiar and oddly familiar reasons: Long, silent, disorienting shots; singularly unnerving conversations that cross a line of social decorum; and frank, desperate views of characters that border on pathetic.

His breakout hit, 1995's *Welcome to the Dollhouse*, introduced audiences to Dawn Wiener, the dim-witted, goofy and kinda unlikeable tween student whose attempts at social acceptance go disastrously wrong. Dawn is back in his latest film, *Wiener-Dog* (now playing at the Angelika Mockingbird), though this may come as a surprise to those who thought she had been killed

off in Solondz' 2004 film *Palindromes* (more on that later), or even those who wonder why she's now played by Greta Gerwig instead of *Dollhouse*'s Heather Matarazzo (more on that later, too). And she's *not* the title character in the movie, either — that laurel belongs to a slow, adorable female dachshund who unifies this collection of four short films.

"It is the life trajectory of this single dog, passing from owner to owner — it's about a dog, but not really *about* a dog," Solondz says in an accent that seems equal parts Long Island and recently-arrived German émigré. (Solondz was born in Newark, N.J.) "The dog is really a conceit — how owners look at their dogs and anthropomorphize them. They become vessels for the owners' hopes and illusions — we project innocence and purity on them, so that when harm befalls them, it affects people with more keen-

BIZARRO BENJI | Greta Gerwig plays Dawn Wiener, one of the messed-up owners of a dachshund who travels the U.S. affecting human's lives in Todd Solondz's brilliantly twisted new film.

ness than were it to befall one of their fellow humans."

The owners in *Wiener-Dog* include a young boy, in remission from cancer; the now-30-year-old Dawn Wiener; a frustrated film school professor (Danny DeVito); and a bitter woman (Ellen Burstyn) near the end of her life (who, disturbingly, has named the dog Cancer). Some of the owners' lives are improved by the dog; some not so much; but all are transformed at various stages of their life cycles.

"Yes, it was built into the structure," Solondz says of the metaphor of youth-adulthood-middle age-dotage. "The movie is really about mortality and how it shadows and hovers over each of these characters and stories."

He even is able to resurrect a character of sorts in the personage of Dawn.

"We all have one life, but we always imagine the possibility of roads not taken," he says. "That's what I've been doing in my movies for a while. After I killed

[Dawn off] in *Palindromes*, I wanted to offer her another possible life trajectory. This was an opportunity for me to do that." Matarazzo had said she did not want to revive Dawn ... which was just another opportunity for Solondz. "I think that's one of the pleasures as a filmmaker — not only creating other lives but letting other [actors] live those other lives of characters."

Solondz doesn't blink in his fearless undercutting of expectations. He admits that the opening shot — an overhead of a young actor lying in the grass — is an homage to Texas filmmaker Richard Linklater's *Boyhood* ... though with a much more subversive take.

"That was very deliberate," he says. "But *Boyhood* is a very different. I have great respect for Richard Linklater, but I wanted to present a kind of *alternative* boyhood, so I told the boy [in the scene] to play dead. That was the [mood I wanted to create]."

It's that perversity that has made Solondz a darling of indie film fans for 20 years ... and probably also what has kept him from mainstream financial success. He makes films about

outsiders — transgender people, societal "losers," those with Down's Syndrome and more — and doesn't prettify their lives one bit.

"I like to play, but not everyone likes to play with me," he drolly opines. "I think whenever I go to the movies I look to be surprised. [I like] to have my expectations subverted and provoked in ways I hadn't anticipated. Art can be transformative. I'm serious about what I do. They are sorrowful and sad, but they are comedies. I guess [you could call *Wiener-Dog*] a comedy of despair."

One of the comedic set-pieces in *Wiener-Dog* is when, half-way through this 90 minute film, Solondz delivers an "intermission" complete with C&W ballad by Marc Shaiman and Scott Witman while audiences are encouraged to

"visit your concession stand." Yet another homage ... this time to Quentin Tarantino?

"I hadn't been thinking so much about Tarantino, but there's no reason he should have

a monopoly on playing with the intermission," Solondz says. "Because it's such a small movie, I wanted to give it a sense of expansiveness — a dog roaming the whole country looking for [his purpose]."

But Solondz *does* get that his humor is, irrefutably, all his, right? Take, for instance, a scene in which a boy's mother (Julie Delpy) explains that spaying the dog is a "favor," so she won't be raped by an HIV-positive mongrel like her own puppy was. He gets that no one has as twisted of a take on the banalities of life as he does?

"I don't know," he says. "The funny thing about this, I suppose, is that I understand how things come across as odd or weird to others, but as I am writing them, they sound perfectly natural to me. It's not an intellectual, but a creative process. I've always thought, if one day some alien creatures came to our planet and thought we [humans] were really cute and would make good pets, and to be good pets we would need to be neutered, would we call our alien owners our best friends?"

A creative process, indeed. ■

WIENER-DOG

Greta Gerwig, Danny DeVito, Ellen Burstyn. Rated R. 85 mins. Now at the Angelika Film Centers.

QUEER CLIP: 'The Legend of Tarzan'

When you have a physique like Alexander Skarsgard, you're destined to spend a career cast as vampires, jungle men, beach bums and sexy drifters. (Pity the gorgeous among us! How hard it is to be Matthew, Brad or Alex!) But I'm not complaining. All three have something else in common beyond abdominal muscles on which you can grate aged Reggiano: Some legit acting chops.

Skarsgard is probably the least acclaimed for his be-shirted performances, but he spends a good portion of the new man-meat actioner *The Legend of Tarzan* fully clad, if in gauzy tunics and well-tailored trousers. Indeed, when we first meet the man of the apes, he's been fully domesticated by London society as Lord Greystoke. It's only when a conniving slave trader (Christoph Waltz, in his patented smugly sinister smartypants mode) lures him and wife Jane (Margot Robbie) back to Africa that he gets to woof and growl ... and, eventually, swing from the trees like Spider-Man by way of the Hulk.

The Tarzan stories have long been the hardest of superhuman heroes to adapt for modern audiences, but director David Yates has some experience at making it *not* seem impossibly silly: He helmed the last four Harry Potter movies. The magic here comes in distracting you from all the pulpy kitsch.

— A.W.J.

DallasVoice.com extra: Read an interview with Alexander Skarsgard.



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Family PRIDE Zone is a family friendly outdoor space in conjunction with the Festival in the Park, held on **Sunday, September 18th** from Noon to 7pm. The Festival in the Park is held with the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade, a Dallas Tavern Guild event.

A fenced off safe space will be created in Reverchon Park inside the gates of the main Festival in the Park. Security professionals will staff our entrance. Park entrance fees are \$10 for adults and children under 13 are free. No coolers, no alcohol and proper attire will be listed among other house rules.

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

For more info, visit: dallaspride.org

If you have questions, call Leo Cusimano 214.754.8710 ext. 114



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Teen PRIDE Celebration, visit: rlc365.org
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Our 33rd Edition | Solidarity Through PRIDE
Sunday, September 18th - 2pm
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Sunday, September 18th - Noon to 7pm
Reverchon Park - 3505 Maple Ave | Dallas
Festival Sponsored by Miller Lite
Family PRIDE Zone Sponsored by Toyota

L+S profile

MARIAH, From Page 24

she didn't understand it. But because I had such an open-minded mother who explained that kind of stuff to me, I wasn't gonna out her mother to her. I was just like, "OK, fine."

You've been a lifeline for many of your LGBT fans because you've showed us that even an outsider can find his or her place. When was the first time in your life you were exactly the person you wanted to be? Wow. The first time I can think of, and this is a great thing that actually incorporated work and fun and being free and music, was when I made the video for "Honey" [in 1997], and I went swimming in the shoes. It was just... I always wanted to have the freedom to be myself and I wasn't in a situation where that was OK; I wasn't allowed to because of that, uhh, first relationship [to ex-husband and then-Sony Music head Tommy Mottola]. I had to overcome a lot to get through that, but that video — prior to that, I always had to settle for less than I wanted to be, and I wasn't allowed to be who I was. And it really took a lot of courage. It wasn't just like, "I'm gonna make a video." It was, "I am moving on with my life, and I have to for my own self because I'm trapped in a situation."

You're doing some of your earliest songs during your Vegas residency. How has your voice and your approach to singing these songs, some of which are over 20 years old, changed?

You know what, certain days I'm like, "Oh, this is a really good day for me; I had a lot of vocal rest today and blah, blah, blah," and some days for me I have to be a little bit more experimental and play around on stage because maybe it's not as strong for that minute. Really, I just think I've become more confident and more experimental in a good way, if you know what I mean, in using different parts of my voice and things. I always did it, but I was more "stick to the script" and "don't go off on a tangent." You know, I think that people kind of like the tangents that I have! (Laughs) Singing tangents. Breaking a high heel on stage tangents; whatever the case may be.

You in your lingerie making pizza tangents — all of it. It was real! That's what I walk around in! I barely own any clothes! All I have is friggin' lingerie.

How have you made yourself feel at home in Vegas? I just bought a lot of lingerie!

What do you think 1990 Mariah would think of 2016 Mariah? Ah, I don't know... I was such a kid, just in over my head, but I knew that I was gonna do this for my life and soooo: I probably would've been like, "Who does your hair and makeup?" 'Cause they had me with some people who didn't know what they were doing and I knew it wasn't really good and I'd just be like, "Who does your lighting, hair and makeup?" is what I'd ask her.

They liked to put you in a lot of black. They did. It was just like, ahhh, such a long story. You don't even wanna know.

We've seen a lot of greats pass away in the last several years: Prince, Whitney, Bowie. In what



Carey just completed her first set of Las Vegas performances, but returns in August and September for more. Tickets are available at Caesars.com.

ways do their untimely deaths have you reflecting on your own legacy and what you want that to be? It's really interesting: I loved Prince and I still do. I love his music, and I'll always have it, and I grew up listening to Prince, ya know what I mean? I was lucky enough to get to know him, but before I knew him I was listening to his music as an adolescent, as a kid, so his passing was very... I really felt like he was one of those people who would be around for a really long time because he just was kind of ageless in a lot of ways.

But in terms of me reflecting on my legacy? I'm not at that place right now. I'm still very much doing fun, creative things that, you know, I don't want to go into a long, drawn out thing about, but a lot of different projects. Some movie things. I'm getting ready to go back in the studio really soon, and obviously I'm doing this residency in Vegas. It's really fun, but I'm not trapped there. I can do other things. We just got back from the European tour, which was amazing audiences, and then we went to Africa, so it's like, all that stuff is great.

But what do I think my legacy will be? It's really hard for me to answer that. I just hope the fans who've been so supportive of me throughout my whole career will have my music and it'll make a difference in people's lives as you told me it did for you, which is amazing, because not everyone knows songs like "Outside" or "Looking In" or "Close My Eyes."

Drink up!

Some cocktail recipes to enliven your Independence Day weekend

The Fourth of July isn't until Monday, which means a lot of us will get an uninterrupted three- or four-day weekend in which to celebrate our nation's independence by getting tipsy by the pool (though no driving, guys!). Most Fridays, I provide a new cocktail recipe to lubricate your weekend, but for a super-sized holiday, I decided to bring out the big guns: several recipes for a variety of tastes. So cheers, and enjoy responsibly! ■

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Star-Spangled Sangria

If you're having a bunch of close friends over, make this in bulk for a high-end summer refresher.

- 3 cups Martini & Rossi prosecco
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice (or lemonade)
- 6 large mint leaves
- 3 lemon slices
- 3 cucumber slices
- 5 fresh strawberries (sliced)

Making it: Combine lemon juice, lemons, cucumbers, strawberries and mint in a pitcher with sparkling water. Chill. Gently stir in chilled prosecco just before serving. Garnish with a sprig of mint.



Coffetail No. 51

Coffee maker Lavazza developed this caffeinated cocktail that's low on alcohol but high on flavor.

- 3 oz. ginger ale
- 2 oz. cold brew coffee concentrate
- 2/3 oz. vodka
- Splash of Grand Marnier
- Splash of simple syrup
- Sliced lemon, orange and cucumber
- Maraschino cherries
- Fresh mint

Fill a 12 oz. glass with ice. In a shaker, combine

cold brew, Grand Marnier, vodka and syrup; pour over the ice. Top with ginger ale. Decorate with wheel or slices of orange and/or lemon. Skewer cherries and cucumber wedge. Garnish with mint.

Amaretto Colada

Nothing seems more tropical than a pina colada, and this version, made with Disaronno Amaretto liqueur, really gays up the traditional version.

- 1-1/2 oz. amaretto
- 3 oz. pineapple juice



- 1 oz. Coco Lopez (or coconut milk)
- Sliced pineapple
- Maraschino cherry

Mix first three ingredients in a blender with ice; pulse until slushy. Pour into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with fresh pineapple and cherries.



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CASEY WILLIAMS | Auto Reviewer
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Some gearheads revel in speed and torque. Some revel in styling and design. But you don't have to choose between power and luxury if you choose one of these amazing cars — all achievable in the mid-five-figures (though you can up the ante as your own tastes dictate.)

Cadillac CTS

Open the door and step inside. Let the wealth of leather waft up your nostrils, beckoning your bum to have a seat. You should probably press the starter button and go for a drive, too. Since you're already there.

If people buy Cadillacs because they like a car

on the sumptuous, glitzy side, they'll slip right into the CTS. Layers of cut-and-sew leather top the dash and doors, intoxicating occupants with their fragrance. Magnesium paddle shifters gleam as ambient light seeps from crevices at night and from the twin pane sunroof during daytime. Large expanses of carbon fiber and subtle chrome add sporting elegance.

Once inside, occupants will relax with heated/ventilated front seats, heated rear seats, heated steering wheel and tri-zone automatic climate control. A power rear sunshade and manual side shades repel bright rays. Bose audio will please discriminating ears.

So will technology that will make retired space shuttle pilots long for lost orbits. Cadillac's CUE infotainment system is accessed via touch-



Caddy's new sumptuous interior cradles you in comfort, but small-jet pilots will appreciate the all-wheel-drive and ample horsepower. (Photos courtesy CM)

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screen that scrolls like an iPad, can be controlled by voice and connects with USBs and Bluetooth calling/streaming audio. It clearly does not like my obsolete iPhone, but navigation and Apple CarPlay worked flawlessly for others in my posse. Drivers get a reconfigurable instrument cluster, head-up display, rain-sensing wipers and power tilt/telescoping steering column.

Step outside. From the eggcrate grille flanked by projector beams and LED light blades to sharply creased bodysides, formal rear roof, and vertical taillamps, it's clearly a Cadillac. You know the car is big when 18-in. wheels look like quarters. Designers could push it further, but the CTS displays a strong affinity for Cadillac's heritage.

If shuttle pilots want to feel rocket thrust, they should order a CTS-V with 650-horsepower V8, but this CTS suits private jet pilots. Understand: It's not slow with a 3.6-liter V6 that delivers 335 horsepower through an 8-speed automatic transmission. All-wheel-drive ensures it goes to good use. Step easy and leave the annoying auto stop/start tech on to see 19/28-MPG city/hwy.

Underway, the CTS' chassis is among the best. That's because it was developed on Germany's famed Nurburgring, fraught with complex crests and turns, that worked over the Brembo brakes and helped tune the suspension. Magnetic Ride Control, also used on Corvette, reads the road 1,000 times per second to stiffen and loosen the shocks for a near-magical erasure of rough pavement that would unsettle otherwise amazing cars. It feels natural, in tour or sport mode, with precision that's more Jaguar than German.

Hauling fin at any speed, it's nice to know there's an armada of safety gear aboard. That big Cadillac crest in the grille hides the radar unit for adaptive cruise control and forward collision



Lexus has amped up the excitement level with this dynamic and sporty creation, which also modernizes the interiors. (Photos courtesy Lexus)

alert with auto stop. Always consult the rearview camera and surround view monitor in tight quarters, but rear cross path detection could save your bumper. Blind spot warning and lane keep assist also do their part. Need help parallel or perpendicular parking? The car can find a spot and do it semi-autonomously.

Cadillac's greatest challenge may be getting drivers to step inside showrooms. Sure, the CTS' back seat is a little tight, the interior is loaded with glitzy gadgets, and your cool gramps will like the styling. But, I'd put it against the Mercedes E-Class, BMW 5-Series or Audi A6 any day. It's as enjoyable to drive as it is to smell and caress, leaving you with a big leather hug.

The CTS starts at \$45,560, but came to \$66,425 as tested.

Lexus RX350 F Sport

Lexus knows its audiences, and while the cars have not been the most exciting in the past, that's about to change. And it's getting the message out. A round of new television spots includes one targeting LGBT drivers called "Ahead of the Curve" in which a stylish male couple in a modern house have a quick embrace between morning exercise and leaving for work. The RX350's dynamic styling and performance are highlighted. If this doesn't sound like Lexus,

■ LUXURY Next Page

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■ LUXURY, From Previous Page

you need to drive the RX350 F Sport.

Gaze into the front and you're confronted with a giant black mesh version of Lexus' trademark spindle grille flanked by angry LED headlamps and running lights. At first, I didn't care for the grille, but it has grown on me and looks good on everything from cars to crossovers. Move around to the side and you see a connection to the smaller NX200t crossover in its origami body creases, but they complement the steeply raked backlight, 20-in. alloys and floating rear roof design. It's more dynamic and sportier while maintaining its connection to previous RXs.

Just the thickly-bolstered red leather seats and thick leather-wrapped steering wheel are enough reasons to go F Sport. They're paired with a restyled interior that gets, in F Sport trim, curved striated aluminum on the console and doors — classy and modern merged. Being a Lexus, the interior is well-made with precision stitching on the dashboard, subtle use of satin silver trim and thickly-padded armrests. Rear passengers stretch their legs out. The cargo hold, with split/fold rear seats deployed, can swallow a bicycle, stroller or luggage for four.

The technology suite centers on a joystick-controlled 12.3-in. high-definition screen in the cen-



ter dash. Use it to access navigation, radio, climate control and iThings connected via Bluetooth or USBs. Bring your best music because the 15-speaker Mark Levinson Premium Surround Sound system is divine. Another knob adjusts the chassis and throttle for Eco, Normal and Sport for a range of fuel economy and performance personalities.

Drivers sit behind an 8-in. LCD instrument cluster and command safety technology including radar-based adaptive cruise control, lane keep assist with steering correction, and forward collision alert with pedestrian detection and auto stop.

But it's the going that's fun. The RX is available as a hybrid, but we went for the 3.5-liter V6

that sends 295 horsepower and 267 lb.-ft. of torque to the all-wheel-drive system through an 8-speed paddle-shifted automatic transmission. The exhaust is tuned so you hear more engine noise as you tromp the throttle (in a Lexus!). Still, nearly 300 ponies are enough to kick the RX350 smartly down the road while returning 19/26-MPG city/hwy.

It's not all perfection. To be truly competitive, the engine needs about another 50 horsepower. And, 26-MPG is at least 5-MPG below what should be expected in a mid-size crossover today. I happen to like the joystick infotainment control, but they're a little distracting. Plant those big wheels over rough pavement and you'll feel every bump — but quietly, cuz it's still a Lexus.

In the past, it was rare for a Lexus to make me tire. But, every Lexus I've driven lately has

Power meets fuel efficiency in the RLX hybrid, a sporty but reliably posh spin on Acura's legendary quality. (Photos courtesy Acura)



melted my resistance. Combine exciting styling and performance with Lexus' reputation for quality and service. That's a crossover — a crossover like the RX350 F Sport — that my husband and I could really embrace.

A base price of \$41,900, and \$56,935 as tested, puts the RX350 against the Audi Q5, Lincoln MKX, Mercedes-Benz GLC, Acura RDX and Infiniti QX70.

Acura RLX Sport Hybrid

Recalling a little history, Honda's Acura division was the first Japanese luxury automaker to roll tires upon American soil in 1986. The brand's flagship Legend sedan enticed buyers of European and American luxury brands to embrace Honda's renowned quality and reliability in a more posh package. After the onslaught of Lexus

Nice rear end...

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and Infiniti, and a switch to alphabet soup RL/RLX nomenclature, sales tumbled. Still, one drive in the Acura RLX Sport Hybrid convinces me the car has the moves to be a real contender.

It may appear as a glorified Accord, but the RLX is much more than that. It's larger, and significantly so, dominating driveways with a long arching body highlighted by Acura's satin chrome grille, Jewel Eye LED headlamps, strongly-formed front fenders, and a rounded rump with LED taillamps. It plants the road with 19-in. alloys, a dominating presence wherever it rolls, but maintains a simplicity appreciated by Acura owners.

That's also true of the comfortable interior. Five passengers stretch out in leather — heated/ventilated upfront and heated in the rear. Drivers tap a heated steering wheel, heads-up display, electronic push-button gear selector. The Krell audio system with 14 speakers sounds good when cranked, but lacks the definition of

'16 RLX SPORT HYBRID

Acura. 377 horsepower, 3.5 liter V6 28/32-MPG city/hwy. As-tested price: \$66,890.

other high-end systems at lower volumes. Rear sunshades and power sunroof filter light.

For some reason, I didn't level expletives at the RLX's infotainment system quite as much this time. Don't get me wrong: I still think the two-screen arrangement is decrepit, but I've learned to connect smart-tech through Bluetooth/USBs, scroll through satellite radio stations as if an Intel 286 is in the dashboard, and plot navigation when it's not updating for 10 minutes. It's complete nonsense, but Honda's latest systems are dramatically improved, so there's hope.

Until then, stay safe with comprehensive safety systems like Adaptive Cruise Control, Lane Keeping Assist, Collision Mitigation Braking and blind spot detection. Around-view cameras and front seatbelt E-Preloaders, that anticipate crashes and cinch preemptively, go further.

While competitors dance it out with potent V8 engines, Acura sticks with a V6 — albeit one "supercharged" with a hybrid system. The powertrain combines a 3.5-liter direct-injected V6 with a 7-speed dual-clutch transmission and 1.3-kWh lithium-ion battery pack for 377 horsepower. The gas engine drives the front wheels while twin electric motors turn the rear. Fuel economy rates 28/32-MPG city/hwy.

Acura's flagship sedan would benefit from a sophisticated electronic suspension like Mercedes' air system or GM's Magnetic Ride Control. Real time damping would transform the ride quality from thump-a-bump to hushed silk without heaving in turns. The right bones are in place, but fall shy for a true luxury flagship.

The RLX is a fine luxury car that needs an identity and a little polish. Sales could only go up with LEGEND chromed across the decklid. Trash the two-screen infotainment system, add electronic chassis control, and Acura's finest would give grief to the Hyundai Genesis, Buick LaCrosse, Lexus GS Hybrid and Cadillac XTS.

Prices start at \$54,450, but came to \$66,890 in loaded Sport Hybrid trim.

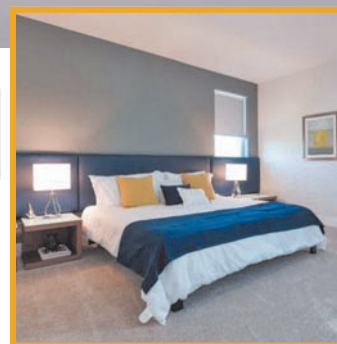
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Sunday 07.03

Get a headstart on the Fourth's festivities at Addison Kaboom Town!

The date on the Declaration of Independence says July 4, but Addison has always jumped the gun a bit. The town's big Fourth of July celebration is routinely held on the Third of July, full of music, fireworks, food, an airshow and the promise of their biggest finale yet. It all starts at 4 p.m., and goes as late as midnight, so turn up for all the fun early and stay as late as you want. Best of all? General admission is free.

DEETS: Addison Circle Park, 4970 Addison Circle Drive. Gates at 4 p.m., fireworks at 9:30 p.m. For details, visit AddisonKaboomTown.com.

Friday 07.01 — Sunday 07.17

Come and meet those dancing feet at '42nd Street' ... in Dallas or Fort Worth

Ever since the early talky film version, *42nd Street* has been one of the iconic behind-the-scenes Broadway musicals. It was reinvented in the 1980s in the form it is today, and jam-packed with amazing dancing and classic songs. It's currently playing in Dallas courtesy of Dallas Summer Musicals, but moves to Cowtown's Bass Hall via Performing Arts Fort Worth... which gives you even more time to see it.

DEETS: Fair Park Music Hall, 901 First Ave. Through July 10. DallasSummerMusicals.org. Bass Performance Hall, 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth. July 12–17. BassHall.com.



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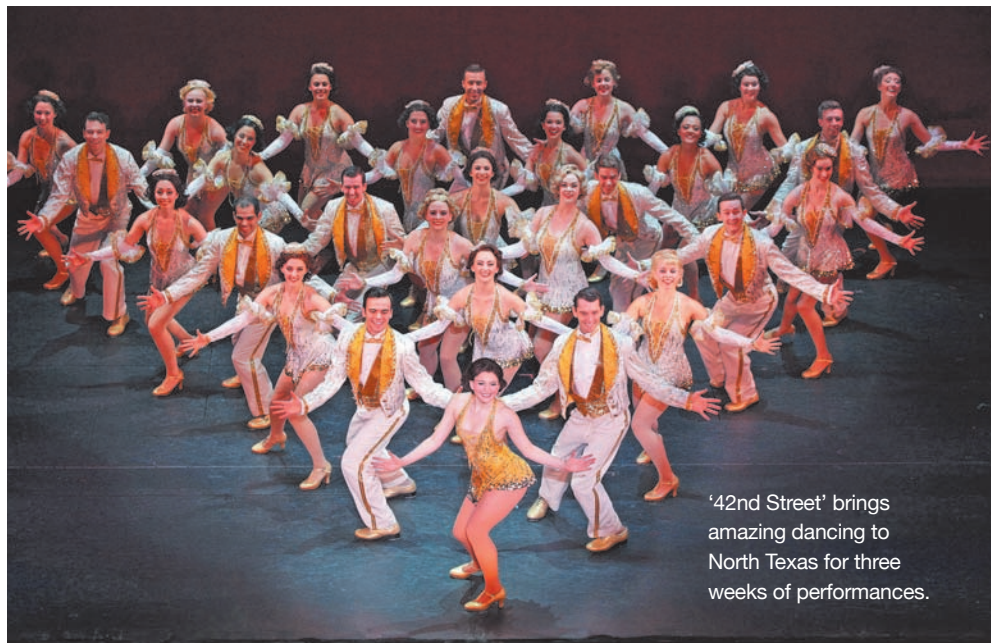


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'42nd Street' brings amazing dancing to North Texas for three weeks of performances.

ARTSWEEK THEATER

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 families. Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Through July 29. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

Bunuel Descending. Matt Posey's original play about the friendship between filmmaker Luis Bunuel, artist Salvador Dali and author Federico Garcia Lorca. *Final weekend.* The Ochre House, 825 Exposition St.

OchreHouseTheater.com.

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

A Kid Like Jake. Second Thought Theatre closes its season with this area premiere about a little boy who prefers Cinderella to G.I. Joe. Bryant Hall on the Kalita Humphrey Campus, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through July 23. 2TT.co.

Old Time Music Hall. Theatre Britain's musical revue and fundraiser. Cox Building Playhouse, 1517 Ave H., Plano. Through July 17. Theatre-Britain.com.



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Pinkalicious. A musical about the joys of overdoing it with color. Rosewood Center for Family Arts, 5938 Skillman St. Through July 17. DCT.org.

42nd Street. The classic insider musical about Broadway. (Plays in Dallas, then moves to Fort Worth.) Music Hall at Fair Park, 901 First Ave. Through July 10. Bass Performance Hall, 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth. July 12–17. DallasSummerMusicals.org. BassHall.com.

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.

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.

SUNDAY 07.03

WORSHIP

Dignity (LGBT Catholics). Worship the first Sunday of each month, led by ministers Cliff and Jon Garinn. Interfaith Peace Chapel (lower level), 5910 Cedar Springs Road. 6 p.m.

**MONDAY 07.04 —
INDEPENDENCE DAY**

TUESDAY 07.05

FILM

Blazing Saddles. Spoof-master Mel Brooks directed this outrageous send-up of Westerns (co-written by Richard Pryor) with Cleavon Little as a black sheriff in an Old West town. 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.

browse

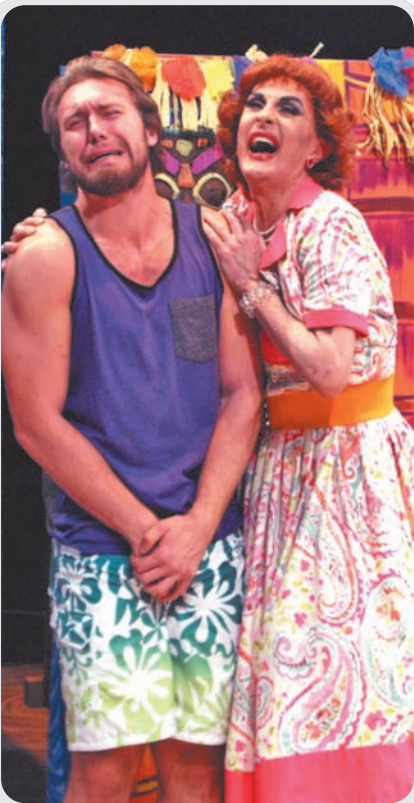
For a more complete Community Calendar online, visit Tinyurl.com/dvevents.

submit

To submit an item for inclusion in the Community Calendar, visit Tinyurl.com/dvsubmit.

this week's solution

T	R	A	P	S	C	H	W	A	E	K	E	S
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STAGE REVIEW: 'Psycho Beach Party'

It is a testament to the complete saturation of absurdism in a Charles Busch play that literally any female character can effortlessly be turned into a man in drag. In the original off-Broadway version of *Psycho Beach Party*, Busch himself played the ingenue teen; in the film, he created a new role for himself as a female detective; and in the latest incarnation — at Theatre 3 until July 10 — Coy Covington dons a dress to play the ingenue's mother, the kooky over-protective Mrs. Forrest. The lesson? Men in petticoats = comedy gold.

As its name suggest, *Psycho Beach Party* is a spoof of the dumb coastal comedies of the 1960s like *Where the Boys Are* and *Beach Blanket Bingo* — inane, predictable, empty-calorie bites of eye candy. But Busch's construct is more subversive: He combines that quintessential '60s film genre with two others (Grand Guignol melodramas and lurid slasher films), throws in a substantial dose of homo-eroticism and a Marilyn Monroe wannabe (Grace Neeley, stealing her scenes), and *voila!* A pastiche punch that exemplifies camp.

The secret weapon of *PBP* is that it cannot be over-played, as Covington proves in his over-the-top scenes. He twirls and mugs and winks like Bette Davis taking a bong hit from Joan Crawford's LSD-laced cremains. And Jenna Anderson as the flat-chested teen with more psychotic personalities than Sybil plays the ugly duckling loser with as much gusto as the crazy alter egos. And you really can't under-estimate the appeal of a quartet of bikini-clad musclemen (Jacob Lewis, Blake Lee, Heath Billups, Zach Valdez) shaking their moneymakers with a seductive innocence that raises the temperature in the theater.

Director Bruce R. Coleman doesn't hold back, tossing in every kitschy music cue and outrageous dance move he can, though the pacing flails wildly from madcap to stagnant. Then again, so did those beach movies. ...

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. Through July 10. Theatre3Dallas.com.

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- ★ Monday - Poolside Picnic @ 1pm
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Girl on Girls

Jenny Block on how long-distance dating can (happily) pump the brakes on a new relationship

It just may be the oldest lesbian joke in the books: Q. What does a lesbian bring on a second date? A. The U-Haul. The thing is, it's only funny because it's all too true. We girls have a habit of getting real attached, real quick.

Why is that? Well part of it is that it's just in our nature to want to partner up, cuddle in and settle down, I suppose. If we're into someone, what's the point in wasting any time? I'm not talking about in a "no more partying, I don't want to ever see my friends again" kind of way. I mean in a "I know we just met but how about we move in together and love each other forever and ever" kind of way.

It's not so different from when we met our besties when we were kids. We met her. We dug her. We wanted her to sleep over every night.

Here's the thing, though: Jumping into the fire that fast can get you burned. Believe me. Been in that particular fire. Not pretty. I moved so fast, I had no real way of knowing if she could be right for me in the long or the short term.

This time around though, it's been a completely different situation ... and it wasn't by choice.

I met my now-girlfriend on Tinder. I naturally assumed that she lived nearby because, well, Tinder. But it turned out she was in town for the big New

Year's Eve game. Apparently, there's some sports-thingy that happens on that day in Dallas. But I digress.

Her team lost, and she was staying the night in a boring hotel. So she got to swiping. The next day I did the same. We matched, got to talking and I quickly found out that she lived in Houston.

At first I thought, "Nope. I've done long distance. I'm not a fan." But then I thought, "What if long distance dating could keep me from making the fatal insta-girlfriend mistake? If she lives hours away, I can't move in tomorrow."

And lo and behold, it worked.

That first week we texted and talked on the phone non-stop. It was fun and exciting and romantic. But more than that, it was incredibly informative. It gave us the chance to ask and answer all sorts of questions that we may have rushed passed otherwise. And since dating was not going to be easy or particularly convenient, we had to really want it.

I asked questions that I really was ready to hear the answers to. In other words, I laid out the deal-breakers and was prepared to walk. I also became more invested than usual. I found out as much as I could about her and was able to actually say to myself, "Wow. I could really like this person. And, I could like this person enough to overcome the distance."

We met in person a week after we e-met. Once it was clear that the "click" (that thing, that indescribable thing that happens when you know you like someone) and the crave (that thing, that indescribable thing that happens when you know you desire someone) were there, I knew I was ready to try the long distance thing again.

And it worked.



It was like dating with the emergency brake on. We could only go so fast and so we couldn't make the typical U-Haul mistakes. And the distance actually made it more interesting and intriguing. It forced

us to be more creative. It made us really examine again and again: Do I like her enough to do this? Is missing her this much worth it? Is flying this much worth it?

Yes. Yes. And yes, as it turns out.

U-Hauling is dangerous because it allows us to skip certain steps. We allow our emotions and our emotions alone to lead us. Our emotions and our desires, that is. Distance means more time for thinking, more time for getting to know someone, more time for easing in. All of that means we can better avoid something that wouldn't have worked any way or it allows us build a stronger foundation for what could turn out to be just the relationship for which we were looking. Either way, it's a win.

Long distance relationships cannot just "work," they can also be better for us in the long run. They can bring two people closer while keeping those people from completely distancing themselves from their friends and families and lives that they had before they met. It can be all too easy to jump from your life to your partner's life when you're together 24/7. But if you still have time and space to yourself, you can still maintain your life.

Not to mention that you can still maintain your self-hood. And that is probably the most important thing of all. An ideal relationship is two whole people coming together; not people looking to fill parts of them that are missing, perceived or otherwise. Think, "you complement me" as opposed to "you complete me."

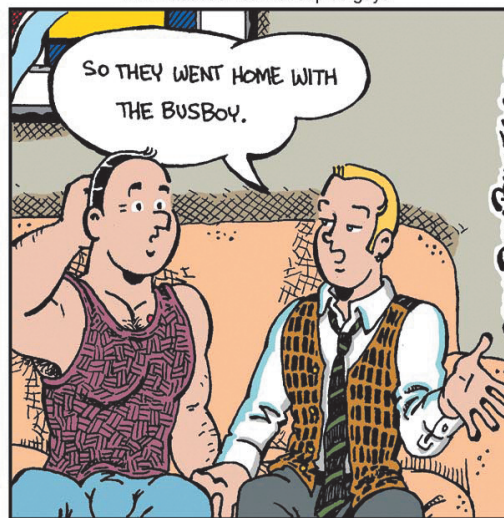
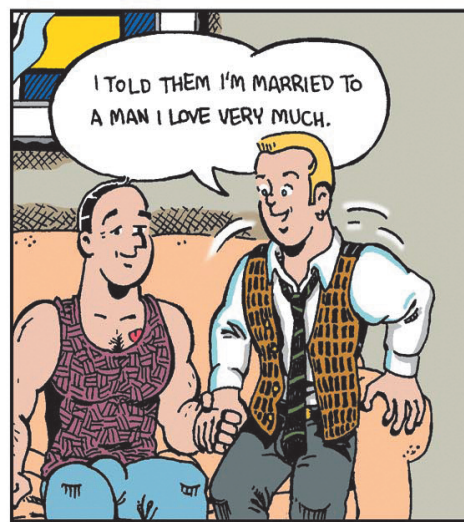
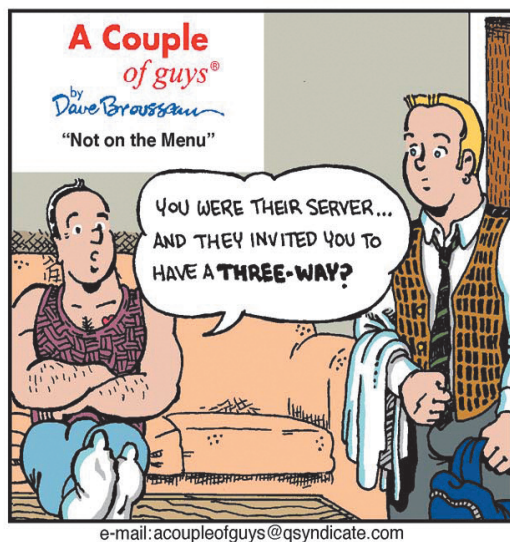
Six months later, my girlfriend and I are basically together every other week. And it works for us. Well. As for moving in together, her rule is four seasons. Two down. Two to go.

Hmmm. Maybe we need a new app where you choose from people who are at least 250 miles away. Like a self-imposed, automatic braking system. If you can't make yourself take your time, the distance will do it for you.

Block is the author of the new book *The Ultimate Guide to Solo Sex* by Jenny Block, foreword by Betty Dodson.

Have a question about sex you want Jenny to address? Email it to GirlOnGirlsJenny@gmail.com.

Photo courtesy StephGrantPhotography.com





Cassie Nova hobnobs with *Real Housewife* Stephanie Hollman and her husband Travis.



Girls and guys enjoy the afternoon on The Strip.



Krystal and Francisco get cozy at JR.'s for Sunday Funday.

- Making the **SCENE** the week of July 1–7:
- **Alexandre's:** *Girls Night Out* with **Peggy Honea** on Friday. *Three Drunk Monkeys* on Saturday. *Karaoke* with **Wayne Smith** on Sunday. *K-Marie* on Tuesday. *Chris Chism* on Wednesday. *So Strung Out* with **Spencer West** on Thursday.
 - **Brick/Joe's:** “Goldfinger” is the theme for *Miss Golden Globe State* and *State at Large* at 6 p.m. on Saturday with reigning *Golden Globe State* **Adrian Michaels**, *Miss Gay Texas State at Large* **Gemini Alexander Brooks** and the official crowning of *Miss Gay Texas State 2016* **Alirah Van Wales Cole**.
 - **Dallas Eagle:** *United Court of the Lone Star Empire* show at 8 p.m. on Friday. *Texas Gay Rodeo Association* presents *Miss Firecracker* from 5-10 p.m. on Saturday. *Dallas Bears* and *Leather Knights* club night on Saturday at 9 p.m.
 - **Marty's:** Monday night showcase with **Chanel Champagne**.
 - **Pekers:** *Voice of Pride* elimination round at 9 p.m. on Thursday.
 - **Rainbow Lounge:** **Kiana Lee** benefit show at 7 p.m. on Friday with **Bianca Gisele Davenport Starr**, **Veronica Reyes**, **Marissah D'Amour Starr** and 16 others.
 - **Round-Up Saloon:** Wine glasses can be purchased in front of the Round-Up for the *July Wine Walk* from 6-9 p.m. on Wednesday.
 - **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:** Hot hits and comedy clips on Friday. Celebrate your independence on Saturday. Funday all day on Sunday. “I love the '90s” on Monday. ■

Scene Photographers: *Kat Haygood, Chad Mantooth*

Black Tie Dinner Sneak Peek preview party





Justin stretches his muscles on The Strip.



Getting some quality patio time at JR.'s.



Skander and Maddie are all smiles at S4.



John and Lilli enjoy a night on The Strip.



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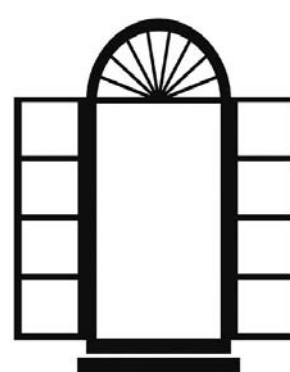
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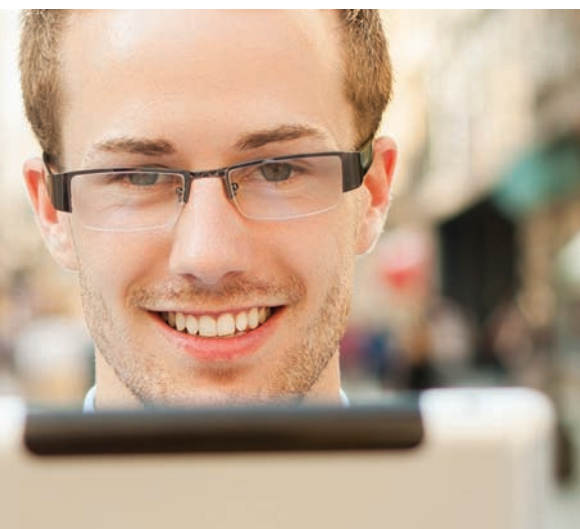


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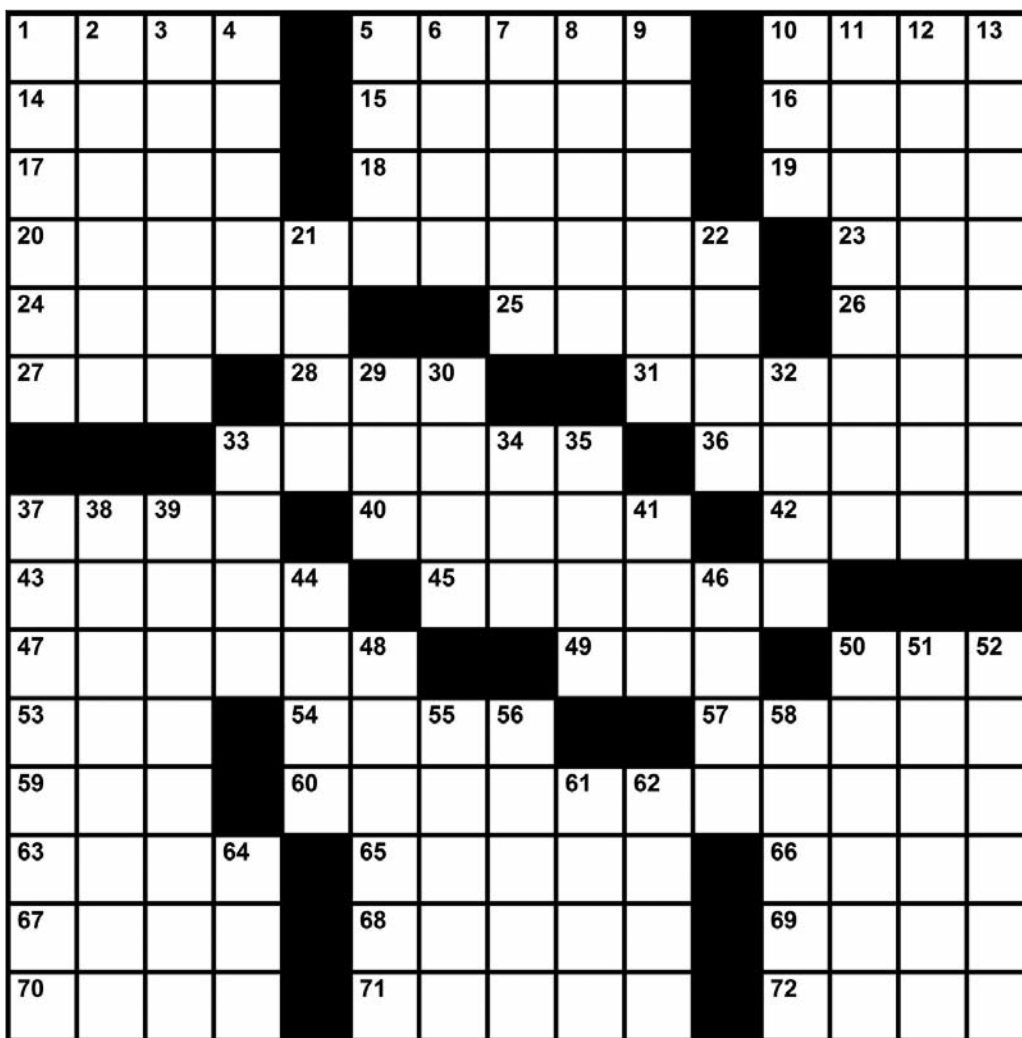
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q-puzzle



Famous Homophobes

Solution on page 37

Across

- 1 Hazard for Sheehan
- 5 E with a queer orientation
- 10 Barely makes, with "out"
- 14 Inventor Elias
- 15 "___ you loud and clear!"
- 16 Stuff stuffed under G-strings
- 17 Male mating call?
- 18 Menotti's middle name
- 19 "___ put it another way ..."
- 20 Homophobic TV doctor of the '70s
- 23 Bloom of *The Producers*
- 24 Peaks in Peru
- 25 Words said near crystal balls
- 26 Eligible for soc. sec.
- 27 Teakettle sound
- 28 Env. stuffer
- 31 Wilde tragedy banned in London
- 33 Anita, who founded the antigay group Save Our Children
- 36 Frugal sort
- 37 *Quills* subject
- 40 Move stealthily
- 42 Becomes wife and wife, e.g.
- 43 Exams on sexual technique? "sick unfortunates"
- 47 Middle point
- 49 Mineo of *Rebel Without a Cause*
- 50 Russian commune

- 53 Like hard-core porn

- 54 Tobias pseudonym
- 57 Former defensive tackle Tuaolo
- 59 Interjection for Ernst Roehm
- 60 Pope who decried homosexuality as "intrinsically evil"
- 63 "Are you up ___?"
- 65 Michelangelo piece with stones of stone
- 66 Park of Queens
- 67 Ron Howard film with Ellen DeGeneres
- 68 Autobiography of Grace's roommate?
- 69 Adolescent affliction
- 70 Matches a poker bet
- 71 Elton's tube
- 72 They depend on their masters

Down

- 1 The "T" in T.E. Lawrence
- 2 Caesar and Antony
- 3 Lammies, e.g.
- 4 Britten's change
- 5 Commands to attack
- 6 Sticking point
- 7 Beginning to come?
- 8 Places for plaques
- 9 Some Western homes

- 10 *The Name of the Rose* writer
- 11 He played to homophobia to help get Bush reelected in 2004
- 12 Put on a pedestal
- 13 Cincinnati gay bar
- 21 Friendly opening
- 22 Consenting votes
- 29 B'way locale
- 30 Singer Vikki
- 32 Blades of grass, collectively
- 33 Cold-cock
- 34 Born, to Bonheur
- 35 Some like them hot
- 37 Ancient Greek gay, perhaps
- 38 415, in San Francisco
- 39 He gunned down Harvey Milk
- 41 Org. that uses ball-washers
- 44 Belgrade resident
- 46 Mapa of *Switched at Birth*
- 48 Go over proofs again
- 50 Kahlo's country
- 51 *Bye Bye Birdie* writer Brecher
- 52 Makes erect
- 55 Blown away
- 56 Mischievous type
- 58 Stravinsky string, perhaps
- 61 *To Kill a Mockingbird* character
- 62 In a lazy way
- 64 Boob tubes

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