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Mama's bear cubs

Protecting her gay, trans children prompted Valerie Hefner to run for the Texas House

by David Taffet, Page 8



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Valerie's Hefner's gay son Desmond and trans daughter Arri. Photo courtesy Valerie Hefner. Design by Kevin Thomas

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communityvoices

'Religious freedom' by any other name is still discrimination

Last spring, Texas lawmakers passed — and Gov. Greg Abbott signed — the despicable “Freedom to Serve Children Act,” which allowed providers within Texas’ child welfare system, allowing them to decline services to individuals based on “the provider’s sincerely held religious beliefs.” Basically, that means that agencies handling adoption and foster care can still receive state funds even though they refuse to work with LGBT people — or anyone else they don’t like, such as mixed race couples or Muslims — just by claiming that working with those people — whether it be a Jewish couple looking to adopt or, say, a gay teen looking for a foster home, for example — would in some way violate their personal religious beliefs.

As nasty as that piece of legislation is, Texas did manage to dodge the bullet of a similar bill that would have allowed those in health care professions to refuse to treat certain people with some characteristic — say, being LGBT — that that health care professional’s personal religious beliefs say is wrong.

But leave it to Donald Trump and his bevy of bigots to leave no stone unturned in their ongoing effort to be as hateful and discriminatory — and unchristian, and un-American — as possible.

This week, on Thursday, Jan. 18, the Trump administration announced the creation of a new conscience and religious freedom division within the Health and Human Services Department that will allow doctors, nurses and other medical professionals to opt out of providing services that violate their moral or religious beliefs.

So much for the Hippocratic Oath.

Right-wingers, of course, were giddy, claiming it protects “people who have objections to participating in abortions,” as David Christensen with the Family Research Council said.

But those on the sane — excuse me, progressive — side of the equation pointed out that this new HHS division puts the health, the very lives of many, many people at risk.

Annise Parker, president and CEO of The Victory Fund, said it has “opened the door to widespread discrimination against LGBT people seeking health services.” She also called out HHS Secretary Roger Severino as an “anti-LGBT activist who has long fought against equality for our community, ignoring science and reality to justify his crusade.”

Rea Carey, executive director of the National LGBTQ Task Force, declared, “We are not fooled: The new office ... is meant to make it easier for people to discriminate, not to protect

people of faith. ...

“The overwhelming majority of people of faith support health care access for women and LGBTQ people,” Carey continued. “There is no contradiction between meeting your duty to care for all people and living by your moral and religious conviction. All people deserve access to health care. ...”

Kathy Miller, president of the Texas Freedom Network, didn’t mince words. “This policy makes a mockery of religious freedom by turning faith into a weapon to discriminate [against] and harm people simply because of who they are or the health care services they need.

“It’s outrageous and dangerous to make care for an LGBT person, a woman or anyone else dependent on the personal beliefs of a doctor or emergency care woman rather than on medical necessity.”

LGBT people have long been urged to “be honest” with our doctors and other caregivers about who we are. The fact that you are a gay man or a lesbian or a trans woman can have significant impact on your health risks and on the kind of treatment or preventative measures you might need.



Tammye Nash
From Where I Stand

But when you are worried that your doctor may refuse to treat you — or that the nurse in the ER might refuse to administer that life-saving injection or the paramedic at the scene of the accident might refuse to give you CPR — because their religion says LGBT people are evil, you probably aren’t gonna tell them, now are you?

And that could potentially put your life at risk.

A more likely scenario is that LGBT people will just stop going to the doctor — no more regular checkups, no more doctor visits to see about that odd lump in your breast or some other alarming symptom.

LGBT people — especially lesbians and trans people — are already drastically underserved when it comes to health care. With Trump’s new religious persecution — excuse me, religious freedom — division of the HHS, that’s only going to get worse.

But here’s the thing I really really REALLY don’t get in all this: It seems, for the most part, that the folks driving this discrimination disguised as religious liberty for the most part call themselves Christians. But how — seriously, HOW — can you possibly refuse to help a person in need and still call yourself a Christian?

Like Jesus said: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like white-washed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness.”

Bones and filth. That’s what this all comes down to, in the end: Our dead bones and your bloody hands and filthy souls.

Tammye Nash is managing editor of Dallas Voice. She is also a proud member of The Resistance.



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**READERS VOICE
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The Michaels

We sit down with mellow power couple
Michael Robinson and Michael Serrecchia

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

Partners in life and theater: Costume designer Robinson and director Serrecchia on the set of 'A Minor Case of Murder!' (Photo courtesy of Pegasus Theatre)

Alexa is playing opera over the Echo while The Michaels — theater director/choreographer Michael Serrecchia and costume designer/actor Michael Robinson — toil away in the kitchen. Dinner will be served shortly; until then, an asparagus frittata and sparkling wine will tide us over until the sauce is ready, the chicken cooked, the fettuccine made fresh by their own hands. Robinson had just gifted Serrecchia with a pasta maker for Christmas, and they were anxious to try it out. Not that making pasta is new to them; with a name like Serrecchia, you learn early to appreciate Italian food, good wine, the symbolic and practical aspects of cooking... in short, la dolce vita, *the good life*.

If they weren't such mellow fellows, The Michaels might be considered a power couple in the North Texas theater scene — Robinson designing costumes (he also runs the Dallas Costume Shoppe) for numerous companies and directors; Serrecchia in demand bringing countless shows to life. They often work apart, but frequently together, including the current production of the original mystery comedy *A Minor Case of Murder!*, one of Pegasus Theatre's remarkable Living Black & White shows, where makeup,

wigs, sets and, of course, costumes make living human beings appear to be in a black-and-white film from the 1930s. This is old hat for Serrecchia; *Minor Case* is his seventh consecutive Living B&W production. But it's also a unique pairing Robinson's first chance to design the costumes for Pegasus.

"I had appeared in the final show [Pegasus founder, playwright and star that Kurt Kleinmann] did as Harry Hunsacker, but this is my first time to costume it," Robinson recounts over a cordial of homemade lemoncello. "It was still challenging — I have seen [Pegasus shows] for years" —

Pegasus' theater used to be across from the Dallas Costume Shoppe on the edge of Deep Ellum — "but it was daunting at first. The wig designer, for instance, had to make a blonde wig [that could not be truly blonde] —

how do you do that? You look at fabrics and [have to] predict, how will that read [onstage]? What color would this be if it were a color? Texture helps to [suggest] color and add a different depth. Satins all look the same, for instance. But this play is set on New Year's Eve, so we can [add texture] with sequins and beads..." although those as well can be fraught with risk.

"Sequins can reflect prisms of color —

shoot rainbows, as we say," Serrecchia offers, nothing that over the years, he has learned tons of shorthands, potholes and tricks to make a B&W show work. One pitfall: The black-and-white effect isn't employed until tech week, immediately before the opening of the show, so all the work is telescoped into an intense few days (that occurs, as timing would have it, between Christmas and New Year's).

"It's tricky. You can look at old movies where you know an actor's true hair color and see a film they did in black and white [to figure out how to do it]," Robinson says. But even that doesn't always work: Barbara Hale's makeup for *Perry Mason* required a green base and black lips to "read" as fleshtones on TV, and the notorious red dress Bette Davis wore in *Jezebel* was actually black. And then there are the bigger limitations imposed by the Pegasus Theatre.

"We're not allowed to show any blood — it's one of the rules in the Harrypedia," the compendium of parameters Kleinmann insists upon so that all shows are consistent, Serrecchia says, dunking a homemade biscotto into his coffee. "In fact, the No. 1 question of me, probably because people know directors go screaming into the night [when faced with the Harrypedia], is 'How do you do it?' But

the strictures are actually freeing. You can't be off-the-wall. If this is your world, you have to be creative within that, but it's more challenging. They are comedy characters, but they have [fixed traits]: Who can carry a gun or wear a hat or say this or that. It's kind of crazy ... but kind of exciting." (In this show, for instance, Det. Foster — who in every previous show wears a hat and overcoat, doesn't have those because it takes place in a nightclub on the first New Year's Eve after Prohibition has been lifted.)

Another challenge for Serrecchia is that, with a new play like this one, neither the cast nor even he has the full script when rehearsals begin — he gets them at most a few days before rehearsal. But the artist in him loves it.

"Sometimes we rehearse and we don't even know who has been killed!" Serrecchia says. "There are no limits here — you have to create. I make [my actors] do their character work and make sure everyone of them *could* have done it. Once we find out [who the killer is], I make very few adjustments because they are all playing the truth of their character. That's exciting!"

Maybe not as exciting as making fettuccine, lemoncello and biscotti then relaxing over a fine meal, but the good life has many aspects. ■

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Tragedy times 2

'Glengarry' sells itself;
Hillary loses (again)

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
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Lucy Van Pelt told Charlie Brown you're not anybody until you've appeared on a bubblegum card. Screw that. The... no, listen, I... hey, wait, pay atten... I talk-- I said I'm talking to you, asshole! Damn! Pay fucking attention why dontcha.... Now, as I was saying You're not anybody until your name becomes an adjective.

And that's David Mamet. The playwright, who turned the use of profanity framed by ellipses into something akin to high art, luxuriates in language the way a hitman luxuriates in high-calibre ordnance. He uses words as both swords and grenades, lobbing invectives across the stage as characters reveal themselves through manipulative explosions of anger, threat ... and, I'm sure once or twice, affection.

GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS

Bath House Cultural Center,
521 E. Lawther Drive. Through Jan. 27.
ImprintTheatreworks.org.

One shaft of fleeting bromantic admiration is apparent in *Glengarry Glen Ross*, the company-launching debut from the new Imprint Theatreworks, operating out of the Bath House Cultural Center. One uber-salesman, Ricky Roma (Joe Messina), understands the balls and vulnerability that come with convincing folks with disposable income to spend their money with you. He sees in Shelley "The Machine" Levene (Mark Oristano) a fellow traveler — one who has been on a cool streak of late, to be sure, but a man who has

achieved something special in life selling Florida retirement properties to nervous Chicagoans with undesignated cash. Attention, attention must be paid to such a man.

Since its debut (can it be?!) 35 years ago, *Glengarry* has been the gold standard against which ruthlessness is embraced in the theater, but really, it's the flip side to Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. In Miller's version, we virtually never see Willy Loman ply his trade, merely the



A gang of ruthless real estate salesmen (Joe Messina, Mark Oristano, Shane Beeson) spew bile in the Mametian 'Glengarry Glen Ross.' (Photo courtesy Kris Ikejiri)

effects of his downfall. *Glengarry* catches its Willys during their rise, plateau and slide, and adds on it the acknowledgment of the cyclical nature of the Lomans in our midst. Even a great era must pass. (Evidence: Our current presidency.)

Glengarry Glen Ross is arguably a flawless play but which, paradoxically, is nearly impossible to do right. You need actors attuned to the archness of Mamet's obsessive punctuation and his unyielding sense of the sound of a play. His characters emerge less

from exposition (you can barely ever trust the words coming out of a Mamet character), but the manner in which they talk — the patter, the word choice, the speed. So, we know Roma is smooth because of the oily but unexpected way he sidles up to a mark (pardon — a "client") in a Chinese restaurant; that Aaronow (Lon Barrera) is a soft-sell weakling because of how he adles and fixates; that Moss (Kevin Moore) is bravado masking insecurity; and that Levene is the embodiment of sweaty des-

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peration twinged by the memory of former greatness. When the real estate office they all work at is burglarized, the list of premium “leads” (people likely to invest in land) purloined, we know one or more of them did it; it’s seeing how they all cope with the accusations that we learn about them. (Character, they say, is what you do when nobody is watching; fuck that, it’s what they do when accused of a crime.)

Mamet is as ruthless with his storytelling economy — and apparent opinion about the human animal — as these characters are with other human beings. They are like manifestations of the writer’s own personality — neuroses made flesh. That’s a narrow window to shoot an arrow through, but director Ashley H. White manages it with her tight cast. North Texas newcomer Messina is more roly-poly than other Romas I’ve seen, but he makes it work with his variation of the Jedi mindfuck; Ian Meade Moore as the milquetoast victim of his pitch is poignantly sympathetic. But Oristano — tall but somehow not imposing, gray-haired and defeated but with the fight of a junkyard dog still in him — gives the show’s best performance. He’s like the high school football star who lives in his past glories, but for whom the

stakes are higher than mere ego. Sales are life for him, literally. The profane, volatile vulgarities of Mamet’s aggression can’t mask the tragedy at its heart. *Glengarry Glen Ross* is a bleak comedy about the fear of becoming obsolete. Its message has rarely felt more pertinent.

Hillary and Clinton portrays a tragedy of different kind. In author Lucas Hnath’s construct, the universe is filled with infinite Earths with differences major and minor, including ones where a former First Lady named Hillary is black, her husband Bill is as much liability as advisor, her opponent in the 2008 primaries is a black man, and she never gets to be president.

Ummm... how is that, really, different from *this* universe.

And thus the conundrum of Hnath’s play, which opened Second Thought Theatre’s 2018 season. He gives himself free rein to rewrite world history to his liking, and what does he do? Tweak this, nip that, spin here, change here and then leave everything more or less the same. So the question is, why? Why pretend these are the Clintons-only-not-the-Clintons when you could fictionalize like a “ripped from the headlines” episode of *Law & Order*,

HILLARY AND CLINTON
Bryant Hall on the Kalita Humphreys campus, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd.
Through Feb. 3. 2TT.co.



An alternative-universe Hillary (Stormi Demerson) and Bill (Barry Nash) relive the 2008 Democratic primary in ‘Hillary and Clinton.’ (Photo courtesy Karen Almond)

or research the actual events and try to explain them? *Hillary and Clinton* feels lazy — a writer who wanted to opine about recent politics without the requirement to fact-check or get permissions.

Simply not enough happens to keep our interest for 85 uninterrupted minutes in uncomfortable chairs. I don’t blame the cast — Stormi Demerson as Hillary, Jim Kuenzer as her campaign manager, Barry Nash as Bill (but not Bill!) and Sam Henderson as “The Other Guy” — who

all seem to acquit themselves of what the script requires. But Hnath toggles meaninglessly between directly addressing the audience to restoring the fourth wall to breaking the artifice of the play construct itself and does so with virtually nothing happening onstage. *H&C* is as stiff as any play I’ve seen, and it doesn’t do anything to upend its characters in profound ways. Mamet transforms words into actions; Hnath can’t even transform them into a compelling story.

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L+S dining

Something to taco 'bout

2 deceptively modest taquerias, Taquero and Revolver, take vastly divergent approaches to the same cuisine, but both achieve exceptional results

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

It's an overcast, drab, chilly Dallas day, the kind that lingers briefly and then can re-up every few weeks, any time from October through March — a day, in other words, when eating something warm and familiar can make a large difference in your attitude. You might think it would be a good time to warm up indoors, but if you're eating at **Taquero**, as I was, you don't really get that option. The restaurant's public spaces are exclusively limited to an uncovered patio, an outdoors-only, order-window-style place, with a smattering of outdoor furniture and a bar populated by white vinyl-covered stools that call to mind the decor on *Mad Men*.

Yet the weather does not deter me, nor should it you. Once you order, the server promptly returns with this astonishing taco stand's version of an amuse bouche: complimentary borracho beans, delivered in an earthenware mug with an oversized, colorful antique spoon. The radiant heat warms your hands, and is even warming going down; the steam from the soupy mixture wafts toward your nose, tantalizing and soothing at the same time. Comfort food, *a la Mexicana*.

Taquero occupies a shady, blink-and-you'll-miss-it corner along Singleton Boulevard in West Dallas, marked only by a modest sign and far from the hipster hubbub of Trinity Groves just a mile down the road. Parking is tight in its tiny lot, and street parking depends on how far you are willing to walk through this residential barrio of small, A-frame homes. It's worth a good walk, even in brisk weather, because Taquero offers a unique spin on street tacos.

Street tacos? More like *field* tacos: This is masculine, bold food — there's nothing dainty or meek or demure about these tacos. (The restaurant's name, Taquero, seems intentionally to rhyme with *vaquero*, the Spanish term for a herding cowboy

— the kind of butch image that demands handheld food with some heft, not a quick nosh while dashing through traffic on your way to a meeting downtown.) Most authentic Mexican tacos in Dallas, even the best ones, rarely take more than three bites to finish and are prepared with sprinklings of finely-diced condiments and herbs. Taquero will have none of that: Durable, single-layer corn tortillas (no choice of flour offered) cradle rough and rustic ingredients: Thick-cut cubes of pork carnitas, a slab of steak the size of a small filet, chunky onions, slivers of chipotle, silver dollar slices of roma tomatoes and diced peppers.

Chef Fino Rodriguez has developed about a dozen tacos, from lengua to al pastor to fish, providing sufficient variety to let you try out a new duet (I wouldn't order more than two unless you've just escaped from a prison work camp) every week and not get bored. The pork is spicy and filling; the steak, while a bit tough (probably owing to the cut of meat), was cooked medium-rare and seasoned well.

Just as enticing is the torta Chihuahua (\$8), a hearty Mexican-style panino served on a firm-crust but unexpectedly soft roll, with succulent carnitas, balanced with avocado, tomato and slaw... all made more emphatic by roja and verde salsas that pack punch (though that could be the chipotles doing overtime).

Irrespective of its humble locale, the vibe is distinctly enjoyable. Images of queer Mexican artist Frida Kahlo peer down from multiple perches; the staff (they speak English, but Spanish is clearly the preferred method of communication) is solicitous, polite, courteous and largely invisible; contemporary Spanish-language music with bossa nova beats wafts out of the speakers. Even when it's cold out, that's enough, with beans and spicy salsa, to warm you up, body and soul.

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The torta chihuahua at Taquero expands its menu beyond tacos; all items feature spicy salsas. (Photography by Arnold Wayne Jones)

In many ways, **Revolver Taco Lounge** couldn't be more different from Taquero: It's in Deep Ellum, the granddaddy of dining destinations for adventurous foodies rather than the up-and-coming West Dallas scene that didn't register a blip only four years ago. They are divided by two highways, and while Singleton hosts a melange of auto garages, tax-preparation offices and single-family homes, Deep Ellum is an established hipster hang of tattoo parlors, underground music venues and trendy, quirky boutiques and craft beer brewpubs. They also take vastly different approaches to the craft of the taco. But both are doing their things defiantly and uniquely. They stake their claims on reinvention of a familiar, usually pretty cheap bit of protein-forward sustenance.

Revolver can boast an actual interior, and a nice one at that. A long high-top table with bench seating dominates the small dining room, where music ranged from the funky syncopation of Cake playing on the radio one moment, then immediately morphing into old-school West Coast hip-hop. A colorful mural of Dia de los Muertos sugar skulls dominates one wall. In short: This is Deep Ellum at its coolest.

Revolver's aesthetic also claims more classical culinary aspirations. Tacos here cost twice, even thrice the standard price-point for a standard taco, the result of labor-intensive creations prepared in the open kitchen *a la minute*. The menu contains more.

All the tacos are served on a thick,

■ **TACO** Next Page

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Adrienne Hicks (Celie) and the North American tour cast of THE COLOR PURPLE. Photo by Matthew Murphy, 2017.



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L+S dining



The pulpo taco at Revolver continues the octopus trend. (Photography by Arnold Wayne Jones)

■ **TACO** From Previous Page

single housemade corn tortilla (they look fluffy and white, which might make you think they are flour, but they are not, and impart a sweetness on the proteins). That's an impressive foundation on which to construct the architecture of tacos. The skill is apparent on the pulpo (\$5), which offers an elegant execution of briny, moist, tender (*not* chewy) octopus "carnitas" undergirding fried leeks layered in crunchy strips and drizzled in a salsa verde (it's made of jalapeno, not avocado or tomatillo, so be prepared for the heat).

I shouldn't have to convince any daring foodhound to gravitate toward the cabrito (\$8), perhaps the signature taco on the menu. The Michoacan-style month-old baby goat was smooth and succulent. (A special made of rabbit cabrito was on the menu, but sold out on my last visit.) The pato (\$7) — a medium seared breast of duck — may have been the most perfect preparation of duck in any context I've had in year — melted on my tongue, but

the caramelized onions and roasted poblano fleshed out the mouthfeel.

A recent addition to the menu is the El Degenerado (\$7.50), practically a meal in itself: Chorizo — rich, fatty, smoky — combined with aged wagyu carne asada, crowned by a luscious egg makes it appear to be brunchy. It's arresting to look at (another diner ordered one for himself after ogling mine), but even better to eat. (A version of just the carne asada without chorizo or egg is also offered.)

Beyond tacos, chef Hugo Galvan has also concocted a ceviche list, and created a Mexican hot dog around Luscher's Red Hots sausages, and the beer list includes quite a few Mexican brews. But the tacos are what lingers — not just as one-off bites for a quick lunch, but as an overall dining experience, a celebration of the creativity that can be achieved within the modest circumference of a tortilla. *Viva tacos!*

*Taquero, 1601 Singleton Blvd.
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**Tuesday 01.23 —
Sunday 02.04**

Push da button! 'Color Purple' returns to Fair Park

The movie made Oprah Winfrey a star, but the stage musical adaptation of Alice Walker's novel *The Color Purple*, about a beset-upon black woman making her way in the segregated South of the early 20th century — including coming to terms with her own sexuality — stands up in its own right. The national tour of the recent revival settles into Fair Park Music Hall for a two-week engagement. Presented by Dallas Summer Musicals.

DEETS: Music Hall at Fair Park, 909 First Ave. DallasSummerMusicals.org.



Saturday 01.20

Compagnie Hervé Koubi dances into the Arts District

A few years ago, the Dallas debut of the French-Algerian dance company by choreographer Hervé Koubi wowed audiences with its bold modern mix of hip-hop and street-style dancing from an all-male company of African artists. It returns this weekend for a one-night-only presentation, certainly one of the most eagerly awaited dance programs of the year. Presented by TITAS.

DEETS: Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 8 p.m. ATTPAC.org.

**Friday 01.19 —
Sunday 01.21**

Theatre 3 unmask 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde'

In a few weeks, the Dallas Theater Center will debut its new take on a 19th century classic of Gothic literature with *Frankenstein*, but if you want to whet your Victorian appetite, try a taste of Theatre 3's new version of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. One unique conceit of this version: While Jekyll is played by a single actor (Michael Federico), four actors play various identities of Mr. Hyde in this frightening psychological portrait of depravity.

DEETS: Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. In previews through Sunday. Theatre3Dallas.com.



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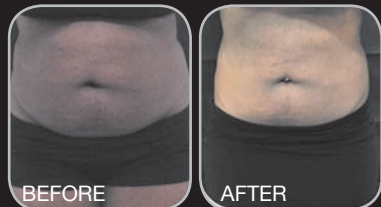


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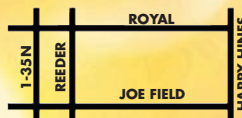
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calendar highlights



'A Night with Janis Joplin,' a jukebox musical about the late Texas rock legend, plays at Bass Hall on Wednesday and Eisemann Center on Friday.

ARTSWEEK THEATER

A Minor Case of Murder. A world premiere Living Black-and-White production from Pegasus Theatre, following the antics of inept detective Harry Hunsacker as he solves a crime on New Years' Eve 1933. Directed by Michael Serrecchia. See feature story on Page 14. Eisemann Center for Performing Arts, 2351 Performance Drive, Richardson. Through Jan. 28. PegasusTheatre.org.

Daddy Long Legs. The stage adaptation of the classic Fred Astaire movie musical. Presented by Irving-based Lyric Stage at its new Dallas home at The Majestic Theater, 1925 Elm St. Through Sunday. LyricStage.org.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. A new adaptation of the psychological horror story. Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Through Feb. 11. Theatre3Dallas.com.

The Gazebo. A comedy thriller that tributes Hitchcock. Directed by Doug Miller. Irving Arts Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd. Through Feb. 3. IrvingTheatre.org.

Glengarry Glen Ross. The new theater company Imprint Theatreworks opens its inaugural season with this Pulitzer Prize-winner about cutthroat real estate salesmen. The cast includes Kevin Moore and Lon Barrera. *Reviewed this week.* Bath House Cultural Center, 521 E. Lawther Drive. Through Jan. 27. ImprintTheatreworks.org.

Hillary and Clinton. A woman named Hillary with a husband named Bill is running for president of the United States in this fictional work by playwright Lucas Hnath (*The Christians*, *Red Speedo*, *A Doll's House Part 2*). Opens Second Thought's 2018 season. *Reviewed this week.* Bryant Hall on the Kalita Humphreys campus, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through Feb. 3. 2TT.co.

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change. The 18th (and final) production from Theatre Too of this musical revue about romance. Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Through March 4. Theatre3Dallas.com.

Like a Billion Likes. An unpopular high school girl starts up a relationship with a gender-non-

conforming boy and abuses social media in this contemporary dark comedy. Stage West, 821 W. Vickery Blvd., Fort Worth. Through Feb. 18. Stagewest.org.

Something Rotten. A struggling playwright keeps getting bested by his rival, William Shakespeare, and hopes to revolutionize theater with a new-fangled genre called “a musical.” Hilarious. Bass Performance Hall, 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth. Through Sunday. BassHall.com.

DANCE
Shen Yun Performing Arts. The Chinese dance company performs. *Final weekend.* Music Hall at Fair Park, 909 First Ave. ShenYun.com/dallas.

FINE ART
Yayoi Kusama: All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins. The DMA features the only Infinity Mirror Room of its kind in a North American collection, this tribute to the gourd by Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through Feb. 25. DMA.org.

FRIDAY 01.19
COMMUNITY
Panoptikon. The weekly retro disco dance party, presented by Lord Byron. Red Light, 2911 Main St. Doors 9 p.m.

FILM
CineWilde Presents I’m So Excited. Almadovar’s candy-colored comedy about an airline. Presented by CineWilde, with a pre-show discussion and campy karaoke post-show party. Texas Theatre, 231 W. Jefferson Blvd. 8:30 p.m. doors, 9 p.m. show. \$10.

SATURDAY 01.20
COMMUNITY
FrontRunners. Gay jogging/walking group meets weekly at 9 a.m. in Oak Lawn Park at Hall Street and Turtle Creek Boulevard for a run along the Katy Trail.

DANCE
Cie. Hervé Koubi. The company of all male street dancers from Algeria and Burkina Faso returns for one night only. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. ATPAC.org.

TUESDAY 01.23
FILM
Kiss Me, Kate. Life imitates arts in this Cole Porter musical set to the plot of, and backdrop to a production of, *The Taming of the Shrew*. 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.

THEATER
The Color Purple. The story of Celie, a black woman triply disadvantaged in the early 20th century South. Fair Park Music Hall, 909 First Ave. Jan. 23–Feb. 4. DallasSummerMusicals.org

WEDNESDAY 01.24
THEATER
A Night with Janis Joplin. A jukebox musical set to the songs of the great bisexual Texas rocker. (Also plays at the Eisemann later in the week.) Bass Performance Hall, 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth. 7:30 p.m. BassHall.com.

THURSDAY 01.25
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.

FRIDAY 01.26
THEATER
A Night with Janis Joplin. A jukebox musical set to the songs of the great bisexual Texas rocker. Eisemann Center for Performing Arts, 2351 Performance Drive, Richardson. Jan. 26 only. EisemannCenter.com.
Elliot, A Soldier’s Fugue. Addison Theatre Centre, 15650 Addison Road. Jan. 26–Feb. 18 (in previews through Jan. 28). WaterTowerTheatre.org.

this week’s solution

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Cassie Nova

Flu, peeing and trusting an ex

Hey, y'all. When I sit down to write this mess, I tend to write about whatever has been on my mind that week. This week, my husband and I have had the freakin' flu. That shit has kicked our asses for five solid days. Last Sunday was Jamie's first day off in weeks and he was sick. I was hoping to go see a movie or have a fabulous Sunday Funday, but no. Instead of brunch, we took a trip to CareNow where he received the wonderful news (flu!) *Dammit!!*

The next morning, I woke up feeling like death as well. My doctor gave me Tamiflu saying we might catch it in time to knock it out. I'm not sure if we did; here it is Saturday, and I am just now feeling normalish.

The flu is no joke this year. We both had our flu shots but still got it. I still say always get your flu shots. Apparently it could have been a lot worse. I will say, thank God for drugs. That Tylenol with codeine helped us sleep even though I couldn't feel my face or anything else for a few hours. Oh, now I get it: That song by The Weeknd is about drugs. Duh!

I try not to be such a pussy when I am sick, but I coughed so much that my diaphragm muscles felt like I had been doing hundreds of crunches. I almost feel like I should have rock-hard abs and a flat stomach by now. When most people get sick they lose a few pounds from not having an appetite. My poor husband had zero appetite — I had to force him to eat or drink anything. I, on the other hand, stayed hungry. I couldn't taste anything, but that didn't stop my fat ass from eating.

On a lighter note, let me tell you about something that happened to me last weekend after the show. I parked in the paid parking area where the Caven employees park before the show. Fast forward to the end of the night I'm fresh out of drag, looking and feeling haggard. It is probably 2:30 in the morning and I just wanna jump in my car and get home. I notice this dude standing very close to my car. My first thought was, oh shit, where is my Taser? Then I realize the motherfucker is peeing. He sees me and zips up and walks to his car parked behind mine.



I get around to my driver's side where he was peeing and see that he has pissed all over my front right wheel. I love my car; it's totes adorbs. So I hulked up. I am pissed. I turned to that asshole screaming, "You pissed on my car!" He had the nerve to smile at me as he slammed his door.

I didn't know what to do. I was so angry. I thought, find a rock and smash out all of his windows, pull him out of his car, whoop his ass, jump on top of his car and keep jumping till my rage went away. All of that went through my mind quickly, but I settled on a much less violent approach. I whipped my dick out and forced out as much pee as I could muster and soaked the side of his car as he drove away. The look on his face was worth it though; he looked like, "What the fuck? This homo is crazy!" He wasn't smiling anymore.

The truth is, I almost pulled a groin muscle and ruptured my nuts trying to force pee out in time to get it on his car. I didn't exactly soak it, more like an S.O.S. message: *Dot dot dash dash dot.*

I stood there, dick in hand, just as pleased with myself as I could be. I then realized what it must look like to anyone standing around, so I made myself right and looked around. Luckily there was nobody else around that I could see. Please God do not let there be a video somewhere of that incident. And to the guy that pissed on my tire? Betcha won't do it again!

Now, as if I have the right, let me help out some folks.

Dear Cassie, I had a boyfriend for about three years. We recently broke up. While we were together, we adopted two dogs and a cat. All rescues and all three became our children. Our break-up was hard, but we have decided to remain friends because I know he loves the animals as much as I do.

He has asked if he can keep the dogs at his place for the weekends. I live in a house with a yard. He now has a small apartment in Oak Lawn. I hate the idea of them being around streets and cars so much. One problem we had when we were together was I was the disciplinarian. He never made them listen or mind him, so I don't trust that they will listen to him out in public where they could be put in danger. Part of me thinks that the animals are going to help us get back together. Should I let

him take the dogs on the weekend or should I be selfish? Thanks, Byron.

Dear Byron, Child, I do not envy you. First off, trust your gut. If you don't think that he can control the dogs out in public then do not let him take them. Let him know he can come over and spend time with them in the safety of your yard. Are your animals big or small? How do they act in public or when they encounter other dogs? If your dogs are yard dogs and don't know how to act on a leash, then you need to train them if you are ever going to let them go to his apartment.

Honestly, it sounds to me like you want to get back with your ex. Would y'all still talk if you didn't have dogs? Good lord, could you imagine how hard this would be with actual children. Like I said, trust your gut. If you trust him to keep them safe then let him take them, otherwise... you got a yard for a reason. Good luck to you both, Cassie.

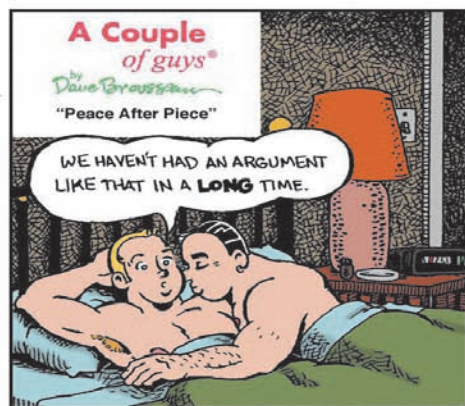
Dearest Cassie, I miss the old Rose Room. Drag just doesn't feel the same as it did back in the day. That small Rose Room was so much better than the giant room you have now. Do you think drag has changed too much? Signed, Miss Nostalgic.

Dear Debbie Downer, Yes, drag has changed. I too miss the old Rose Room. It was awesome. It was so intimate and personal. You were right up on the girls as they performed. As an entertainer we always complained that the room was too small, but when we got the new room, we gave up a lot of that intimacy for a bigger and in some ways better show.

Drag feels different for many reasons. First off, there will never be a time as fun as when you first start coming out and being around your people. Those first five years of coming out to the shows, everything was better. The music, the people, just everything. Drag seemed better because it was fresh and new to you. Just like to some new kid who will look back on the "now" times and say the same thing you are saying in the future. It is an evolution. I'm glad you remember the old Rose Room so fondly, so do I. Just accept that things change, give the now a chance.

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

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



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 - **Club Reflection:** **Empress' Starlight AIDS Ball** and **Snowflake Contest** with buffet at 6 p.m. and ball at 6 p.m. on Saturday. **Leathermen chili cookoff** from 4–7 p.m. and Court Show at 7 p.m. on Sunday. **Wall of Food Show** at 8 p.m. on Wednesday.
 - **Dallas Eagle:** **Boots, Chaps & Cowboy Hats** hosted by **Onyx Lone Star** at 10 p.m. on Saturday. **Diva Night** with **DJ C-Rail** on Saturday.
 - **JR.'s Bar & Grill:** **Cassie's Freak Show** at 11 p.m. on Monday.
 - **Marty's Live:** **Gumbo for a Cause** from 4–9 p.m. on Sunday, benefits Resource Center Food Pantry. **Lardi B – Bodak Jello** performs at 7 p.m. on Sunday.
 - **Round-Up Saloon:** **Bear Happy Hour** from 6–9 p.m. on Friday.
 - **Sue Ellen's:** **Mustache Envy** on Friday. **Robin Lore** on Saturday. **Bella & Darla** at 3:30 p.m. followed by **Edison** on Sunday.
 - **The Rose Room:** **Mr. and Miss Gay Dallas USofA** and **Miss Gay Dallas USofA Newcomer** at 10:30 p.m. on Wednesday. \$10 cover.
 - **Urban Cowboy Saloon:** **Drag Race** watch party at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday.
 - **Woody's Sports & Video Bar:** **HRC Federal Club** mixer from 6–8 p.m. on Friday.
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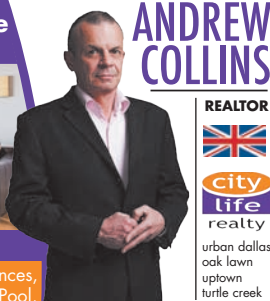
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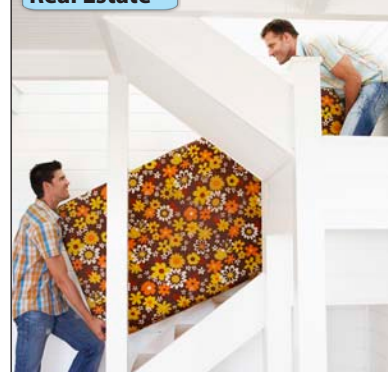
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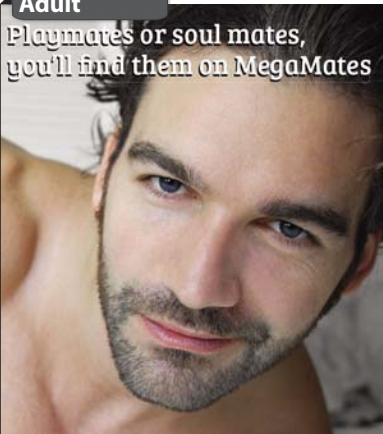
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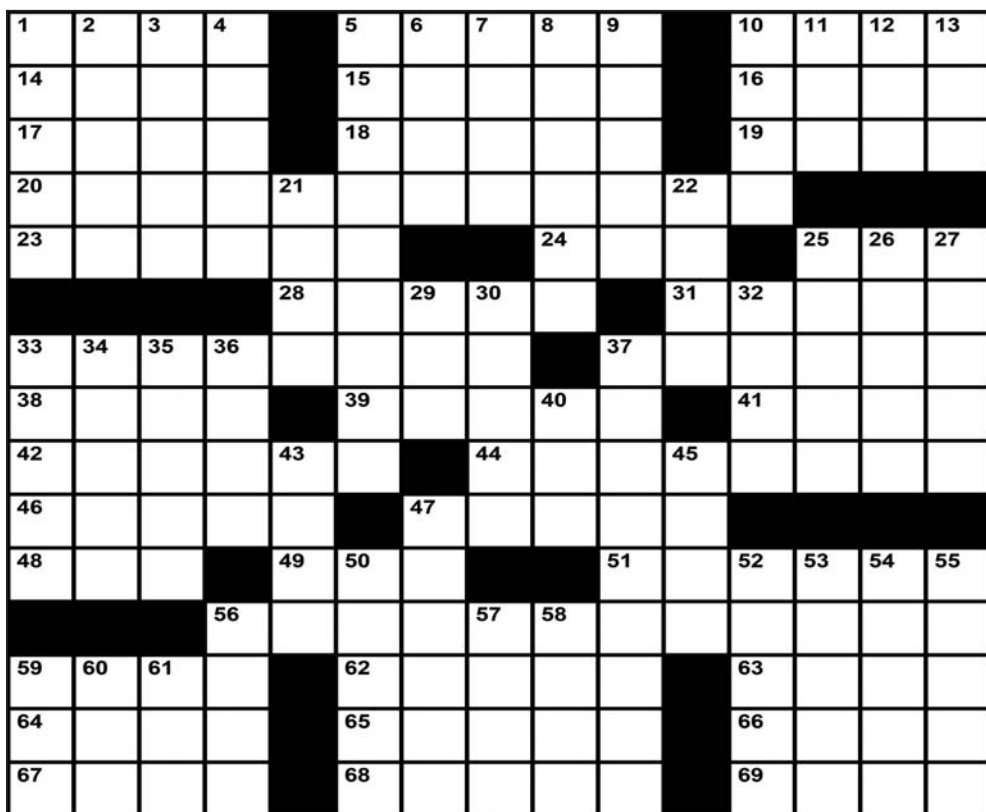
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Solution on Page 23

Across

- 1 Filed for palimony, e.g.
 5 Gay rodeo accessory
 10 Jeremy Irons title, in *The Borgias*
 14 Lesbos, for one
 15 Ike's opponent
 16 Wilson of *Zoolander*
 17 Man in a skirt, perhaps
 18 Pieces of Porter's fuel?
 19 "I'm ___ your tricks!"
 20 Author of Trump expose *Fire and Fury*
 23 Mary Cassatt, for one
 24 Three R's supporter
 25 And, in Aachen
 28 Tests that could make you go down?
 31 What a surrogate mom goes into
 33 Gavin McInnes claims you can't trust 20-Across because he has this...
 37 Hoffman title role
 38 Tammy Baldwin and others
 39 Position in Bernstein's orchestra
 41 Gilbert or Teasdale
 42 Amy chaser Ben
 44 ...and because 20-Across is probably this
 46 Where *Aida* premiered
 47 Butler of *Gone with the Wind*

- 48 It may follow directions
 49 Personal-ad stat
 51 Desists
 56 What it's hard to keep when you read the claims of McInnes
 59 Hoofbeat of a stallion
 62 *Frasier* pup
 63 Rock's Jethro
 64 Enjoy phone sex
 65 Speed skater Blanchard
 66 Red rind contents
 67 "Climb ___ Mountain"
 68 Former Mouseketeer
 69 Meter maid of rock

Down

- 1 S, as in Socrates
 2 Old line for cockpit workers
 3 Log Cabin Republican's poster word
 4 New ___ (birthplace of Urvashi Vaid)
 5 Where Eliza cheered for Dover
 6 Ryan of porn
 7 What there oughta be
 8 Chicken hawk's weapons
 9 Gay partners can walk this in every state
 10 *Billy Elliot* epithet
 11 Rent alternative
 12 Stroke your furry one

- 13 New Age music pioneer
 21 Dating from
 22 "...our gay apparel, ___"
 25 German sub
 26 Our, in *Les Miserables*
 27 Can't bear the thought of
 29 Essen exclamation
 30 Cary Grant's real last name
 32 Recess at St. Peter's
 33 Lickety-split
 34 Be a success in life
 35 ___ *the Family*
 36 River near Dunkirk
 37 Like grumpy Bert on Sesame Street
 40 Suffix with duct
 43 Bear's fur
 45 Editor's word
 47 Woolf's *The Common* ___
 50 Allman ex of Cher
 52 Last word of a fairy tale
 53 Gulf war ally
 54 Fame
 55 1965 voter registration drive site
 56 Able to bend over
 57 It comes out of your head
 58 What you do to loins
 59 Broadway role for Antonio
 60 *Little Miss Evil* writer Raphael
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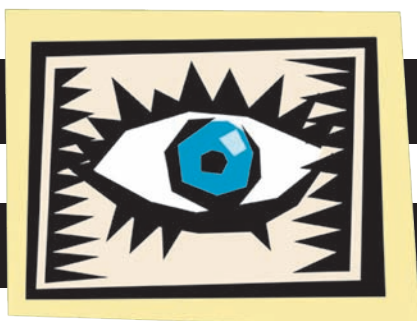
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Lost Souls Rugby on Saturday, Jan. 13, collected a pool table full of socks for homeless LGBT teens in conjunction with Outlast Youth. The team set up shop at the Round-Up Saloon, and supporters donated socks by the bagful. Team members posed for this picture about halfway through the afternoon's collection drive. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

Suspect arrested in murder of Orange County gay teen

An Orange County, Calif. couple has expressed "solidarity with our son and the LGBTQ community," after their son's body was found last week in Borrego Park in Lake Forest, about 50 miles southeast of Los Angeles.

Blaze Bernstein, 19, was reported missing Jan. 3 by his parents. His body was found after a week-long search in a shallow grave along the perimeter of the park. He had been stabbed repeatedly.

Samuel Woodward, 20, a high school classmate of Bernstein's, was charged with one count of felony murder on Monday, Jan. 15, with a sentencing enhancement of personal use of a knife, according to the Los Angeles Times.

Blaze Bernstein was openly gay, and in an email to the Times, his parents suggested that his sexual orientation may have played a part in his murder.

Gideon Bernstein and Jeanne Pepper Bernstein wrote, "our son was a beautiful gentle soul who we loved more than anything. We were proud of everything he did and who he was. He had nothing to hide. We are in solidarity with our son and the LGBTQ community."

Noting that the investigation is continuing, they added, "If it is determined that this was a hate crime, we will cry not only for our son, but for LGBTQ people everywhere that live in fear or who have been victims of [a] hate crime."

UPDATE: Woodward has since reportedly told investigators that he killed Bernstein because Bernstein kissed him against his will. California banned the so-called "gay panic defense" in 2014, and Illinois followed suit with a law that went into effect on Jan. 1 this year. But in Texas and the other 47 states, it is still considered a valid legal defense against murder charges.

Prosecutors said Woodward had picked up Bernstein at Bernstein's parents' home in Lake Forest after an "interaction" between the two on Snapchat. PhillyVoice.com pointed to Woodward's "disturbing pattern of online activity,"

which included violent language and imagery, and a defense of the Confederate battle flag as a symbol of Southern pride.

— Tammye Nash

amfAR founder Mathilde Krim dies

Mathilde Krim, who began her crusade against a deadly virus and the discrimination against people who had contracted it in the early 1980s, died at her home on Monday, Jan. 15, at the age of 91.

Krim was a geneticist and virologist who had done work in cancer research. She was the founding chair of amfAR, the Foundation for AIDS Research.

"Dr. Krim was at the forefront of scientific and philanthropic responses to HIV/AIDS long before the world fully understood its catastrophic global reach," amfAR wrote of its founding leader on its website.

Krim's husband was the chairman of United Artists and Orion Pictures. In her fight for money for research and civil rights for people living with AIDS, Krim recruited friends from Hollywood to join the cause, most notably Elizabeth Taylor, who served as international chair.

In its testimonial to Krim, amfAR wrote:

She helped create it, supported it, kept it afloat more than once, and guided it with extraordinary dedication until poor health forced her to assume a less active role. Dr. Krim testified on Capitol Hill on several occasions and, with the help of allies such as Senator Edward M. Kennedy, was a driving force behind legislation that expanded access to lifesaving treatment and behind efforts to scale up federal funding for AIDS research. In August 2000, she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom — the highest civilian honor in the United States.

Dr. Krim also fought discrimination against gays in housing and employment and against mandatory HIV testing that could be used to discriminate specifically against gay people.

— David Taffet

A close-up photograph of a man with a beard and glasses, smiling. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a white dress shirt. His hands are clasped together in front of him. The background is plain white.

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- **Weekly: Lambda Weekly** at 1 p.m. on 89.3 KNON-FM with David Taffet, Lerone Landis and the late Patti Fink. This week's guest is writer LGBT activist **Erin Moore**; **United Black Ellument** hosts discussion on HIV/AIDS in the black community (UBE Connected) at 7 p.m. every fourth Tuesday of the month at 3918 Harry Hines Blvd.; **Core Group Meeting** every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.; **Fuse game night** every Monday evening except the last of the month at 8 p.m. at the **Fuse** space in the 3918 Harry Hines Blvd.; **FuseConnect** every Wednesday from 7 p.m. For more information call or e-mail Jalenzski at 214-760-9718 ext. 3 or jalenzski@myresourcecenter.org. LGBT square dancing group **Pegasus Squares** meets every Sunday from 2:30-4:30 p.m. at Grace United Methodist Church, 4105 Junius St. For more info, email pegasussquares@gmail.com; **Dallas Frontrunners** meet for a walk or run on the Katy Trail at Oak Lawn Park, Turtle Creek and Hall Street, every Wednesday at 7:15 p.m. and every Saturday at 9 a.m.; **Leadership Lambda Toastmasters** practices and develops speaking and leadership skills from 6:30-8 p.m. on Tuesdays at First Unitarian Church, third floor of the Hallman Building, 4012 St. Andrews; **Gray Pride** support group from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. followed by mixer every Monday at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road; **Lambda AA** meets at 7 a.m., noon, 6 p.m. 8 p.m. and 11 p.m. and has a men's meeting at 10 a.m. on Saturdays and meets at 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Sunday at 1575 W. Mockingbird Lane #625. Call 214-267-0222 for details.

JANUARY 2018

- **Jan. 19: Federal Club January mixer**
HRC presents its monthly mixer at 6 p.m. at Woody's Sports and Video Bar, 4011 Cedar Springs Road. Tickets at eventbrite.com.
- **Jan. 19: Little Black Dress**
Legal Hospice of Texas presents its FashionCITED preview party from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Goodson Acura, 4801 Lemmon Ave.

- **Jan. 19: Women's Weekend Happy Hour**
Cocktails with the candidates from 6-8 p.m. at 55 Degrees, 1104 S. Elm St., Carrollton.

• Jan 20: Gay4Good

Join Gay4Good at Dallas Animal Services making pet toys, dispensing treats and assisting as needed from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Dallas Animal Services, 1818 Westmoreland Road.

• Jan 20: Dallas Women's March

Join State Representative Victoria Neave, lead organizer of the Dallas Women's March, Rhett Bowers, Chair of the Dallas Women's March, Planned Parenthood, Dallas AFL-CIO, Texas Coalition of Black Democrats, and other partner organizations to commemorate the first anniversary of the historic Dallas Women's March, when Dallas joined cities across the country and the world to stand up for equality, justice, and inclusion. Starts at 10 a.m. at St. Paul's UMC, 1816 Routh St., and ends at Pike Park, 2807 Harry Hines Blvd. For information email Dallas-WomensMarch2018@gmail.com.

• Jan 20: Impeach Trump Rally

On the one year anniversary of Trump's inauguration, people gather to demand his impeachment and removal from office at 11 a.m. at Dallas City Hall, 1500 Marilla St.

• Jan 20: Slumber Party 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.

• Jan 20: Stonewall Goes Hollywood

Tarrant County Stonewall Democrats holds a fundraiser, Stonewall Goes Hollywood with QCinema founder Todd Camp speaking at 7 p.m. at First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church, 1959 Sandy Lane, Fort Worth. Tickets are \$50, available at tarrant-stonewall.org/hollywood.

• Jan 21: Legos & Literacy

Rainbow Roundup event at North Oak Cliff Branch Library, 302 W. 10th St.

• Jan 22: LGBT 50+ support group

Weekly support group for LGBT people 50+ facilitated by SMU Counseling from 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road.

• Jan 23: Senior Services Program listen-



State Rep. Victoria Neave and other community leaders have organized the Dallas Women's March on Saturday, Jan. 20, to commemorate the anniversary of the historic 2017 marches held around the country. Also on Saturday, there will be a rally at Dallas City Hall, on the anniversary of Trump's inauguration, to demand his impeachment. For details, see listings.

ing session

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Adam Medrano hosts a program on the city's senior programs from 10-11 a.m. at Catholic Charities Dallas Brady Center, 537 S. Hall St.

• Jan 23: DFW LGBT Grief Support Group

For people who have lost a same-sex spouse at 6:45 p.m. at Oak Lawn Branch Library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road.

• Jan. 25: Life Planning Seminar

The Meyer Group of Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Inc., presents the Goals-Based Life Planning Seminar, 6-8 p.m. at Resource Center Dallas, 5750 Cedar Springs Road. Hors d'oeuvres and refreshments will be served. For information call 800-999-6692.

• Jan 27: Krewe de Kidds

A Mardi Gras Masquerade presented by Kidd's Kids from 7-10 p.m. at House of Blues, 2200 N. Lamar St.

• Jan. 31: The Kennedy Experience

Caven Employees Benevolence Association presents The Kennedy Experience, starring Dallas' own Kennedy Davenport and, from Shreveport, Chi Chi Devayne, both of *RuPaul's Drag Race Allstars 3*, in

the Rose Room at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. The evening begins a 9 p.m. with VIP meet-and-greet, following by the show at 10 p.m. VIP tickets are \$20; general admission is \$10. For more information and advance ticket sales, visit CEBADallas.org.

FEBRUARY

• Feb. 4: Pizza & Politics

LGBT issues are on the agenda at the YPC of Dallas 32nd congressional district candidates forum at 12:30 p.m. at Northaven UMC, 11211 Preston Road.

• Feb. 6: Mid-Cities Democrats

Gubernatorial forum and chili dinner at 6:30 p.m. at Local UAW 218, 98 W. Hurst Blvd., Hurst. \$25. info@midcitiesdemocrats.com.

• Feb. 6: DFW LGBT Grief Support Group

For people who have lost a same-sex spouse at 6:45 p.m. at Oak Lawn Branch Library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road.

• Feb. 6: Outlast Youth: 2018 Vision & Equip

Discussion of where Outlast Youth is headed, what resources are available to address LGBT youth homelessness and how to get involved

from 6:30–7:30 p.m. at Promise House, 224. W. Page Ave.

• **Feb. 8: PFLAG Dallas**

PFLAG meets the second Thursday of every month from 7-9 p.m. at Northaven United Methodist Church, 11211 Preston Road. 972-849-0383. PFLAGDallas@outlook.com.

• **Feb. 10: Love Equality**

Benefit for Equality Texas at 8 p.m. at 7 for Parties, 150 Turtle Creek Blvd. Suite 107. Tickets are \$50 in advance, available at tinyurl.com/yaumagh. Tickets at the door are \$75, Sponsorships start a \$500 and are available at tinyurl.com/ya57oesf.

• **Feb. 10: 2018 Dallas Mardi Gras**

The Krewe de Etoile presents the 2018 Mardi Gras Dallas Gala Masquerade Ball at Fashion Industry Gallery, 1807 Ross Ave., from 7 p.m.-midnight. Tickets start at \$80, and this year's spotlighted charity is CitySquare. For information visit KreweDeEtoile.com.

• **Feb. 14: Valentine's Day**

• **Feb. 15: Miss CEBA Sweetheart**

Caven Employees Benevolence Association presents the Miss CEBA Sweetheart Pageant, hosted by Asia O'Hara at The Rose Room in S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Pageant begins at 10:30 p.m. Winners and first two runners-up will receive cash prizes and more; for information or to apply as a contestant, visit CEBADallas.org.

• **Feb. 17: Gold Medal 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.

• **Feb. 17: Krewe to Cure Arthritis-Mardi Gras Ball**

From 6-11 p.m. at The Hall on Dragon Street, 1500 Dragon St.

• **Feb. 20: Early voting begins**

Early voting for the March primary runs Feb. 20-March 2. Vote at any early voting location in your county.

MARCH

• **March 2: Bianca Del Rio**

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Don't cross the Mama Bear

One mother decided to run for the Legislature when her own state rep wouldn't talk to her about her trans daughter

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Meet Valerie Hefner. She's a new breed of Mama Bear, someone fiercely protective of her children.

Hefner lives in Sherman, about 80 miles north of Dallas, with her four kids. One kid's gay. Two are straight. And her youngest is her trans daughter, Arrianna.

Arri's in 6th grade this year, and this year things have been better in school than they were last year. Hefner said the bullying comes and goes, but she noticed that when teachers and school staff treat Arri as they do any other kid and its business as usual, things are good.

But, she added, "When a teacher keeps slipping, that's when I notice trouble with the other kids."

Last year, Arri had to use the bathroom in the nurse's office. This year, she's using the girl's room. Maybe school staff has learned it doesn't matter? Or maybe they're a little intimidated by Hefner since she announced her run for the Texas Legislature.

Hefner said she was always busy working and taking care of her four children, so she never got involved in state or local politics. She first took notice after the *Obergefell* marriage equality ruling in June 2015, when Kim Davis made the news.

Davis is the county clerk in Kentucky who refused to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples because it conflicted with her religious beliefs. Hefner doesn't believe Davis gets to decide that.

"She doesn't get a choice," Hefner said. "It's her job. That wouldn't fly in any other profession. She'd be fired."

Hefner said she was also outraged at how the media handled the story, turning Davis into a hero for not doing her job.

Then came this year's onslaught of so-called "bathroom bills" in the Texas Legislature — efforts to pass laws targeting transgender people by regulating what public restrooms they could use. Because of work, Hefner wasn't able to make it to Austin to testify herself, but she watched the testimony online that went late into the night.

"It fell on deaf ears," she said of lawmakers' responses to the public testimony that was overwhelmingly against the bathroom bills.

Hefner was sorry she couldn't go herself, but did what she could: "All I could do was call my state rep."

She left a message for state Rep. Larry Phillips at his office, asking that he call her. She wanted him to know that he had the life of one of his own constituents in his hands.

But, "He never picked the phone up to call me back," Hefner said.

So she started going to Democratic club meetings in her area to get more involved. And, she said, "Me going to those meetings turned into me running for state rep."

Hefner said she knew since Arri was two or three years old that she was different from the other kids. Arri, who was assigned male at birth, liked dolls and dressing in a princess costume.

"She put on make-up and walked around in my shoes," Hefner said. "She had a purse since she was three."



Valerie Hefner

Hefner thought Arri was probably gay and always let her be herself.

But at age nine, Arri "told me she had a girl's soul in a boy's body," Hefner said.

Hefner said she immediately went to the web, did some research and watched a few episodes of the reality show about a trans teen called *I Am Jazz*. But, she said, it wasn't a shock when Arri told her she was a girl since Arri had always been consistent about

her gender identity.

After her fifth grade experience where she had to use the nurse's bathroom, Hefner knew her daughter wasn't happy. So over the summer she told Arri, "If you want to go to the girl's bathroom, I'll deal with it."

Two months into the school year, one staff member saw Arri walk into the girl's room. Hefner was called to the school. She told them there was no law on the books



Valerie and Arri (all photos courtesy of Valerie Hefner)

about bathroom use, and there'd been no problem in the two months Arri had been using the girls room.

So why, Hefner demanded of school officials, were they trying to start a problem where none had existed?

As she begins her campaign for public office, Hefner likes to tell people in her district, "I'm more concerned with what goes on in the classroom than in the bathroom."

One issue of concern for Hefner is the amount of standardized testing required in the schools, which she believes is killing public education and shouldn't be tied to teacher pay.

Another looming problem is healthcare. Lawmakers in the 2017 Legislature spent time arguing over unnecessary bathroom bills that should have instead been spent dealing with healthcare. And now, with CHIP not renewed by Congress, 400,000 Texas children face losing their coverage. That means some children won't get life-saving medication they need.

"I feel I can do something about that," Hefner said.

Although she has no opponent in the March Democratic primary, Hefner's already been out campaigning. She said every town and city in the area has a fall festival, and she attended as many of them as she could. This summer she plans to knock on as many doors as she can.

This might be the right time for a newcomer to jump into that North Texas race, which has traditionally been a safely Republican seat. Phillips is retiring from the seat that covers Grayson, Fannin and Delta counties. In November, she'll face one of the three people running for the Republican nomination.

Hefner said she has spoken to some of her neighbors, Republicans who have said who are supporting her. When she's asked them why, they've told her they've looked at what the Republican Party has become they told her: "This is not what I signed on for."

Hefner lives in a Republican district, but this might be the year a Democrat has a chance even in that conservative part of the state. ■



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One woman's story

New short film from Cinna Monroe, starring Krystal Summers, shines an unforgiving light on anti-trans violence

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“This is not *THE* trans story. This is just *MY* trans story.”

That’s the opening line in the new short film, *It’s Not Over Yet*, which recounts a day in the life of a transgender woman named Karen.

But it isn’t just any day in her life. It is the last day of her life.

As the seven-and-a-half-minute-long film begins, Karen — played by Dallas actress/performer Krystal Summers, is relaxing after her day job as a hair stylist, playing — quite beautifully — a baby grand piano and enjoying a glass of red wine as her boyfriend, Justin is hard at work in the kitchen, (played by Justin Labasco) finishing up an elegant dinner.

They sit together at the dining table, chatting, about their day and their plans for the next day as they eat. Karen answers a call from a client who wants to set an appointment for a haircut, and Justin encourages her to take his truck instead of calling Uber for a ride that evening when she heads for the nightclub where she performs.

Then Justin heads to bed to rest up for the next morning, when he has promised to help a friend move, and Karen heads for the club in Justin’s truck. As usual, the gayborhood is crowded, and she has to park several blocks away, in a dimly-lit area. But as she walks toward the club, pulling her



Drag queen filmmaker Cinna Monroe (Photo courtesy Cinna Monroe)

wheeled bag behind her, she is confronted by two men and a woman, out for a night of trans-bashing.

At this point, I’ll just say that Karen never makes it to the club. As she said in the introductory voice-over: “The day had started like any other day. I didn’t know it would be my last.”

Before the closing credits begin to roll, the filmmaker drives her point home: “At least 27 transgender people were murdered in the United States in 2017.” And the count for 2018 already stands at at least two.

It’s Not Over Yet is the creation of Texas drag queen filmmaker Cinna Monroe, who said this week that she hopes to get the short included in as many film festivals as possible this year. But she’s not looking to get it into the LGBT festivals; Monroe said she wants to take her message to a mainstream audience.

“All year long last year, I kept seeing on my Facebook page posts about yet another trans death, another trans woman being murdered,” Monroe said. “By the end of the year, there were 27 trans people murdered in the U.S., and that’s just in 2017.

“But,” she continued, “outside of the gay community, outside of the gay press, you don’t even hear about it. I am a drag queen filmmaker, and I am a trans ally, and

I am trying to bring a light to bear on these tragedies, to make people understand what horrible things are happening. I’ve showed this to people, to my cousins and aunts and uncles, my mother — like a lot of [non-LGBT people] none of them were even aware that this was going on.”

Although this isn’t Monroe’s first foray into filmmaking — she created, produced and stars in the 30-minute camp-fest *Beaver*, which should also be making its way into film festivals around the country this year — it is her debut as a director.

“I was very lucky to be surrounded by some vastly talented people,” she said. “I believe that all the performances really

rang true and [co-producer] Austin Williams and [director of photography] Tyler J. Case were just phenomenal.”



Krystal Summers stars in “It’s Not Over Yet.”

(*It’s Not Over Yet* is a product of Monroe’s Four Horsemen Productions in associated with Alfa Whiskey Entertainment.)

Monroe acknowledged that the story in the short is “a piece of fiction that I have written,” and that while the trans woman in her film is white, most of those murdered — in 2017 and every year — are trans women of color.

“It was a situation where I know Krystal. I’ve worked with her before, and we have a good working relationship. So we made the film with Krystal.”

While the topic of hate crimes and trans-bashing may be new for Monroe, in terms of filmmaking, it’s familiar territory for Summers.

“Trans murders are a huge problem, a huge tragedy,” Summers said. “This film has a very strong message, an important message. It’s a message that people need to hear, and a message that I have wanted to help spread for several years now.

“Yes, it is really the same message that was in ‘that other film’ I did a few years ago,” she continued, referring to her starring role in Israel Luna’s controversial 2010 trans-ploitation rape/revenge film, *Ticked-Off Trannies with Knives*.

“That movie had a good message, too. But it was campy and over the top. This is not,” Summers said. “I wanted to do this because it gets the message across in a serious and intense way.”

Summers acknowledges that *It’s Not Over Yet* is “really hard to watch at the end. But that’s intentional. We really wanted to strike a chord in people. We wanted to create that awareness, for people to really understand” the brutality of anti-transgender hatred and violence.

Summers, like Monroe, stressed that *It’s Not Over Yet* is not intended to be *THE* transgender story. It isn’t the truth of every trans person’s life. As she says in the opening voice-over, “Because, you know, we’re all as unique and different as leaves on a tree. But what we all have in common is a desire to be given the same basic respect you’d give any human being as we try to live our authentic, true lives.”

That, Monroe agreed, is the impetus that lies at the heart of the short film.

“I just wanted to try and establish that basic human respect is missing for so many transgender people,” the filmmaker said. “And, for lack of a better word, I am trying with this film to humanize what ‘transgender’ actually means for an audience that really still just doesn’t get it.

“Here is this vibrant, talented, hard-working, wonderful woman, who is contributing so much to society, and she is just brutalized, eradicated by people who fear and hate what they don’t understand.” ■

Stonewall elects 2018 officers and issues endorsements

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
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Stonewall Democrats of Dallas this week issued the list of candidates it is endorsing in the March 3 primary. Because so many candidates in contested primaries sought the group's endorsement, chapter President Lee Daugherty said endorsements for candidates in uncontested primaries would wait, possibly until after the primary. That includes candidates like Hon. Steven Kirkland, a gay Houston judge who is seeking a spot on the state Supreme Court, and Hon. Tonya Parker, a Dallas County judge who is lesbian and seeking re-election.

"Across the last week, almost 30 hours of interviews and deliberations were put forth by members with the largest field of Democratic candidates Dallas County has ever seen," Daugherty said. "The Endorsement Committee, headed by Tracy Yoo Clinton, did amazing work in keeping it organized and on schedule."

Those candidates who win their primary carry the Stonewall endorsement through the November election. Endorsed candidates who make it into a runoff carry

the endorsement through the runoff. If there's a runoff, but the endorsed candidate doesn't make it into the top two, Stonewall may decide to endorse a difference candidate for the runoff.

Stonewall's Dallas chapter is the largest Democratic club in Texas. Because of its prominence, past officers have gone on to serve in positions in the state party. One past president, Omar Narvaez, is currently a Dallas city council member, and another, Jesse Garcia, was appointed to a position in the Obama administration in Washington, D.C.

To receive an endorsement, candidates must attend a screening. In the case of some national or statewide races, a campaign official may attend for the candidate.

In addition to deciding on its endorsement slate, Stonewall members voted on officers for 2018. Daugherty returns for a second year as president. Other officers are Vice President Brandon Vance; Secretary Dale Robinson, and Treasurer Cassandra Gandara.

Endorsements for the March 3 Democratic primary:

State Comptroller: Joi Chevalier
Constable, Pct 1: Tracey Gully
Constable, Pct 4: Sha Steger Knight
Constable, Pct 5: Beth Villarreal
Criminal Court-At-Law, Court 3: Audrey Moorehead
Criminal Court-At-Law, Court 10: Roberto Canas
Criminal District Judge, No. 1: Tina Yoo Clinton
Criminal District Judge, No. 6: Alison Grinter
Criminal District Judge, No. 7: Mark Watson
Dallas County Party Chair: Carol Donovan
District Attorney: John Creuzot
District Judge, 68th District: Martin Hoffman
District Judge, 160th District: Jim Jordan
District Judge, 193rd District: Carl Ginsberg
District Judge, 203rd District: Raquel "Rocky" Jones
District Judge, 204th District: Stephen Duplantier
District Judge, 255th District: Sandre Monciffe
District Judge, 265th District: Jennifer Bennett
District Judge, 283rd District: Lela Mays
(Warning issued against Mays' opponent, Vonciel Hill)
District Judge, 302nd District: Sandra Jackson
District Judge, 304th District: Ladeitra Adkins
Governor: Lupe Valdez
Judge, County Court-At-Law No. 2: Melissa Bellan

Judge, County Court-At-Law No. 4: Ken Tapscott
Judge, County Criminal Court Of Appeals No. 1: Kristin Wade
Judge, County Criminal Court Of Appeals No. 2: No Endorsement
Justice Of The Peace, Pct 2, Place 1: Margaret O'Brien
Justice Of The Peace, Pct 4, Place 2: Katy Hubener
Justice Of The Peace, Pct 5, Place 2: Juan Jasso
Lt. Governor: Mike Collier
State Board Of Education, District 11: Dr. Carla Morton
Sheriff: Roy Williams Jr.
State Senator, District 8: Mark Phariss
State Senator, District 16: Nathan Johnson
State Rep, District 100: Eric Johnson
State Rep, District 104: Jessica Gonzalez
State Rep, District 105: Terry Meza

State Rep, District 108: Joanna Cattanach
State Rep, District 109: Carl Sherman, Sr.
State Rep, District 113: Rhetta Bowers
State Rep, District 115: Julie Johnson
U.S. Rep, District 26: Co-Endorsement, Linsey Fagan and Will Fisher
U.S. Rep, District 24: Jan McDowell
U.S. Rep, District 30: Eddie Bernice Johnson
U.S. Rep, District 32: Colin Allred
U.S. Rep, District 33: Marc Veasey
U.S. Senator: Beto O'Rourke

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