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**Behind the scenes at
Del Shores' new cult comedy**
By Arnold Wayne Jones
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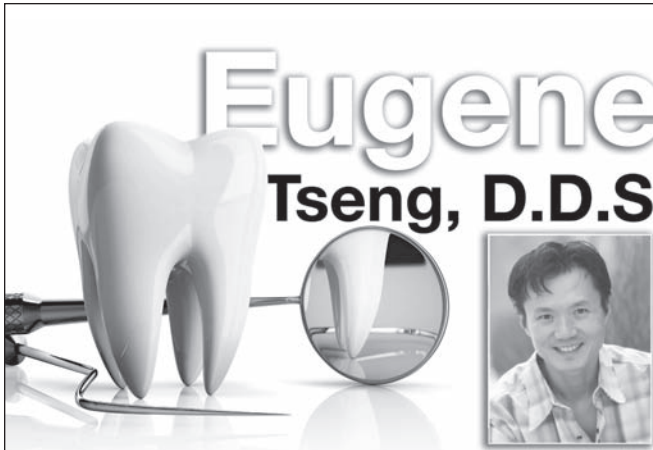
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Notice of DART Public Meetings

D2 Subway Public Meetings

On behalf of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) invites you to attend a public meeting to hear about progress on the Dallas CBD Second Light Rail Alignment (D2) as a subway. DART has narrowed options to a short list of alternatives for the project and continues toward a refined locally preferred alternative (LPA) to be selected this summer. We need your input on:

- The remaining set of D2 subway alternatives
- D2 station locations and pedestrian access points
- Downtown Dallas Streetcar expansion

Public Meetings

Tuesday, April 18, 2017 • 12:00 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.

DART Headquarters – Board Room, 1401 Pacific Avenue, Dallas

The same information will be provided at each meeting.

Learn more and subscribe to project updates at DART.org/D2 or contact DART Community Engagement at 214-749-2543.



instantTEA

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McDonnell appointed to FW Landmarks Commission



Fort Worth City Councilwoman Gyna Bivens appointed Resource Center's Rafael McDonnell to the Fort Worth Landmarks Commission.

McDonnell said the commission looks at historic designations and certificates of appropriateness for building modifications, repair or add-ons for historic buildings or houses in historic and conservation districts.

Former City Councilman Joel Burns sat on this commission before his election to office.

McDonnell may be the only person in the area who sits on official commissions and committees in two counties. Dallas Independent School District Superintendent Michael Hinojosa appointed McDonnell to the Superintendent's Advisory Committee that advises on DISD priorities and issues.

McDonnell was sworn in on the Landmarks Commission at 12:15 p.m. on Monday, April 10 and attended his first meeting as a voting member at 2 p.m.

acades, Take Back Oak Lawn considers this man VERY DANGEROUS ... The attack he admitted to was very violent in nature and caused serious personal injury," according to the Take Back Oak Lawn Facebook page.

Box is a white man, about 5'8". Take Back Oak Lawn urged anyone who sees him in the Oak Lawn area to "call and report him as a suspicious person."

— Tammye Nash

An unexpected moment on 'Survivor' sets the transphere ablaze

Truth be told, I haven't watched *Survivor* in years, though I did see the season with Jeff Varner. Varner is back for this season of repeat contestants, apparently, on Wednesday, April 12— spoiler alert! — he was voted off by acclamation (no secret vote) when he asked a fellow contestant, Zeke Smith, "Why haven't you told people you're transgender?" It was something nobody seemed to know ... certainly not the 8 million people who do still watch *Survivor*.

Varner, who is gay, initially defended himself by saying being in the closet that way was proof of deception, and he was just trying to save himself — hey, all's fair right? But the castaways turned on him like a collective snake, chastising Varner for the low blow of outing someone who was not himself ready to come out. During the closing confessional, he tearfully apologized, and Zeke has even written about the experience (remember, the show was filmed months ago in private). Sadly, it wasn't much more of a teaching moment, as the moral outrage was quickly replaced by game play. Maybe the thoughtful reflection will come next week.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Oklahoma Capitol pages warned of cross-dressers in the building

An email sent to teenage pages who work in the Oklahoma Capitol building warned that cross-dressers would be in the building when about 70 LGBT students from Tulsa spent a day lobbying their legislators on Monday, April 10.

The email was sent by Karen Kipgin, a staffer who oversees the page program.

"As per the Speaker's office, Pages are being allowed access to the ladies restroom across from 401, for today. Again, there are cross-dressers in the building."

The visit by Tulsa students was sponsored



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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.** This week's guest is **Al James** from **The Trevor Project**; **United Black Ellument** hosts discussion on HIV/AIDS in the black community (UBE Connected) at 7 p.m. every fourth Tuesday of the month at 3116 Commerce St., Suite C; Core Group Meeting every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.; **Fuse game night** every Monday evening except the last of the month at 8 p.m. at the Fuse space in the Treymore Building, 4038 Lemmon Ave, Suite 101; **FuseConnect** every Wednesday from 7 p.m. For more information call or e-mail Jalenzski at 214-760-9718 ext 3 or Jalenzski@myresourcecenter.org. LGBT square dancing group **Pegasus Squares** meets every Sunday from 3-5 p.m. at Dallas School of Burlesque, 2924 Main St. #103; **Dallas Frontrunners** meet for a walk

or run on the Katy Trail at the Robert E. Lee statue in Lee Park every Wednesday at 7:15 p.m. and every Saturday at 9 a.m.

APRIL

• **April 14: DFW Pride Happy Hour**
DFW Pride Happy Hour, organized and maintained by TI Pride Network as a community service, takes place from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Cedar Grove, 4123 Cedar Springs Road, #110. For information call 214-567-0592.

• **April 15: Purple Gaybingo**
Monthly fundraiser for Resource Center takes place from 6-9 p.m. at the Rose Room at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. 214-540-4458. MyResourceCenter.org/gaybingo.

• **April 15: GALA Meet the Candidates**
GALA (Gay and Lesbian Alliance) North Texas hosts a Meet the Candidate event featuring candidates for city council, school board and the Collin College board of trustees, from 3-5:30 p.m. at 601 Rouen Drive in McKinney. For information email info@galanorthtexas.org.

pet of the week / TABITHA

Meet **Tabitha**, a gentle 5-year-old, torbie domestic shorthair mix weighing in at a sturdy 11 pounds. The shelter has been a little scary for her and she's a bit shy with strangers but a total love with her close friends and family. She is a certified lap warmer and loves to sit with you while you scratch her head and chin. Tabitha is incredibly sweet, calm and playful at times. She doesn't mind the other kitties in her condo and can often be found sunbathing on her bed. In her previous home, she was overwhelmed by the bounding energy of dogs and small children, so she'd do best in a home without them. Tabitha has been spayed, microchipped, tested negative for FIV/FelV and has received all age-appropriate vaccinations. #151733

Tabitha is waiting for you at the SPCA of Texas' Jan Rees-Jones Animal Care Center in Dallas, 2400 Lone Star Drive, near I-30 and Hampton Road. Hours are noon-6 p.m. Sunday-Wednesday and noon-7 p.m. Thursday-Saturday. Regular adoption fees are \$250 for puppies, \$125 for adult dogs 6 months or older and kittens 0-6 months, \$75 for adult cats 6 months or older and \$50 for senior dogs or cats 7 years or older and VIP dogs and cats (available for adoption for 30 days or more.) Fee includes spay/neuter surgery, age-appropriate vaccinations, a heartworm test for dogs six months and older and a FIV/FelV test for cats 4 months and older, initial flea/tick preventative and heartworm preventative, a microchip, 30 days of PetHealth Insurance provided by PetPlan, a free 14-day wellness exam with VCA Animal Hospitals, a free year-long subscription to Activ4Pets, a rabies tag and a free leash. Call 214-742-SPCA (7722) or visit today.



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• **April 15: Federal Club neighborhood social**

• **April 16: Easter in the Park**

The Pooch Parade in Oak Lawn's Lee Park is an Easter tradition, but there will also be live music, an Easter egg hunt for the kids and an Easter Bunny. Visit LeeParkConservancy.org to register for the Pooch Parade; fee is \$10. Bring your picnic basket and lawn chairs. 1 p.m.; Pooch Parade at 2 p.m.

• **April 18: Arabesque Preview Party**

DJ Steffi Burns featured from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Joule, 1530 Main St. \$50. DIFFADallas.org.

• **April 19: Evening with the Judges**

Dallas LGBT Bar Association hosts an Evening with the Judges, from 5:30-7 p.m. in Belo Hall at Belo Mansion, 2101 Ross Ave. Features Judges Roberto Canas Jr., Dennise Garcia, Maricela Moore, Tonya Parker and Ingrid Warren. Offers attending lawyers one-and-a-half hours of free continuing legal education credits. For information visit DGLBA.org.

• **April 20: Fairway to Equality Kickoff**

Human Rights Campaign hosts its annual Fairway to Equality Kickoff Party, for LGBT adults and allies, from 6-8 p.m. at upstairs at JR's Bar and Grill, 3923 Cedar Springs Road. Raffle tickets will be sold for drawings for gift baskets, and other games and prizes will be available. People can also register as individuals or as teams for the June 10 Fairway to Equality fundraising golf tournament. For information email Ingrid.retzter@dfwfederalclub.org.

• **April 20: Employee Resource Group Mixer**

A cocktail reception for the leaders of local LGBT employee resource groups will be held from 6-8 p.m. at the Law Offices of Littler Mendleson, 2001 Ross Ave., Ste. 1500. RSVP by calling 214-880-8131.

• **April 20: Gray Pride monthly mixer**

From 6-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road. ResourceCenterDallas.org.

• **April 21: Federal Club mixer**

The DFW Federal Club holds its April Mixer from 6-8 p.m. at Cedar Grove, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. Visit DFWFederalClub.org or email co-chairs@dfwfederalclub.org for information.

• **April 21: Compassion Fatigue Symposium**

Ed-U-Care presents its sixth annual symposium from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, 9200 Inwood Road. EdUCareDallas.com.

• **April 22: Metroball Day at the Casino**

Metroball Winstar Casino Party Buses and fundraiser for Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund leave at 8:30 a.m. from Sue Ellen's, 3014 Throckmorton St. and from Collin Creek Mall in Plano at 9 a.m. \$75. \$125 per couple. GDMAF.org

• **April 22: Turtle Creek cleanup**

Turtle Creek Association needs volunteers to help keep Turtle Creek beautiful and litter-free. Trash bags and pickers provided. Wear no-slip shoes and gloves. Meet at 9 a.m. on Hall Street at the Katy Trail. Clarke@TurtleCreekAssociation.org.

• **April 22: Charity Underwear Auction**

Charity America organization hosts a Charity Underwear Auction at BJ's NXS!, 3215 Fitzhugh Ave., at 9 p.m. The event is hosted by Mr. and Miss Charity America 2017, Preston David Pickett and Jazzmin St. James D'Monaco, and will feature Sable Alexander, Melodee Karrmichael, Onyx Anderson, Gloria Devine, Mona Devine, Bronx Diorr and The Queen G. Event sponsors are Outlines Men's Wear and Skivvies.

• **April 22: Carnival of Health**

Students, physicians and health professionals from UT Southwestern Medical Center team up for the 13th annual Carnaval de Salud (Carnival of Health) from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at T.J. Rusk Middle School, 2929 Inwood Road, offering free health care to under-served populations in Dallas. The health fair will feature free health screenings for several common conditions, including diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Participants can also get free sports physicals and learn about local health resources. There will be interactive booths for children, carnival activities, arts and crafts and prizes.

• **April 23: Yom Hashoah**

(Holocaust Remembrance Day) Dallas Holocaust Museum/Center for Education and Tolerance hosts a community-wide commemoration of Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) at Temple Emanu-El, 8500 Hillcrest Ave. The program will include readings from the children of Holocaust survivors and music for the Temple Emanu-El Choir and the Israeli Scouts. Yom



Patti Le Plae Safe hosts Gay Bingo Saturday at The Rose Room. See listings for details.

Hashoah commemorates the 6 million Jews murdered in the Holocaust and celebrates the lives of those who survived. DallasHolocaustMuseum.org.

• **April 23: Free men's grooming event**

Free beard trim, hot towel treatment, facial, hair touch up, raffles, free samples and more from 2:30-7 p.m. Dallas Eagle, 5740 Maple Ave.

• **April 23: Pre-needs planning**

Funeral planning for the LGBT community from Lincoln Funeral Home. Brunch included from 1-3 p.m. at El Fenix, 6811 W. Northwest Highway. To reserve a seat, contact Scottlynd Colgrove at 214-398-8133 or scolgrove@lincemetery.com.

• **April 24: HRC Mondays**

Chino Chinatown in Trinity Groves on Singleton Avenue in Dallas hosts HRC Mondays, partnering with Equality Vodka to offer specialty cocktails and \$5 Equality Vodka drinks, with 20 percent of all Equality Vodka sales going to the Human Rights Campaign.

• **April 24-30: National Black Trans Advocacy Conference**

The National Black Trans Advocacy Conference and Awards Gala is an educational and empowerment event

attended by 300 trans and gender non-conforming individuals, family, friends, allies and corporate partners from across the country. Marriott Quorum, 14901 Dallas Pkwy, Addison. BlackTrans.org.

• **April 25: Spring Fling mixer**

Meet the Oak Lawn Library staff and Oak Lawn Library Friends who discuss upcoming programs. Free appetizers and drink specials. 5:30-7 p.m. at Zephyr, 4001 Cedar Springs Road.

• **April 27-May 1: Purple Party Weekend 2017**

Dallas Purple Party 2017, presented by Purple Foundation, begins Thursday with Bear Party, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Dallas Eagle, continues with Pump! the Welcome Mixer on Friday from 4-8 p.m. at Aloft Hotel, then the Ignite Opening Party from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at S4, continues Saturday with the Rise Pool Party from 1-7 p.m. at Sisu Uptown and the Purple Party Main Event from 10 p.m.-5 a.m. at South Side Music Hall, followed by the Refresh Sunday Brunch from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Aloft Hotel and Revival Tea Dance from 1-7 p.m. at The Nines, and concludes with Glow Closing Party from 9 p.m.-4 a.m. at the Hall of State at Fair Park. For information and tickets visit PurpleFoundation.org.

Teaching the teachers

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

At a time when the public education system appears to be at a crossroads, one organization is working to create career teachers who are better equipped to meet the challenges of teaching in urban schools. And recruiting LGBT teachers for its rigorous program is an integral part of reaching that goal, officials with Urban Teachers say.

Urban Teachers, previously known as Urban Teacher Center, was founded in 2009 to meet the challenge of improving the quality of new teachers. Founders Jennifer Green and Christina Hall, who were at the time colleagues in the Baltimore City Schools central office, set out to create, from the ground up, a new “break the mold” program designed to “ensure every teacher would get the experiences and support they need to produce results with students,” according to the Urban Teacher website.

They started with programs in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., cities with two of the highest-need school districts in the country. They expanded to the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex last July, and are looking to move into other cities soon.

Emily Nolen, executive director of Urban Teachers in DFW, explained that the organization is a four-year program that, in partnership with Johns Hopkins University, lets participants earn a master’s degree after two years and, after three years, certifications in specialty areas including English as a second language, special needs and math.

The burn-out rate among new teachers, especially those in urban schools, is alarm-

ingly high, Nolen said. Young men and women fresh out of college “don’t really get enough training ahead of time” before stepping into the classroom, she said. Without that training, they often find themselves in situations where they fail. When they fail, they quit.

“We end up losing someone who could have been a really good teacher in the long run,” Nolen said. “If they had the right training, they would be successful. But

they don’t, and because they care they aren’t willing to just do a crappy job with the kids. So they quit.”

Urban Teachers helps those young teachers avoid failure and burnout by helping them become better prepared for the challenges they will face in the classroom in urban districts.

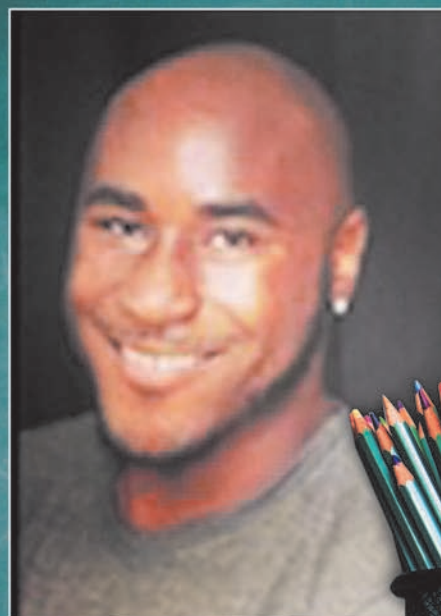
Urban Teachers recruits spend their first year in a residency program, serving as co-teachers in urban classroom settings,

Graduate program focused on creating better teachers in urban classrooms is reaching out to LGBT recruits

with support from Urban Teachers faculty. “They work all day [in the classroom] and they are in graduate classes at night,” Nolen said. “The work is intense. We lose about 20 percent of our recruits in that first year. And that’s fine. We need to lose everyone we’re going to lose in those first months, because after that, they will be teaching their own classrooms and once you start, you can’t quit on the kids. That’s not fair.”



Emily Nolen



Terrance Smith



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Nolen said that in looking to expand, Urban Teachers wanted an area with three components: districts that pay teachers a competitive salary, districts that pay for performance tied to achievement and broad community support for the schools. She said that it was support from the Dallas Regional Chamber and Commit to Dallas — a coalition of area nonprofits dedicated to helping Dallas students succeed — that sealed the deal.

“We felt like, in coming to Dallas, we were getting in a boat that was already going in the right direction,” she said.

The Urban Teachers program is not focused on education theory, Nolen said. “It’s designed to be different, to be relevant. It’s more much experiential, more clinical in nature. It is designed to teach them how to succeed in an actual classroom.”

While inclusion of LGBT people among its teachers is not included in Urban Teachers’ articulated, focused goal, Nolen said, the program strives for an inclusive environment that reflects the culture around it.

“Kids need to see teachers that look and feel and sound like them,” Nolen said, touting the fact that of the teachers in the Urban Teachers program, 70 percent are people of color, 35 percent are bilingual, 35 percent are male and 50 percent are first-generation college graduates.

While the program’s mission statement doesn’t specifically mention LGBT people, there is an LGBT affinity group, and LGBT participants are finding a welcoming home with Urban Teachers in DFW, thanks to the area’s large, well-organized and visible LGBT community.

Terrance Smith is from Orlando, and was at Pulse nightclub on June 12, when a gunman massacred 49 people and injured more than 50 others. That experience, he said, caused him to re-evaluate his life and set new goals for his future. Urban Teachers offered him a way to reach those goals.

Smith moved to Dallas and is now in his

first year residency with the program.

“I wasn’t recruited because I am gay,” Smith said recently. “I’m not ‘the gay cohort.’ I am not identified that way, and nobody asks me to identify that way. I am just a cohort member who happens to be gay.”

This first year of residency, Smith said, “is a real gauntlet. But if you make it through this first year, then you know you are ready to move forward. It is giving me confidence.”

Urban Teachers is a tough program, but it’s worth it, Smith continued. “In general, I’d say, if you have a heart for children and you want to be a teacher, you should at least give it a try,” he said. It’s good for LGBT people who want to be teachers, and it’s good for LGBT youth trying to make their way through school.

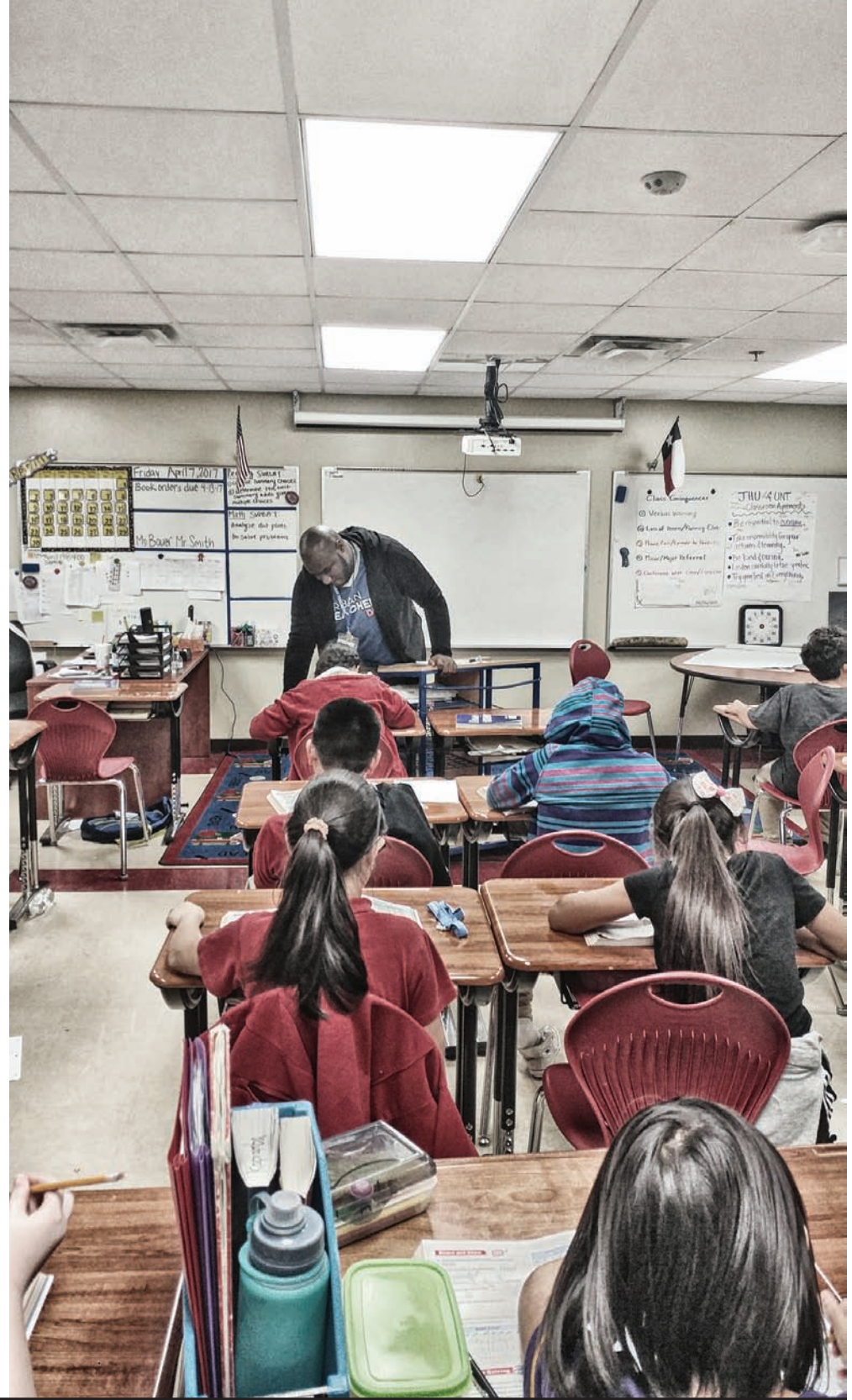
“Like Emily said, it’s good for kids to see teachers who are like them who have been able to succeed,” Smith continued. “A cisgender, heterosexual teacher wouldn’t really be able to relate to a student battling to find their own identity [as an LGBT person].”

“We need more openly [LGBT] teachers who know what it’s actually like to sit up at night, trying to figure out why you are feeling the way you do.

“As a gay teacher, I can say to those students who might be struggling [with sexual orientation or gender identity issues] that there really is a light at the end of the tunnel,” Smith said.

Of course, at the end of the day, Nolen said, the goal is to train teachers to be better and more effective teachers.

“As much as we value a diverse cohort, and as much as we value the ability of that diverse cohort to reach a diverse student population, the main goal is to create highly-skilled educators,” Nolen said. “In the end, we’re not going to love kids to college. In the end, if our teachers can’t effectively teach their students, then we’re failing. And we aren’t going to fail.” ■



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LGBT needs assessment getting underway

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Texas Pride Impact Funds has contracted with sociologists at University of Texas Dallas to do a statewide needs assessment of services for the LGBT community. Dr. Richard Scotch is heading that study.

"As far as we know, this is the first statewide LGBT needs assessment ever conducted," said TPIF board member Roger Wedell.

TPIF is a statewide communities foundation established to benefit the LGBT community. The organization will channel philanthropy from LGBT donors and others to secure the future of LGBT communities across the state. So far, Houston, Austin and Dallas-Fort Worth have regional leadership groups.

Wedell said TPIF already has one donor-advised fund and has received a major gift from a donor to support start up activ-

ity and grant making. The first grants should be awarded in the first quarter of 2018, he said.

In addition, TPIF received a grant to cover the cost of the needs assessment. Wedell said the organization put out a request for proposals and were in conversation with two universities and one private company. The UTD proposal came closest to TPIF's needs.

Wedell said they particularly liked that UTD was engaging graduate students and had created a graduate class around the study.

Scotch said that not only were grad students from his sociology department participating, but a number of students who were interested in the study have volunteered their time.

So far, Scotch said, the UTD research team has been working its way through a list of LGBT organizations across the state that TPIF compiled. That list includes HIV agencies, advocacy and social groups and churches and other religious organizations.

While the statewide assessment is interested in what's going on across the state in all demographic groups, TPIF is paying special attention to five subgroups — those living in rural areas, people of color, the

transgender community, youth and seniors.

In a few weeks, Scotch said, the UTD team will start conducting personal interviews and release a survey that can be answered online. He said he hopes to hold focus groups and would like at least one of those focus groups to center on those living in rural areas.

He said he wasn't sure how many interviews would be needed.

"When you start getting the same story, you know you don't need to go any further," Scotch said. "We're hoping we'll get a good enough picture."

He said he knows there are some things they'll find: "Issues of aging, retirement and access to services. We know there are tremendous issues with youth. We're open to be surprised that some issues are OK and some are worse than expected."

The study won't just focus on what the LGBT community is providing itself, but where needs are met through the generic service providers. He cited the study the Coalition for Aging LGBT is doing in Collin County, surveying assisted living and nursing home facilities to find out which are open to LGBT residents and actually have services that welcome them.

Scotch said a dozen UTD students who are involved are each assigned topics, such as "Do schools accommodate trans youth?"

and "What stigma and support is coming from faith communities?"

Surveys will address 30 issues and ask participants: Is this a great need or not a need? Is this need being well met or not met?

In a month, Scotch expects to be receiving some preliminary results. The final study should be ready in September. Wedell said he expects TPIF will receive a wealth of information from the study.

Scotch commended the committee putting together the foundation for looking for evidence-based information.

"A lot of organizations try to gather information intuitively," he said.

In the 1990s, Scotch was involved in a similar needs assessment for United Way. At the time, he found a number of LGBT people working for companies that contributed to United Way that were withholding their donations because no LGBT or HIV agencies were included. That led to Resource Center becoming a United Way agency.

Wedell said results from the needs assessment would help establish priorities in making grants, but this won't be the last study.

"We anticipate contracting on further assessments either regionally or issue-based," Wedell said. ■

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Abounding Prosperity receives \$1.7 million grant

The funds will allow agency to continue HIV testing in Texas' hardest hit community

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Abounding Prosperity has received a \$1.7 million grant to serve the health needs of black gay and bisexual men and transwomen through its testing and screening clinic and prevention services. The grant targets people ages 14 to 29.

Special Projects and Programs Manager P.J. Moton said the grant would help them link people who test positive to care within 30 days of their diagnoses. Abounding Prosperity tests both at its facility on MLK Jr. Boulevard and through its mobile testing van.

"The mobil van goes into the community six times a week," Moton said, "going

where gay black men socialize or gather."

In addition, the grant has allowed AP, Inc. to bring on staff a nurse practitioner, and it lays the groundwork for the organization to build HOPE — Helping Our People Excel — its own health facility that will test for HIV, STDs and Hep C, as well as offer PrEP treatment, Moton said.

The grant targets young people, ages 14 to 29, who make up a large portion of newly-diagnosed HIV cases. They're also screened for other sexually transmitted diseases.

It also gives the organization the ability to continue other programs, such as behavior change interventions, including 3MV — Many Men, Many Voices — a two-day educational program with curriculum designed specifically for black men.

Abounding Prosperity's referral program works with AHF, Prism Health and for those clients with insurance who prefer seeing a private doctor, Dr. Chrisette Dharma.

AP, Inc. is the only organization in Dallas awarded a portion of this grant from the Centers for Disease Control, Moton said. Organizations in Houston and San Anto-

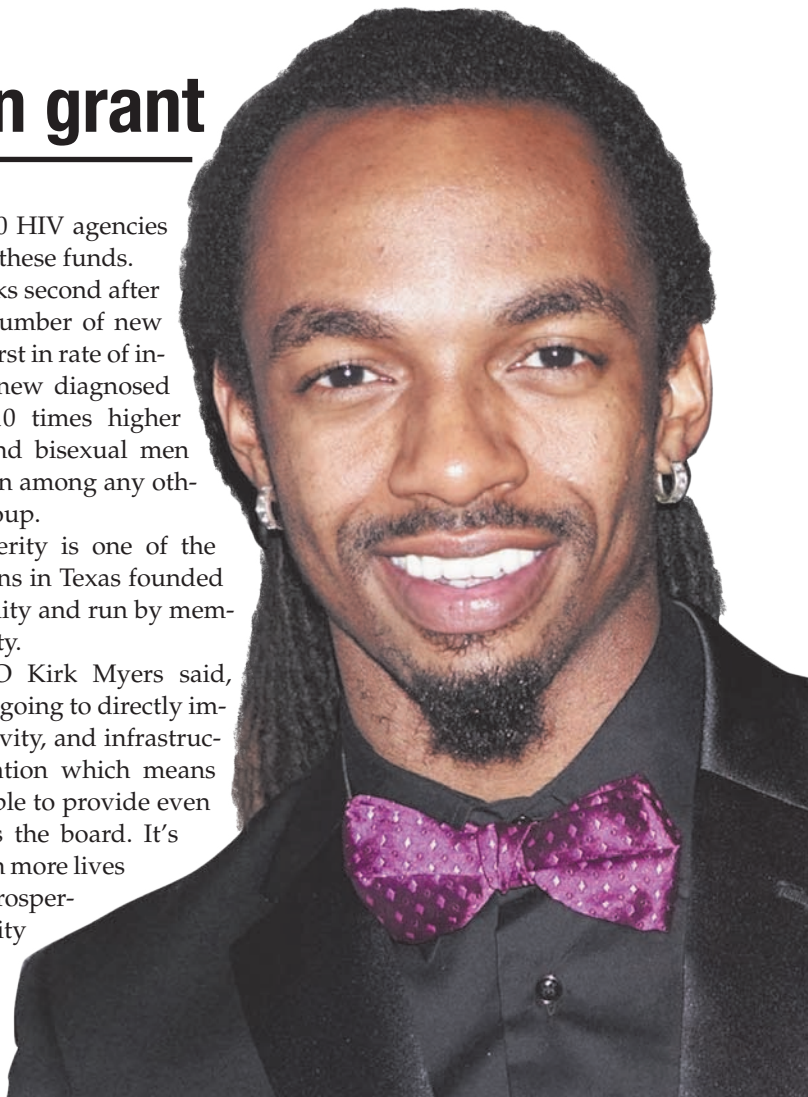
nio are among the 30 HIV agencies nationally to receive these funds.

Dallas County ranks second after Harris County for number of new HIV infections and first in rate of infection. The rate of new diagnosed cases of HIV are 10 times higher among black gay and bisexual men and transwomen than among any other racial or ethnic group.

Abounding Prosperity is one of the few HIV organizations in Texas founded in the black community and run by members of the community.

Founder and CEO Kirk Myers said, "These resources are going to directly impact the reach, longevity, and infrastructure of the organization which means we are going to be able to provide even more services across the board. It's our aim to touch even more lives thereby promising prosperity for the community as a whole."

P.J. Moton



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Whatever happened to the 'friendly skies'?

Taking a look back at some of the airlines' slogans that no longer ring true



Illustration by Kevin Thomas/Dallas Voice

Not so long ago, airlines portrayed air travel as fun and adventure—some — a big party in the sky. To bolster that image, the airlines adopted appropriate slogans in the 1940s to attract new passengers.

And for several decades, it was fun. But that's all changed.

Considering what air travel has become — unpredictable, frustrating and even dangerous — I thought it might be fun to recall some of those slogans from days gone by. Based on personal experience, these slogans are jokes at best. Unless you are sitting in first class, your trip will likely be uncomfortable and anything but fun.

Going in alphabetical order, the first that comes to mind would be American Airlines. A few of the corporation's slogans over the years were: "We're American Airlines, doing what we do best," "Fly the American Way," and "We know why you fly. We're American Airlines."

The truth is, from what I hear from travel professionals, that American Airlines has become infamous for mechanical problems and other flight delays. Too few planes in the air to accommodate passengers during peak travel times. If one breaks down, everybody suffers.

Many of the American Airlines employees appear on the verge of a nervous breakdown every time a new event occurs. A six-hour delay caused me to miss a cruise ship in San Diego, and I left a lot of stressed-out ticket agents in my wake that day. If that's the best, I sure don't want to see the worst.

The now-defunct Braniff Airlines had



David Webb
The Rare Reporter

a great slogan: "When you've got it, flaunt it." Actually, I always loved flying back and forth to New York on Braniff, but that was decades ago. I guess all that catering to the passengers helped put them out of business.

British Airways' promotions promise, "We'll take more care of you," and that seemed to be the case when I flew to London and Paris. Free cocktails flowed generously, and the flights were comfortable.

Then there is Delta: "We love to fly, and it shows;" "Delta is ready when you are," and "You'll love the way we fly." Wrong, again. I didn't like it much at all.

Because the airline charges for checked baggage these days, there is never enough room for all the carry-on bags in the overhead bins. About halfway through boarding, the remaining passengers are ordered to check their bags. Confusion, disagreements and flight delays seem to be the norm.

On my way to Barcelona, I had to change planes in Atlanta, and I didn't think we would ever take off, but I allowed an extra day to catch my cruise ship in the Mediterranean.

To make matters worse, a traveling companion flew to Spain in a first-class pod that reclined into a bed. She arrived fresh and cheerful while I was a wreck.

And there was the flight I boarded for a trip to Southeast Asia on the also now-defunct Northwest Airlines. Their mottos were "Now you're flying smart," and "Some people just know how to fly."

After an unscheduled layover in Tokyo and stops in San Francisco and Detroit on the return before finally getting back to Dallas, because of employee strikes, I felt anything but smart. My bags arrived in Dallas on another plane two days before I did.

Finally, we have United Airlines, which made the news recently after flight attendants had a doctor thrown off a plane to make room for a United employee. The doctor got beat up in the process.

United's slogan? "Fly the friendly skies." I had my own experience with United in Athens last summer. A ticket agent told me the flight was overbooked, and I didn't have a seat. I asked how that could be possible when I bought the ticket six months earlier.

She wound up calling me "rude," but she got me on the plane. In fact, she again told me I was rude when she handed me the boarding pass. But at least she didn't beat me up, and she appeared perfectly capable and willing to do just that.

So unless you can afford to fly first class, don't trust any of those slogans. They really don't move their tail for you like Continental Airlines promised in the 1970s. ■

David Webb is a veteran journalist with more than three decades of experience, including a stint as a staff reporter for Dallas Voice. He now lives on Cedar Creek Lake and writes for publications nationwide.

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Del Shores hops into his rental car, pops in a CD of Brandi Clark, and rushes from the Design District to Oak Cliff for a meeting with a potential investor. He's leveraging the meeting by doing a little location scouting at the same time for a film that, it will turn out, won't even start shooting in Dallas for another 11 months. The meeting seems to go well and the investor acts interested, but he never signs a check (the equivalent of a real estate "looky-loo") — something that will eventually irk Shores, but he will get over it quickly because that's the game. At least he checked out the locale, so it wasn't a complete waste of time. When you're in the business of show, holding grudges or obsessing about slights has limited value. It's about the work, and getting the work done.

In the realm of indie film, though, that work is often more than mere artistic creativity. Just as often, a scrappy sensibility and ability to roll with the punches is just as valuable. For instance, Shores was always gonna be the writer-director of this project, but he became a producer on it because, well, that's sometimes what it takes to close the deal.

"We truly didn't think this was ever going to happen," Shores will tell me nearly a year later. "But the universe opened up when I decided to be a producer. It attracted all the right people, cuz it took a big, sordid village to make this movie."

The movie, indeed, is *A Very Sordid Wedding*, the umpteenth time Shores has gone to the bottomless well of Lone Star kookiness in telling about the white trash inhabitants of Winters, Texas, a backwater of religious hypocrisy and homophobia. Winters also happens to be the actual hometown of Shores himself, so read all you want into that. And the village that came together includes not just *Sordid* veterans like Leslie Jordan, Bonnie Bedelia, Caroline Rhea, Dale Dickey, Ann Walker and the late Sarah Hunley, but also locals like Cassie Nova, Krystal Summers, Ron Corning and Edna Jean Robinson, and cameos by nationally-known celebs like Whoopi Goldberg, Mitchell Gold, Alec Mapa and Andrew Christian. That's some powerhouse villagers all focused on one thing: Bringing the *Sordid* gang back in front of audiences.

The *Sordid* history is a case study in building a cult following. It got its first incarnation in *Sordid Lives*, a play Shores

The Wedding planner

Del Shores revisits the residents of Winters, Texas, in his timely — and hilarious — 'A Very Sordid Wedding'

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

Leslie Jordan returns as Brother Boy, the Tammy Wynette-loving drag queen in the 'Sordid' trilogy.



Emerson Collins, above, stars as a serial killer but also produced the film; the great Dale Dickey, showing Texas Pride; Shores directed Jordan in a scene filmed on The Strip.

wrote in 1996 that got its start in Los Angeles, as well as in a memorable run in Dallas in 2000, just as the film adaptation was being released. Without ever breaking the Top 10 in weekend receipts nationwide, *Sordid Lives* the movie ran for months in Dallas (and other cities), especially at late-night showings that gave *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* a run for its money. (It ran for a full year in the same Highland Park Village theater.) And why *wouldn't* it score, with its hilarious peek at sexual intrigue in a sleepy Bible Belt town? Cross-dressing, infidelity, wooden legs, psychiatry, alcoholism, black-sheep shame? Why, it was a family reunion in microcosm.

Fans craved more, however, and Shores was able to sell a prequel TV series to Logo, which aired in 2008. But a falling out with the network meant no second season, despite newly-whetted appetites. Then the 2015 Supreme Court decision legalizing same-sex marriage nationwide gave Shores not only a hook on which to hang a freshly-minted sequel but the momentum to get it done.

A Very Sordid Wedding was shot in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in Central Canada as well as Dallas during the summer of 2016 on a micro-budget... although you'd never be able to tell with the sharp editing and all-star cast. The world premiere was in Palm Springs last month, with many Dallasites attending. But there's something special about



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■ WEDDING From Previous Page



the homecoming screenings, which will pre-launch the USA Film Festival. The April 21 Dallas premiere at the historic Texas Theatre is already sold out, but there will be additional screenings on April 23 and 25.

Set in the weeks following the *Obergefell* decision, the story deals with Ty (Kirk Geiger), the gay son of uptight faux-society mom Latrelle (Bonnie Bedelia), who is traveling the country with his new husband Kyle (T. Ashanti Mozelle) on a mission to marry in every state of the union — culminating with a ceremony in Shittown, Texas ... aka Winters. That's something the new pastor can't abide, as he hosts an Anti-Equality Revival. Meanwhile, drag queen and Tammy Wynette devotee Brother Boy (Leslie Jordan) decides to pack up and move to Dallas, with the chance to finally conquer the mecca of drag: The Rose Room.

Let's get this out of the way: *Wedding* is hilarious and touching and angry and super-gay in the way only Shores can accomplish. Fans will love it.

But it wasn't easy. Putting together a film like this, especially with stars who have grown in popularity and demand over the decades, is a massive jigsaw puzzling of planning, hope and luck.

"What's the next line?" Leslie Jordan asks as he's doing his run-through inside the Rose Room on a sweltering July day last year. The club buzzes with actors,

Whoopi Goldberg, above, filmed her cameo in just five hours; below and opposite, local drag queens share their scenes with Leslie Jordan.

grip, caterers, assistants, even a journalist. Someone asks Jordan a question. "I'm not the director," he responds, then moves back to his mark to do the shot again.

Jordan — the iconic, Emmy Award-winning pixie with a Tennessee drawl and a deskful of stories — only has one day to get all his scenes shot. And he's sharing the screen opposite actual local legends of drag — James Love (aka Cassie Nova), Richard D. Curtin (aka Edna Jean Robinson) and Krystal Summers. In the background, various backers, investors and supporters (including underwear designer Andrew Christian) serve as extras. That's how indie filmmaking goes: Everyone pulls together to make it come off.

"Great work everybody," Shores says. "Let's do it again."

A Very Sordid Wedding may be a comedy, but being on set is serious business. There's very little time to waste or money to spend. And everyone is giving his (or her) all.

"That was the single most intense day of my professional life," says Emerson Collins, producer of the film and one of the stars as a rough trade criminal on the

run who falls for Brother Boy. "There were so many set-ups, it really was a two-day shoot [reduced to one day]." But it was worth it.

"There was not a lot of money, just a shared passion for the project," Shores says. That includes their luck in getting Whoopi Goldberg to make a cameo — she was available for, literally, *five* hours ... and that included hair and makeup.

"I'm agnostic, but I do believe there is a movie god," Shores says. "We scheduled all the scenes based on Whoopi arriving. She was camera-ready in no time at all and completely prepared. She was gracious and you saw the performance — truly magical. One of the things that touched my heart was when she said, 'Thank you for including me in this story because we must continue to fight together.'"

That's also how they were able to get Mitchell Gold, whose Faith in America nonprofit seeks to reconcile the community of believers with the community of queers.

"Nearly 50 percent of LGBT people identify as people of faith," Collins says. "I think it's really important that the film speaks [to that segment]. For people of faith [who are gay], there continue to be more and more faith organizations that are welcoming.

Not all religions are hypocrites when it comes to LGBT people. We wanted to recognize that."

Wedding ended up being the conclusion of Latrelle's journey, from disapproving zealot to accepting, even defiantly protective mother

hen. Latrelle "became the *thump-thump* of the tone for me, as well as her sidekick Sissy," Shores says. "People tell me [after getting to know me], they started questioning those [anti-gay religious doctrines] they were brought up with, so I put that in Latrelle's journey. I really wanted to honor those people."

Still, Shores insists, the purpose of the movie is first and foremost to entertain. And it's hard not to have fun when you have assembled such a dedicated company as Shores has over the decades.

"Leslie and I have been working together 30 years now. This is my 15th time to work with Dale Dickey," Shores explains of the actress, perhaps one of the most unappreciated treasures in Hollywood.

But the sweetest part may have been shooting in Dallas to add "some real Texas flavor. Emerson and I share a deep love for the Rose Room."

Collins, in fact, has often spoken of how "the very first time I ever entered a gay bar as a closeted Baylor student, Krystal Summers was the spe-



cial guest, and Cassie, the Grand Mouth of the South, was there. I love being about to recognize them" by including them in the film.

"It's so special to have Cassie and Krystal and Edna in the movie," Shores adds. "I had no idea how special *Sordid Lives* was for Cassie and the journey with her mom, until I read her column in the Voice. So it was full-circle for her. Everything was flawless in Dallas. It truly was the cherry on this wedding cake that we were baking to finish the movie."

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Life in the in-between

Zo Pryor, a teenaged, self-identified genderqueer actor, casts in doubt the privileges of 'Straight White Men'

JONANNA WIDNER | Contributing Writer
jonanna.widner@gmail.com

Ever-so-slowly, the world is changing when it comes to its transgender — as well as its “non-binary” — population.

Obviously, we are far from an ideal state. Change can be agonizingly slow. But we are tilting toward the good: more understanding, more acceptance, more opportunities for folks whose identities don't conform to the “normal” gender paradigm. It's a hopeful, if challenging, moment.

You can hear that hope in the voice of 14-year-old Zo Pryor, even over the telephone. Pryor is engaging and bright, curious and positive, his voice shining

with adolescent curiosity.

“I'm eventually going to transition to male,” he says matter-of-factly, “so the way I'm living, I'm kind of in-between.”

Pryor — who is comfortable using both male (he, him) and neutral (they, their)

pronouns to describe himself — is living that in-between state in an amazingly open way. Pryor is appearing in Second

Thought Theatre's new production of *Straight White Men*. Written by Young Jean Lee, the comedy follows three complex themes that sometimes intertwine, some-

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Gender-non-conforming actor Zo Pryor, opposite, adds flavor to the whitebread comedy 'Straight White Men,' above

times contradict: At times, it's a satire of the people who have made the rules since the dawn of time. Later, it provides an argument as to why disenfranchised groups (aka, almost everyone except for straight, white men) should actually have compassion for them. Third, the play toys with the idea that being aware of your own privilege is awareness enough, as Pryor describes it. “Are you required to do something with it? Do you need to step out of the way?”

Pryor plays the role of Person-In-Charge-2, one of two people who introduce the play and its concepts to the audience — roles that the playwright insists be cast with gender non-conforming performers. (With the consent of the playwright, Person-in-Charge-1 is played by an African-American cisgender woman.)

“When I found out I got to play the part, I was so frickin' happy,” Pryor says. “I just loved the fact that it included genderqueer people, because there are so few parts for genderqueer or trans people [out there].”

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It may at first seem like a simple trope, but Lee's insistence on casting of non-conforming actors adds a richness to the play. After all, what's more deliciously ironic than having the "person in charge" played by a person who, not being a straight white man, is denied the opportunity to be in charge in real life?

"It's been interesting playing this character, because I'm aware, being gender nonconforming, I usually just shut up about it because it could affect my relationship with people," Pryor notes. "And the whole point of this part is not apologizing for who you are, not apologizing that [your being] is inconveniencing other people."

Pryor started his theater career in second grade, after his brother was diagnosed with ADHD. "He was getting a lot of attention," Pryor says. "And me being a needy second grader, I was like, 'I want attention, too!'" So he joined some childhood friends in an ensemble part for a local production of *Beauty and the Beast*. "I enjoyed it so much more than I thought I was going to. I fell in love with it. Theater helps me do stuff I never thought I could do, because in theater, you're not really limited."

That's true onstage, but people like Pryor and Lee are also helping make this a world where they aren't limited offstage, either.

"When I grow up, I want to write a bunch of plays that include trans people and genderqueer people," Pryor says. "I'm also highly considering activism for minority groups. I may end up doing a combination of those things."

In some ways, Pryor has been fortunate. His mother has been supportive of his transition from the get-go. "So many other people wouldn't understand, but she's always said, 'You're my kid and my priority is your happiness,'" Pryor says. Perhaps even more remarkably, his schoolmates have generally been supportive. But even at a young age, Pryor recognizes the complexities — and dangers — of asserting one's identity.

"I think the world's definitely changing, but I also think that the pushback gets stronger when people come out and are vocal about who they are. When people ask to be acknowledged, that's when you get conflict and tension," he says.

Still, he notes, his voice lifting, "it will never be perfect. But it will continue to get better."



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My mean, lean Greek tragedy

DTC's outdoor vision of 'Electra'

The first thing you hear in Dallas Theater Center's new adaptation of *Electra* is breath panting in your ear. It comes as a

shock — so intimate, so real. The DTC has supplied every patron with headphones, which brings every word conspiratorially into your brain. It's a practical device — the play, set outdoors, walks its audience in and around the noisy public space of Annette Strauss Square — but also a canny artistic choice by director Kevin Moriarty. He wants the audience to feel as caught up in the intrigue as the characters themselves.

This is grand tragedy as only the Greeks, and perhaps Shonda Rimes, have the balls to pull off. Electra (Abbey Siegworth)

is the original girl with daddy issues. Psychologically, she's the mirror image of Oedipus — a woman sexually obsessed with her own father, Agamemnon, who was murdered by his wife Clytemnestra (Sally Nystuen Vahle) and her new husband Aegisthus (Tyrees Allen) as revenge for Agamemnon sacrificing their eldest daughter Iphigenia a decade earlier, as an offering to the gods to win the Trojan War. Now Electra, and her long-absent brother Orestes (Yusef D. Seevers) are plotting to continue the cycle — "Blood for blood!" is shouted.



Electra (Abbey Siegworth), asking the gods to aid in her vengeance. (Photo by Karen Almond)

Yeah, that kinda policy always ends well. Ask Hamlet. (The parallels to Shakespeare are stark.)

As familiar as the plot is, and as comparatively clunky as the structure and dialogue are, full of overwrought emotions and purple prose, the decision to present this play in the open air, moving us to new settings instead of bringing sets in, gives *Electra* an amazing immediacy. With the language piped into our ears, along with pulsing sounds and mood-setting music, it's more akin to living inside a graphic novel, or an especially well-designed but dark attraction at a Disney theme park, than a traditional play. It feels more like Julie Taymor's movie of *Titus Andronicus* than a Shakespeare-in-the-park production.

As wordy and dense as Greek tragedy is, though — there's a lot of narration — it manages to hit home in part because the emotions ring true across the millennia. As Electra's sister, Chrysothemis (Tiana Kaye Johnson), counsels her not to rock the boat and antagonize the new king, she spews back, "He is not *my* king!" That's something a lot of people in 2017 can relate to.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

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**Friday 04.14 —
Saturday 04.15**

Che Malambo brings Latin dance to the City Performance Hall

Based on Argentina, the dance company Che Malambo has been described as a testosterone-fueled dance extravaganza... and that's more than enough to get us interested. Combining the rhythmic pulse of stomping and drumming with precise choreography and the passion of a lonely gaucho, Che Malambo makes its Texas debut, thanks to TITAS. There are two performances this weekend.

DEETS: City Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. 8 p.m. ATPAC.org.



Friday 04.14 — Saturday 04.15

Get bewitched at Walpurgisnacht

The German word Walpurgisnacht means "Witches' Night," and in folklore is when enchanted beings emerge to wreak their magic on the world. But at Dark Hour Haunted House in Plano, it's a way to mark the mid-point of Halloween... and scare the living daylights out of you. Thirteen witches and countless screams await — you have been warned.

DEETS: Dark House Haunted House, 701 Taylor Drive, Plano. 8–11 p.m. DarkHourHauntedHouse.com.

Sunday 04.16

Pooch Parade and more greet ya on Easter in Lee Park

After an interruption a few years ago, Easter in Lee Park is back again, with hosts Steve Kemble and Real Housewife of Dallas LeeAnn Locken once more serving as masters of ceremonies for the Pooch Parade and other festivities, including live music, vendors and food trucks and just a fun day in the sun along Turtle Creek.

DEETS: Lee Park and Arlington Hall, Turtle Creek Boulevard and Hall Street. 1–4 p.m. Free.



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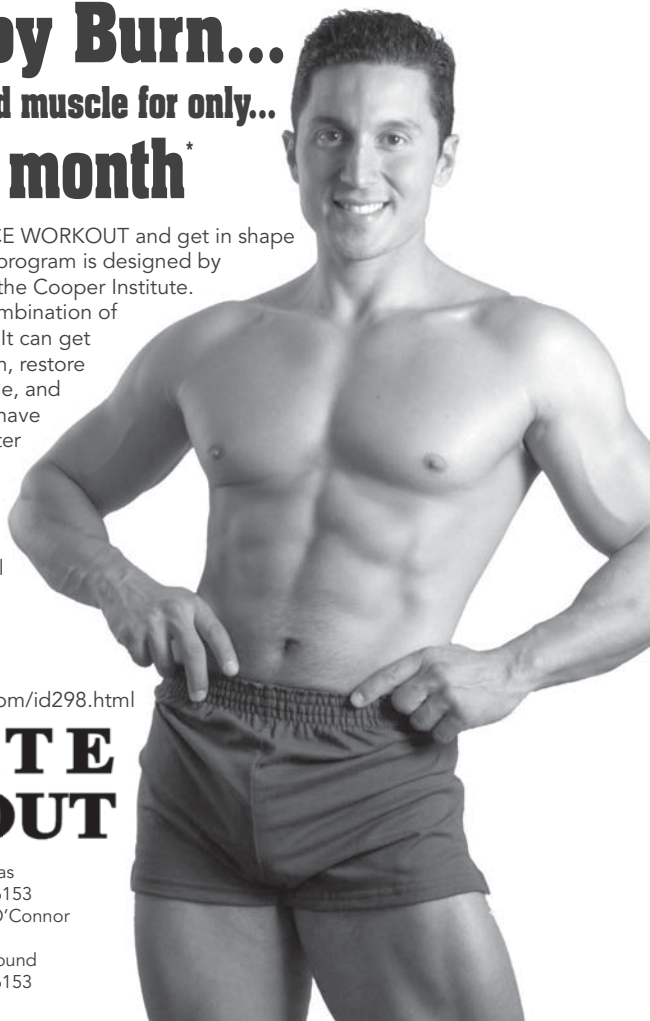
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calendar highlights



Morrissey returns to Dallas for a Saturday concert at the Majestic Theatre.

ARTSWEEK THEATER

...A Moment in the Life of Willa Dee Arvis. A drama set in 1942 about a mystery relating to two women whose husbands have enlisted to fight in World War II. Stone Cottage Theatre, 15650 Addison Road. Through April 23. MBSProductions.net.

Electra. DTC artistic director Kevin Moriarty has adapted Sophocles' tragedy for an outdoor experience just as in ancient Greece, with the audience intimately involved in the production. Abbey Siegworth takes on the title role. Annette Strauss Square (beside the Winspear Opera House), 2403 Flora St. Through May 21. Start time will be after sundown (8:30 p.m.). DallasTheaterCenter.org.

Let It Be Me. Theatre Britain continues its final season with this tale of a caretaker for her senile aunt whose life is complicated when she falls in love. Cox Playhouse, 1517 H Ave., Plano. Through April 30. Theatre-Britain.com.

Straight White Men. A father deals with his three sons — two successful, one not so much — in this modern comedy. Presented by Second Thought Theatre. Bryant Hall on the Kalita Humphreys campus, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through May 6. 2TT.co.

Two Trains Running. One of August Wilson's Pittsburgh Plays (along with *Fences*) is this story about African-Americans making do in 1969. *Final weekend.* Jubilee Theatre, 506 Main St., Fort Worth. JubileeTheatre.org.

FINE ART Mexico 1900–1950: Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, Jose Luis Orozco and the Avant-Garde.

A magnificent exhibition of nearly 200 works showcasing the impressive diversity — from realism to cubism to surrealism and even film — of Mexican art in the first half of the 20th century. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through July 9. DMA.org.

Landscape Relativities: The Collaborative Works of Arnold Chang and Michael Cherney.

This exhibition highlights the blurred line between photography and Chinese ink painting from two contemporary artists. Crow Collection of Asian Art, 2010 Flora St. Through June 25. CrowCollection.org.

FESTIVALS

37th Scarborough Renaissance Festival. The annual faire that takes you back to 17th century Europe features vendors, performances and cosplay. Scarborough Faire Grounds, FM 66

in Waxahachie (exit 399B off I-35). Weekends through May 29. SRFestival.com.

DANCE
Tu-Tu: Beckles Dancing Company. Loris Beckles' troupe performs, with dancers from Danielle Georgiou Dance Group, at its annual spring concert. South Dallas Cultural Center, 3400 S. Fitzhugh Ave. Friday–Saturday at 8 p.m. \$10–\$20. Tickets available on Eventbrite.com.

HAUNTED HOUSE
Dark Hour Haunted House. Walpurgishacht: Half Way to Halloween. The North Texas scare show celebrates the mid-point between Halloween with 13 witches and lots of chills. Dark Hour Haunted House, 701 Taylor Drive, Plano. 8–11 p.m. DarkHourHauntedHouse.com

FRIDAY 04.14
COMMUNITY
DFW Pride Happy Hour (formerly High Tech Happy Hour). Monthly queer mixer sponsored by the TI Pride Network, and open to everyone. Cedar Grove, 4123 Cedar Springs Road. 5:30–7:30 p.m.


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


SATURDAY 04.15
CONCERTS
Morrissey. The iconic singer performs. The Majestic Theatre, 1925 Elm St. 8 p.m. \$75–\$110. Tickets available at AXS.com.

SUNDAY 04.16
COMMUNITY
Easter in Lee Park. The annual picnic, festival and parade on Easter Sunday. Free. Lee Park and Arlington Hall, Turtle Creek Boulevard and Hall Street. 1 p.m.

MONDAY 04.17
CABARET
Mama's Party. Local singer Amy Stevenson hosts her ongoing cabaret series, always with special guests and a good time. Uptown Theatre, 120 E. Main St. Grand Prairie. \$10.

TUESDAY 04.18
FILM
The Manchurian Candidate. A masterpiece of Cold War suspense, with the Communists brainwashing an American to become an assassin. Angela Lansbury's performance is perfection. 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/dvevents.

WEDNESDAY 04.19
COMEDY
Lip Sync Comedy Battle. PT the Comedian hosts this comedy lip-sync show, welcoming celebrity look-alikes (or just any lip sync-ers) to show up and show their skills. Arlington Improv, 309 Curtis Mathes Way, Arlington. Sign-up at 7 p.m., show at 8 p.m. \$10.

THURSDAY 04.20
CABARET
Glitterbomb Denton. Weekly queer variety show with a new lineup every Thursday. Mable Peabody's Beauty Parlor and Chain Saw Repair, 1125 E. University Drive, Denton. 9:30 p.m.
Jay Gardner: Coward & Cole in Words and Music. Singer Jay Gardner performs at the Sammons Cabaret, with songs by two great gay composers: Noel Coward and Cole Porter. Sammons Center for the Arts, 3630 Harry Hines Blvd. 7 p.m. SammonsArtCenter.org.

THEATER
Susan and God. The 1937 stage version of one of the film films Joan Crawford made at MGM. Theatre 3, 2800 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. April 20–May 14. Theatre3Dallas.com.

FRIDAY 04.21
THEATER
Disney's The Little Mermaid. The charming stage adaptation of the movie musical, written by Dallasite Doug Wright. Casa Manana, 3101 W. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth. April 21–May 14. CasaManana.org.
Greater Tuna. Co-author and co-star Jaston Williams goes behind the scenes to direct this new production, which features three actors instead of two. The plan hilariously spoofs Texas culture. Eisemann Center for the Performing Arts, 2531 Performance Drive, Richardson. April 21–22. EisemannCenter.com.

OPERA
Norma. Bellini's classic of the bel canto canon, about a doomed Druid priestess in Ancient Gaul. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. April 21–May 7. DallasOpera.org.

this week's solution

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Cassie Nova

Cassie says, haters gonna hate

Hello, all. I am really confused and frustrated with the world. I guess we all are, about many different things. This week I am frustrated by people getting offended by every little thing. I pride myself on being funny. I get that some folks don't think I am. I am a drag queen with a horribly offensive sense of humor. I have said things onstage that are just awful, whether it be for shock value or just a laugh. The ridiculous shit I say is all in good fun. I would never post most of the stuff I say because it can so easily

be misinterpreted. Inflection and timing can turn saying something offensive into a charming joke.

Recently, I have noticed that I have been editing myself onstage for fear of alarming the easily offended... and I fucking hate that! Every day, there is a new subject or word that is off limits. It's exhausting trying to keep up on what is politically correct. I never want anyone to leave my show upset, but I also feel it is our jobs as entertainers to push the envelope a little.

A few weeks ago, while in Palm Springs, we saw Lady Bunny's show called Trans-Jester. It was hilarious — we laughed our asses off and "Yasss Kween'd" at some of her darker jokes. One thing she talked about was the word tranny. She said that back in the day, the word was a term of endearment used between sis-



ter-performers and friends, but now the word is verboten. I have tried to stop saying it because so many of my trans sisters don't like the word. I will never know the struggles of being a trans person, so I try to be supportive. But if I *do* say tranny, my friends know my intent is not hurtful. Still, that word is on the list.

Lady Bunny talked about how many standup comedians won't work at certain venues, mostly colleges, because they are given a list of trigger words that they are not allowed to say — words like rape, abortion and suicide. All horrible things, but to ban words that are a part of life makes no sense to me. I have a pretty good gauge of how far I can take a joke but being told that you can't say certain words before even knowing their intent is so stupid to me. When did we become a society that is so easily offended by everything? For every point you make, there is someone ready with a counterpoint, and it defeats the purpose of joy. Butch up world — learn to take a joke.

Now to help the world.

Dear Cassie, I am a little confused as to how to approach this issue. A member of my family who has known and interacted with me for many years has recently sent me an email that left me stunned and shaken. I recently married and have celebrated the news, but since we got engaged, this family member had not bothered to remark about it on social media or even private email. The email started:

"Dear Robert, I love you. But feel compelled to tell you this: You are going to Hell! How can you openly advocate your lifestyle and your sins on Facebook like you do?" The rest carried quotes from the Bible and so forth.

In the past, I would have fired back a serious email asking her a few questions ... like how can you attack me like this when you have four kids and still are testing people for three to find the father. But is there any point in even trying to do anything with her or is it now time to just forget she shares the planet with me?

Dear Robert, Many of us have been where you are. Let me give you the advice I wish someone would have given me years ago: Life is too short to let that kind of person consume any more of your life, love or energy. I had friends years ago who told me the same bullshit. They were more than friends when I was young; they were family. So I tried to change their minds. I counterpointed their scripture with other scripture and let their opinion ruin me for a while. For some reason, it was important to me to have them accept me. They would not. Everything about our relationship changed the day I realized that I didn't need any of them. I was sad about losing those friends and

family members, but in the end it was so worth not having to be told I was "less than." A true Christian would never judge you or be so bold as to tell you where you will spend eternity.

Unfollow her, unfriend her. I'd block the bitch. You are married — he is your family now. Let him fill the void of losing an unkind, unloving family member with love. Moving on is easier than you think. Don't argue with her, don't feel like you need to put a bitch in her place. Just close the door and walk away. Good luck moving on, Cassie.

Dear Cassie, I have been married to my husband for almost three years. We are most of the time very happy. About a year ago, he got mad and punched me. I wasn't even sure what I did wrong. I didn't fight back because I am much bigger than him and would never hit him. I thought I was going to leave him for good, but that night he apologized and we had the best sex we have ever had. He fucked me like I have never been fucked.

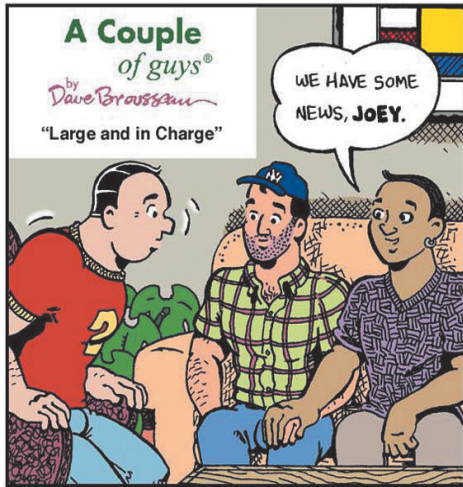
Two months later, we got into a stupid argument over me not being able to open a bottle of wine correctly. He smashed the bottle of wine and proceeded to slap me around. I balled up on the floor so he started to kick me; 20 minutes later we were fucking, and once again it was the hottest, most passionate sex we have ever had. So I guess my question to you is, should we be together or should I leave him. Thanks, Anonymous.

Dear Anon, First I need to tell the readers that I had to edit your letter way down. It was much more of the same — fighting, beating then sex (lots of sex). Way too many details. But the conclusion I have come to is this: Hitting is never OK in my book. Physical violence should end any relationship that is supposed to be based on love. That being said, I kind of feel like you are using violence as foreplay.

One of the parts I edited out talked about how you wanted to start an argument in hopes of great sex. I think you both need to see an actual therapist. I am just a drag queen with an advice column, but you two need professional help. I think your husband has anger issues and you might have daddy issues. I think y'all might be more into S&M than you even know or you have watched way too much prison porn.

I hope you are not in any real danger and if you feel you are, then please contact Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project at gmdvp.org or find a service to help you. I truly believe you both could benefit from seeing a counselor. Good luck, Cassie.

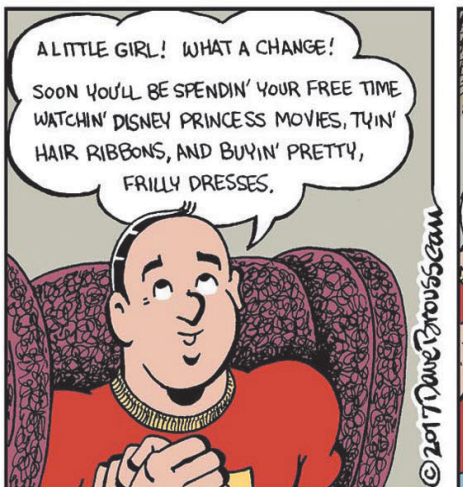
Remember to always, love more, bitch less and be fabulous! XOXO, Cassie Nova.



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- **BJ's NXS!:** **All Male Review** on Thursday.
- **Cedar Grove:** **DFW Pride Happy Hour** from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on Friday.
- **Club Changes:** **The Divine Miss Divas Show** at 10 p.m. on Saturday.
- **Club Reflection:** **Leathermen Cookout** at 4 p.m. **International Gay Rodeo Association King and Queen of the Rodeo fundraiser Cowboys and Angels** at 7 p.m. **Wall of Food Show** at 8 p.m. on Thursday.
- **Dallas Eagle:** **United Court of the Lone Star Empire** presents **Little Bit Country/Little Bit of Rock-N-Roll** at 7 p.m. on Friday. **Discipline Corps club night** at 10 p.m. on Friday. **UCLSE** presents **Spring Revival** on Saturday at 7 p.m.
 - **Onyx:** **Central Southwest Chapter club night** on Saturday. **Back to the Barracks** at 10 p.m. on Saturday.
- **Hidden Door:** **Easter Basket Auction** at 7 p.m. on Saturday.
- **JR.'s Bar & Grill:** **Cassie's Freak Show** on Monday at 11 p.m.
- **Rainbow Lounge:** Audience votes in **Drag Warz** at 11 p.m. on Wednesday.
- **Round-Up Saloon:** **Easter Basket Auction benefits Resource Center and Texas Gay Rodeo Association** at 6 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Sue Ellen's:** **Ciao Bella** on Saturday. **Kathy & Bella** at 3:30 p.m. and **Tyla Taylor** at 6 p.m. on Saturday.
- **Two Corks and a Bottle:** **Show Tune Night** from 7-10 p.m. on Wednesday.
- **Woody's Sports & Video Bar:** **Woody's patio** open all day on Easter Sunday.

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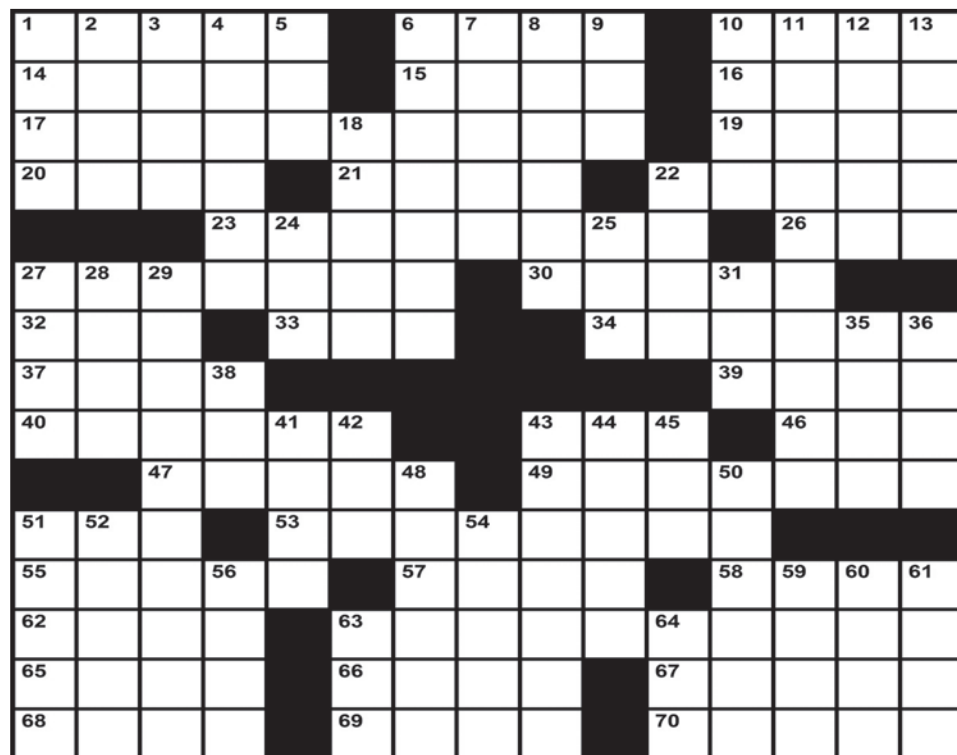
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Rainbow Flag

Solution on Page 23

Across

- 1 The Oscars, and others
- 6 "Woe ____!" (*Hamlet*)
- 10 Greek war deity
- 14 City of Lorca's homeland
- 15 *The Boys in the Band*, in 1968
- 16 Ward of *Once and Again*
- 17 Official dessert of the rainbow flag?
- 19 Ginsberg's "Gotcha"
- 20 One-named designer
- 21 Pennsylvania city
- 22 Lake site of a gay and lesbian ski week
- 23 Official band of the rainbow flag?
- 26 Heteros, on PlanetOut?
- 27 Brand for covering your bottom
- 30 List-maker Schindler
- 32 Home of the Buckeyes
- 33 "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's ____"
- 34 *Six Feet Under* auto
- 37 Queen, to a dealer
- 39 San Francisco's Nob ____
- 40 Building managers
- 43 Sixth notes in "Do-Re-Mi"
- 46 Fourth book of the OT
- 47 What some are doing in bed
- 49 "Fast," to Leonard Bernstein

- 51 Follower of James Buchanan, familiarly
- 53 Official song of the rainbow flag?
- 55 Fruit desserts
- 57 Emma Donoghue's country
- 58 Colors hair
- 62 "I've had better..."
- 63 Official beverage of the rainbow flag?
- 65 "No" to someone who is "lesbisch"
- 66 Bear overhead
- 67 Treats meat
- 68 Marine flyer
- 69 Rosie Jones supporters
- 70 Begins, as a Broadway play

Down

- 1 Ironically straight singer Marvin
- 2 State with certainty
- 3 Gay tune
- 4 Claim
- 5 Saint, in Rio
- 6 Len Deighton's *The ____ File*
- 7 Like Harvey Milk in 1978
- 8 Get by barely
- 9 Queer body part on TV
- 10 Continent of Margaret Cho's parents
- 11 Official seafood entree of the rainbow flag?
- 12 She's George
- 13 Wise guys
- 18 TV show with Isabelle
- 22 Little biker in a gay pride march
- 24 Cell stuff, for short
- 25 It hangs from your butt
- 27 George O'Malley, et al.
- 28 Birthright seller of the Bible
- 29 The other official song of the rainbow flag?
- 31 Mouth-open-wide sound
- 35 Sling mud at
- 36 Muppet pal of Rosie
- 38 Laurie Partridge portrayer Susan
- 41 Ridges on condoms
- 42 Trump-mocking comedy
- 43 Thin plates
- 44 "____ Comes Mary" (*The Association*, 1966)
- 45 "Reduce Speed", on a sign
- 48 Bonheur's war
- 50 With butts in the air?
- 51 Make up (for)
- 52 Rainbow flag designer Gilbert
- 54 Use a rubber
- 56 Timothy Daly's sister
- 59 Time of *Camelot*
- 60 Genie portrayer Barbra
- 61 Abuse orally
- 63 Glossy gay magazine
- 64 Logical beginning



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