

dallasvoice

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Back Again

Officer Sara Straten returns to the liaison role she originated in 2009

by Tammye Nash, Page 10

What is BIKTARVY®?

BIKTARVY is a complete, 1-pill, once-a-day prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults. It can either be used in people who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before, or people who are replacing their current HIV-1 medicines and whose healthcare provider determines they meet certain requirements.

BIKTARVY does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS. HIV-1 is the virus that causes AIDS.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

What is the most important information I should know about BIKTARVY?

BIKTARVY may cause serious side effects:

- ▶ **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you have both HIV-1 and HBV and stop taking BIKTARVY, your HBV may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking BIKTARVY without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health.

Who should not take BIKTARVY?

Do not take BIKTARVY if you take:

- ▶ dofetilide
- ▶ rifampin
- ▶ any other medicines to treat HIV-1

What are the other possible side effects of BIKTARVY?

Serious side effects of BIKTARVY may also include:

- ▶ **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ **Kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys. If you develop new or worse kidney problems, they may tell you to stop taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ **Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious but rare medical emergency that can lead to death.

Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: weakness or being more tired than usual, unusual muscle pain, being short of breath or fast breathing, stomach pain with nausea and vomiting, cold or blue hands and feet, feel dizzy or lightheaded, or a fast or abnormal heartbeat.

- ▶ **Severe liver problems,** which in rare cases can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow, dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored stools, loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, or stomach-area pain.

The most common side effects of BIKTARVY in clinical studies were diarrhea (6%), nausea (5%), and headache (5%). Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or don’t go away.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking BIKTARVY?

- ▶ **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or have had any kidney or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- ▶ **All the medicines you take,** including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, antacids, laxatives, vitamins, and herbal supplements. BIKTARVY and other medicines may affect each other. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist, and ask if it is safe to take BIKTARVY with all of your other medicines.
- ▶ **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if BIKTARVY can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Ask your healthcare provider if BIKTARVY is right for you.



Please see Important Facts about BIKTARVY, including important warnings, on the following page.

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BIKTARVY is a **1-pill, once-a-day complete HIV-1 treatment** for adults who are either new to treatment or whose healthcare provider determines they can replace their current HIV-1 medicines with BIKTARVY.

BIKTARVY does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.

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MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY may cause serious side effects, including:

- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you have both HIV-1 and HBV, your HBV may suddenly get worse if you stop taking BIKTARVY. Do not stop taking BIKTARVY without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to check your health regularly for several months.

ABOUT BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY is a complete, 1-pill, once-a-day prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults. It can either be used in people who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before, or people who are replacing their current HIV-1 medicines and whose healthcare provider determines they meet certain requirements.

BIKTARVY does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS. HIV-1 is the virus that causes AIDS.

Do NOT take BIKTARVY if you also take a medicine that contains:

- dofetilide
- rifampin
- any other medicines to treat HIV-1

BEFORE TAKING BIKTARVY

Tell your healthcare provider all your medical conditions, including if you:

- Have or have had any kidney or liver problems, including hepatitis infection.
- Are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- Are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take:

- Keep a list that includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, antacids, laxatives, vitamins, and herbal supplements, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.
- Ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist about medicines that interact with BIKTARVY.

IMPORTANT FACTS

This is only a brief summary of important information about BIKTARVY® and does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your condition and your treatment.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY can cause serious side effects, including:

- Those in the “Most Important Information About BIKTARVY” section.
- Changes in your immune system.
- New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.
- Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis), which is a serious but rare medical emergency that can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: weakness or being more tired than usual, unusual muscle pain, being short of breath or fast breathing, stomach pain with nausea and vomiting, cold or blue hands and feet, feel dizzy or lightheaded, or a fast or abnormal heartbeat.
- Severe liver problems, which in rare cases can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow, dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored stools, loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, or stomach-area pain.
- **The most common side effects of BIKTARVY** in clinical studies were diarrhea (6%), nausea (5%), and headache (5%).

These are not all the possible side effects of BIKTARVY. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any new symptoms while taking BIKTARVY.

Your healthcare provider will need to do tests to monitor your health before and during treatment with BIKTARVY.

HOW TO TAKE BIKTARVY

Take BIKTARVY 1 time each day with or without food.

GET MORE INFORMATION

- This is only a brief summary of important information about BIKTARVY. Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist to learn more.
- Go to BIKTARVY.com or call 1-800-GILEAD-5.
- If you need help paying for your medicine, visit BIKTARVY.com for program information.



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11



16



20

headlines

TEXAS NEWS

- 10 Straten returns as FWPd liaison
- 11 Officials question 22-year relationship
- 12 Toyota team recalls AIDS Ride

LIFE+STYLE

- 16 McIver lights up the 'Desert'
- 19 'Ant Man & the Wasp' packs a sting
- 20 Sean Hayes: Changing TV and culture
- 23 A new memoir on coming out

ON THE COVER

Fort Worth PD's LGBT liaison Officer Sara Straten. Photo by Tammye Nash. Design by Kevin Thomas.

departments

- | | | | |
|----|----------------|----|-------------|
| 8 | The Gay Agenda | 25 | Best Bets |
| 10 | News | 28 | Cassie Nova |
| 14 | CommUNITY | 29 | Scene |
| 16 | Life+Style | 32 | MarketPlace |

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P.I., family looking for anyone who witnessed accident that injured pedestrian



A private investigator and family members of the victim are looking for anyone who witnessed the accident in the 4500 block of Cedar Springs Road about 4:15 p.m. that left a pedestrian critically injured. John Villareal, a private investigator who also happens to be the brother-in-law of the victim, John Young, asked that anyone who saw the accident, was there in the aftermath or who has any information please call him at 214-596-1585.

Villareal said Thursday, July 5, that Young remains in ICU at Parkland Hospital and

has not yet regained consciousness. He said doctors there have put a metal rod in Young's right leg, which was badly broken, and that Young's right arm was shattered in the impact. He also suffered a severe head injury, and Villareal said doctors so far do not know the extent of the damage to Young's brain.

Villareal said that in recent days, Young has shown some movement in his left arm and left leg, and that family see that as a positive sign.

— Tammye Nash

Anti-trans initiative doesn't make the Montana ballot

Proponents of a ballot initiative targeting transgender and non-binary people in Montana — I-183 — has failed to gather enough signatures to put their measure on Montana's ballot for the November elections.

I-183 would have prevented trans and non-binary people from using public facilities corresponding to their gender identity in places such as libraries, parks and schools. The Montana Legislature had rejected an almost identical measure in 2017.

The battle against I-183 included the ACLU of Montana's successful challenge last July of the initiative's ballot statement. The Montana Supreme Court agreed that the statement did not accurately describe I-183's intended and unintended consequences, and in invalidating the ballot statement the court also voided what proponents claimed

were "thousands of signatures" they had already gathered.

SK Rossi, director of advocacy and policy for ACLU of Montana also credited I-183 opponents' campaign featuring transgender Montanans. "Transgender and non-binary Montanans have been powerful examples of bravery and authenticity in leading the fight against I-183. We anchored our campaign in the voices of the community most impacted by this costly and unnecessary measure. And in these voices, people heard their friends, family, neighbors and coworkers."

— Tammye Nash

StudentsMarch, March for Our Lives presenting Road To Change discussion in Dallas

March for Our Lives, the student-led gun law reform movement born from the Valentine's Day shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., is coordinating with Student-March.org, the local student-led gun law reform movement, to present March for Our Lives Road to Change cross-country tour to Dallas this weekend.



The two organizations will present the panel discussion and engagement fair Saturday, July 7, from 1:30-4:30 p.m. at Paul Quinn College, 3837 Simpson Stuart Road.

According to a press release, the moderated discussion will include students and alumni from Marjory Stoneman Douglas HS and local students who have been affected by gun violence, along with Manuel Oliver, father of Joaquin Oliver, who was among the 17 students and teachers killed at MSD High School on Feb. 14. "The discussion will center around the importance of common-sense gun reform and student involvement in all levels of government," the press release noted.

After the discussion will be the engagement fair with booths from partner organizations including MOVE Texas, Mi Familia Vota and NAMI Moms Demand Action along side voter registration booths.

— Tammye Nash

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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.

JULY

• Through September: Pride at the Library

From UNT's LGBT Archive, the library will exhibit collections from UNT's LGBT Archive, documenting the history and culture of the LGBT community in Dallas at the J. Erik Jonsson Central Library, Dallas History & Archives (7th floor), 1515 Young St.

• July 7: Road to Change

Marjory Stoneman Douglas students are among the panelists focusing on common-sense gun laws and voter registration drives from 1:30-4:30 p.m. at Paul Quinn College gym, 3837 Simpson Stuart Road. The event is presented by March for Our Lives and StudentsMarch.org.

• July 8: K-Von Takes Big D

Tuckers Gift fundraiser with Last Comic Standing's K-Von with Melodee and Angela Karrmichael at 7 p.m. at The Rose Room, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. \$25-35 at Eventbrite.

• July 9: Mr. Gay Texas America

Preliminary to Mr. Gay America 2019 emceed by Chanel LaMasters at 9 p.m. at the Rose Room, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. \$20.

• July 10: Resource Center tour

Resource Center CEO Cece Cox leads a behind-the-scenes tour of the center's community center at 5750 Cedar Springs Road. RSVP to development@mysresourcecenter.org.

• July 10: Grief support group

LGBT grief support group for people who have lost a same-sex partner from 6:45-8 p.m. at Oak Lawn Library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road.

• July 10-13: Miss Gay Texas America

Preliminary to Miss Gay America 2019 emceed by Miss Gay Texas America 2007 Chanel LaMasters at 9 p.m. on preliminary nights July 10 and 11, at 10:30

p.m. for review show on July 12 and at 9 p.m. for finals at The Rose Room, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. \$10 on July 10-12 and \$25 on July 13.

• July 13: Pride happy hour

Monthly DFW Pride happy hour from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Zatar Lebanese Tapas & Bar, 2825 Commerce St.

• July 13-14: Texas Transgender Nondiscrimination Summit

The 10th annual Texas Transgender Nondiscrimination Summit will be held at the University of Houston Student Center, 4800 Calhoun Road, Houston. Register at TxTNS.org/summit.

• July 14: Lambda Legal women's brunch

The women of Lambda Legal's Dallas Leadership Committee hold a fundraising wine and brunch with entertainment by Anton Shaw at 11 a.m. at Times Ten Cellars, 6324 Prospect Ave.

• July 16: Dallas Masterpiece Town Hall

How does the *Masterpiece Cakeshop* decision affect the fight for equality from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Resource Center 5750 Cedar Springs Road.

• July 17: Waco Masterpiece Town Hall

How does the *Masterpiece Cakeshop* decision affect the fight for equality from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Lakeshore Baptist Church 5801 Bishop Drive, Waco.

• July 17: Classic Chassis Car Club

See, share and enjoy classic cars the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at JR.'s Bar & Grill, 3923 Cedar Springs Road.

• July 17: Priscilla, Queen of the Desert

CineWilde presents the classic gay film at 9 p.m. at the Texas Theatre, 231 Jefferson Blvd. Tickets at boxoffice.printtixusa.com.

• July 21: Orange You Glad It's 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.

• July 21: Federal Club luncheon

HRC's Olivia Alair Dalton is the speaker a



March for Our Lives and the local organization StudentsMarch.org present a panel discussion on common-sense gun laws July 7 at Paul Quinn College. Students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School will participate. See listings for details.

• **Weekly: Lambda Weekly at 1 p.m. on Sunday on 89.3 KNON-FM with David Taffet, Lerone Landis and the late Patti Fink.** This week's guest is legislative candidate **Brandy Chambers**; **Leadership Lambda Toastmasters** gay-identified Toastmasters group meets from 6:30-8 p.m. every Monday at the First Unitarian Church, 4015 Normandy Road (does not meet on Mondays that are holidays); **United Black Ellument** hosts discussion on HIV/AIDS in the black community (UBE Connected) at 7 p.m. every fourth Tuesday of the month at 3918 Harry Hines Blvd.; **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; **DVtv in Spayse**, news and entertainment discussion live streaming every Friday, 4-5 p.m., on the Spayse Station YouTube channel.

the Federal Club summer luncheon from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at The Tower Club, Thanksgiving Tower, 48th Floor, 1601 Elm St. RSVP required at eventbrite.com.

• July 24: Resource Center tour

CEO Cece Cox leads a behind-the-scenes tour of Resource Center from 5-6:30 p.m. at 5750 Cedar Springs Road. RSVP to kfields@myresourcecenter.org.

• July 26: GALA Volunteer engagement

Learn about GALA and how to become

more involved from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Blue Mesa Grill, 8200 Dallas Parkway, Plano.

• July 27: Black Tie Dinner On Stage

Performing Arts Fort Worth hosts "Black Tie Dinner: On Stage" featuring special entertainment, highlights of Bass Hall's upcoming season, backstage tours and a special presentation on the upcoming Black Tie Dinner: VISIBLE at 6:30 p.m. at Bass Performance Hall, 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth. \$25.

• **July 28: Down to Float 4: Candy Land**
Impulse Group Dallas presents Down to Float 4 with Vanessa “Vanjie” Mateo from season 10 of RuPaul’s Drag Race, DJ Joe Gauthreaux and special guest host and artist Blake McIver from 2-7 p.m. at 7044 Royal Lane. \$20-70. DownToFloat4.com.

• **July 28: Health Summit**
Issues discussed include autoimmune issues, diabetes, kidney, heart disease and more from 10 a.m.-6:30 p.m. at Renaissance Hotel, 15201 Dallas Parkway, Addison.

• **July 31: Building LGBT Families**
GALA presents a panel discussion with representatives from Jonathan’s Place, Dallas IVF and DebnamRust attorneys and GALA parents from 6:30-9 p.m. at Blue House Too, 934 Watters Creek Blvd., Allen.

AUGUST

• **August 4: TX Latino Pride pool party**
Music by DJ Charlie Phresh, photo booth and open bar from 5-9 p.m. at Sisu, 2508 Maple Ave. \$15. Tickets at Eventbrite.com.

pet of the week / LADY

Meet **Lady**, a 5-year-old, white-and-tan pit bull mix weighing 47 pounds. She’s an outgoing, affectionate and playful girl who loves people, going for walks, running around outside and playing with all kinds of toys. In her previous home, she did well with children. She’s very smart, and already knows how to sit, come, shake, stay and lie down. She can be choosy about her dog friends, so she would do best in a home with no other dogs. If you’re looking for a happy-go-lucky gal to take on adventures, she’s the one for you. Lady has been spayed and microchipped and is current on all age-appropriate vaccinations. Come meet her today. #160538

Lady 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. Sun-Wed and noon-7 p.m. Thurs-Sat. Regular adoption fees are \$100 for puppies and kittens aged 0-6 months, \$50 for adult dogs and cats aged 6 months or older, \$25 for senior dogs or cats aged 7 years and older and \$25 for 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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The once and future liaison

Officer Sara Straten returns to the role of FWPD's LGBT liaison, which she originated in the wake of the Rainbow Lounge raid

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

The summer of 2009 was typical of North Texas, with hot, humid days that made most people want to stay inside under the air conditioner. But in Fort Worth, it was the police department, especially relatively new Chief Jeff Halstead, that was feeling the real heat. And no amount of air conditioning would help.

It had all started on June 28, at the Rainbow Lounge, when a few Fort Worth PD officers had helped two agents with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission conduct what they called a bar check, but what the folks in the bar that night said was nothing less than a raid.

People were arrested, handcuffed and hauled to jail. One of the men arrested, Chad Gibson, was thrown to the floor and handcuffed, incurring a head injury that left him with permanent brain damage.

And it all happened on the 40th anniversary of the raid on the Stonewall Inn in New York City — the event known as the birth of the modern gay rights movement, and the reason we celebrate June as LGBT Pride Month each year.

The response from the LGBT community was immediate and overwhelming. And Halstead and his department were dead center of the storm. That's when Officer Sara Straten, then a 17-year veteran of FWPD, volunteered to step into the storm as the department's first liaison to the LGBT community.

Although she quickly realized that the position might be more tempestuous than she had known — "Maybe if I had read all the [press surrounding the Rainbow Lounge incident] online first, I

wouldn't have volunteered," Straten told Dallas Voice in a July 20, 2009 interview, her first interaction with the media as liaison — Straten quickly grew into her new role and as liaison, helped turn what started as a contentious, angry relationship between the community and the police into a close, mutually beneficial bond.

Straten remained as liaison for a little more than two years before handing the job off to Officer Kellie Whitehead in late 2011. Now, almost seven years later, Straten is back, ready to take up the reins as the community's contact on the police force once again.

During a recent interview to talk about her new-again-role as liaison, Straten talked about those tumultuous days-weeks-months after the raid. She said that when she heard Halstead was looking for an LGBT liaison officer, she sent an email to volunteer.

"I told him that I was openly gay, that I [at the time] attended the biggest gay church in town [Celebration Community Church] and that I worked part-time at [Best Friends, at the time the largest LGBT bar in town]," she said. And when she met with Halstead, she said, she could see that he truly wanted to reach out to the community and create a better relationship. So when he offered her the position, she readily accepted.

"I had no idea what I had signed up for!" she said. "Times have changed now. But at first, it was really rough. Everything just got so busy so fast."

Straten stayed in the liaison position for about two-and-a-half years, but as the job transitioned for a part-time gig into more of a full-time role in the department's public information office, she said, she began to "miss doing police work" more and more.

So Straten left the liaison role to Whitehead and transferred to the Narcotics Division. It was a whole new world.

"I had just spent the last two-and-a-half years dealing with the media and being 'on the record' every day, all day, and then I switched to Narcotics where I was totally off the record," she said.

During her time with Narcotics,



Officer Sara Straten has returned to the role of LGBT liaison.

Straten also trained and worked as a hostage negotiator. And while the high drama "TV cop show" type situations are relatively rare in Fort Worth, the hostage negotiators are always busy, she said, explaining that "any time SWAT is called out, the negotiators are called out. They are called out in all kinds of situations."

Straten stayed in the Narcotics Division for about five years. But during that time, just as the city and the department were changing, so was her life. She adopted two sons and she got married, inheriting older children and, now, even a grandchild. And the 10 a.m.-to-3 a.m. shifts, and the two-weeks-on-call responsibilities as a negotiator began to wear on her.

"By that time, I had been on the force for 25 years. I was tired, and my kids had become teenagers with a lot of activities going on," she said. "We [she and wife Debra Straten] are those moms who are at every game, every event, dragging the big cooler with snacks for everybody behind us. I needed regular hours, Monday through Friday, so I could be there for my family."

Plus, she continued, "I wanted to do something positive." Transferring in 2016 to become a school resource officer gave her that chance.

Through the years, liaison officers had come

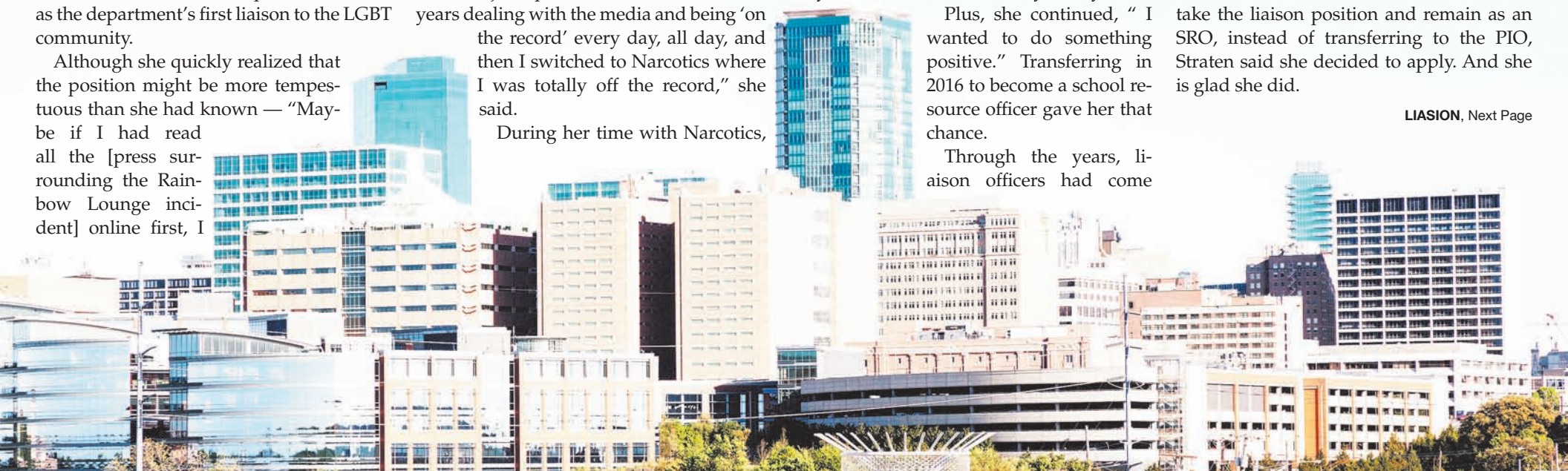
and gone. Tracey Knight replaced Whitehead, then Kathy Jones replaced Knight. When Jones retired, another officer stepped in for a short time, but the position had been vacant for awhile when Straten decided to take the job again. "Every time the position was vacant, somebody would ask me if I was going to do it again. I had seen Chief [Joel] Fitzgerald [named chief in September 2015] a couple of times and he asked me about it. But I was still in Narcotics and still having fun."

Then after she switched to being a school resource officer, Straten said, she knew she would have the time to be liaison, but at the same time, she didn't want to leave the SRO work to go to the public information office, where the liaison job had been living.

"PIO is a scary gig. When you are in that office, you are the face of the department and you have to constantly watch every word you say. Dealing with the media is a real chess match, and it isn't easy. You have to WANT to be in the PIO; you have to have a talent for it to do it well," she said.

But when she found out that she could take the liaison position and remain as an SRO, instead of transferring to the PIO, Straten said she decided to apply. And she is glad she did.

LIASION, Next Page



Is it really real?

After 22 years together and a legal marriage, Cannon and RafiQ face questions from Homeland Security over the 'validity' of the relationship

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
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Cannon and RafiQ Salleh-Flowers have been together 22 years. After their January 2014 marriage in California, they applied for and received RafiQ's temporary green card.

To support the application, they supplied a stack of documents measuring about a foot high to support their claim of a "good faith marriage." That included their marriage license, photos, tax returns, insurance documents, joint bank accounts, joint investment accounts, wills and powers of attorney, leases and mortgages and drivers' licenses. All of that showed that since they met in Singapore and then moved to the U.S., they have lived together and commingled all of their assets.

In December 2016, they applied for RafiQ's permanent green card. Three weeks ago, the couple received a letter telling them they "have not established that the marriage upon which you were granted conditional status was entered into in good faith."

Homeland Security acknowledges in its letter that tax returns, leases, utility statements and photos are indeed included, but they claim that doesn't sufficiently establish they have "shared assets, liabilities, finances and/or property."

Then a list of what would establish shared property begins with "children as a result of your marriage."

Interesting that the government considers children to be property. And, unfortunately, both Cannon and RafiQ, since the

time of their marriage, have been beyond their childbearing years.

Next on the list is "deeds and mortgages in both names showing joint ownership." Their joint lease proves they did live together and also indicates there wasn't a mortgage. They rent, and home ownership isn't required for citizenship.

Had Homeland Security been simply checking that the marriage was still intact four years after issuing the temporary green card, they could have asked for joint income tax returns as updated proof. That wouldn't have been possible to file before the 2013 *Windsor v. U.S.* decision, which invalidated the Defense of Marriage Act and allowed the federal government to recognize marriages performed in states where they had already been legalized.

Instead, Homeland Security wrote in bold letters, "GOOD FAITH MARRIAGE, INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE" and asked for current federal and state returns, joint checking, savings or investment accounts, joint property, life or health insurance documents and loan or credit card account statements.

All of that has been supplied and the letter says that all of those documents provided don't prove their marriage.

But now, somehow, providing those same documents again will prove it.

Jackie Yodashkin is a spokesperson for Immigration Equality, a national organization founded with the mission to end the ban on immigration for persons with HIV, to have sexual orientation and gender identity recognized for purposes of granting asylum and gaining marriage equality for immigration purposes.

All three of the organization's original goals were met. The HIV ban ended in 2010. Asylum may be granted for people whose lives are in danger because of their sexual orientation or gender identity and the Obergefell decision granted the right for same-sex couples to marry in 2015.

Despite those victories, Yodashkin said

her organization is busier than ever and is currently working with as many as 700 bi-national couples.

Although Homeland Security asked the Salleh-Flowers about having had children, Immigration Equality has cases in federal court concerning the government not recognizing the children of those who've been granted asylum. She said cases like Salleh-Flowers are just part of the current immigration problem that "shows animus toward immigrants."

To underscore the problem of detentions currently underway, especially for LGBT people, she said a report released by the Center for American Progress last week showed that LGBT people are 97 times more likely to be sexually abused in detention than straight detainees.

Yodashkin gave a recent example of a transgender woman from Mexico denied asylum because parts of that country have marriage equality. That judge was confusing gender identity with sexual orientation.

In the same way, some people at Homeland Security may be misunderstanding same-sex marriage or imposing their own values rather than accepting as valid the same marriage license issued to any couple, she said.

"Our combined faith is strong," Cannon said. "But, the trauma RafiQ and I suffer on a daily basis for the past 22 years is like a silent darkness in the room, always in the room, and you manage to hold on to each other to get through, making no long-term plans because you have no idea where you will be in the long term. We live from visa



Cannon Salleh-Flowers, left, and his husband RafiQ.

Immigration Equality works with advocates for those seeking asylum so they understand the issues they're dealing with. Unfortunately, immigration judges don't get that same training.

to visa, immigration status to immigration status, and the roadblocks can make us sad and often seem insurmountable. All of this because we are a same-sex, binational, human couple." ■



MARRIAGE, From Page 8

"Back when it all started, it was a tough time. But Chief Halstead was invested to making this work, in making a better relationship with the LGBT community and in the role of the liaison," she recalled.

Today, she said, "Chief Fitzgerald is just

as committed to this as Halstead was. I believe he genuinely wants to keep this door [between the police department and the LGBT community] open, to not let it close.

"Today, we are in a much better place," she continued. "There is a younger gener-

ation out there now and for them, being gay is not 'out of the norm.' Sure, there are still haters out there, but overall, society has evolved. Our community and our police department have evolved, too.

"I want our community to know that I am

here, that they can reach out to me for help. That's why I am here."

Fort Worth Police Department LGBT Liaison Officer Sara Straten can be reached by phone at 817-925-9355 or by email at Sara.Straten@fortworthtexas.gov. ■

Team Toyota rides in AIDS Life Cycle

Wendy Walker said she participated so she could give something back to agencies like those that helped her through her brother's final illness

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
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Wendy Walker decided to ride in California's AIDS Life Cycle to give something back to AIDS agencies like the ones who were so helpful when her brother Danny died of AIDS complications in 2005.

She recalled finding out about his illness: "We didn't find out until really late," she said.

He'd get lost while driving and would call for help, she said. He started losing weight and developed sores all over his body. That was only about 10 months before he died.

"We knew something was wrong and asked," Walker said. "He said everything was OK."

Danny had never been tested for HIV. Finally he went into the hospital.

"The doctors didn't give us a prognosis," she said. But they sent him home with medication. So Walker contacted an AIDS service organization called House of Ruth in her hometown of Louisville, where they lived at the time. A staff member visited Danny and told Walker she thought he had about eight weeks to live.

Danny was active in his Baptist church. He had been married and had two daughters. Then he got divorced and came out. Walker said he lived a conflicted life in a world where people didn't talk about HIV.

"For a long time, I wanted a way to give back to the agencies that support people affected by AIDS and who helped the families," she said. "When I found out Toyota had a team, I signed up immediately."

Building a team

Toyota has been a sponsor of AIDS Life Cycle for four years.

Ryan Hines moved with Toyota from California to Texas last year. "I was hired by Toyota to manage this sponsorship," he said.

He became a cyclist in 2017 and, after moving to Dallas, decided to see if other employees would be interested in forming a team to go to California and participate in the AIDS Life Cycle. For 2018, nine people participated as cyclists and one as a roadie, the people who pack up camp and move to the next site and staff rest stops along the way.

Not all of the 10 Toyota participants are Dallas-based. "A lot of us met for the first time on that Saturday before the ride," Hines said.

AIDS Life Cycle celebrated its 25th anniversary this year. The seven-day San Francisco-to-Los Angeles ride was founded by the same team that created the Houston-to-Dallas AIDS ride in the late 1990s. Like the Texas ride, the California event broke away from that founding company and was taken over by its beneficiary organizations.

For a number of years, the Texas ride remained profitable, but the number of riders dwindled and the event became less profitable. Unlike the Dallas ride, the California event has remained wildly popular.

This year's 560-mile ride brought in \$15.6 million. Participants each had to raise \$3,000. In addition to the Toyota corporate donation, this year's team raised more than \$46,000 — \$16,000 above what was required of the 10-person team.

Hines said team members raised quite a bit of money through social media. As a team, they sold \$4,000 in Toyota cycling gear.

On a Facebook Live event, Hines raised \$1,200 for the team in two hours. Broadcasting from Toyota headquarters' spin center, he promised to continue peddling an additional amount of time for each pledge that came in. Every time he thought he was about done, someone made another donation. Nothing brings in money like friends laughing at you while seeing you suffer, he explained.

The night before the ride, the team had passed its original goal of \$40,000. Toyota matches to some late donations brought them up to the \$46,000 final total.

Hines said he began his training in January participating in rally and big group rides that varied from 40 to 80 miles. Spin classes and cross training, especially on rainy weekends, completed his preparation to ride.

Not everyone on the Toyota team prepared as diligently. Half the team joined just two months before the ride began.

Training in Texas doesn't completely prepare someone for the California ride,

however. Hines did one training ride in the hilly country around Tyler, but part of AIDS Life Cycle is along the mountain cliffs of the Pacific Coast Highway.

"The ride is truly breathtaking," Hines said.

The longest day — Day 2 at 109 miles — had the lowest elevation. The shortest — just 41 miles — was quite hilly.

In addition to varied terrain and gorgeous scenery, AIDS Life Cycle had several things the Texas ride never had. The last night, the camping was on the beach at San Buenaventura State Park. Pit stops includ-

ed one at a strawberry field and another among fresh artichokes.

Hines said plans are already underway for Toyota to sponsor next year's ride. This year, the company provided 70 loaner vehicles. Next year, he said, they hope to add some of the trucks needed to haul equipment.

The 2019 team is shaping up as well with several of this year's participants pledging to return and new riders already signed up.

Wendy Walker and photos of the team.
(Courtesy Ryan Hines)



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- Cough
- Flatulence (gas)
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For a full list of side effects, please talk to your doctor. Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or does not go away.

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editorial

Tammye Nash Managing Editor | 113

Arnold Wayne Jones Executive Editor Life+Style | 129

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multimedia

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Suicide contagion

Percentage of those taking their own lives is at a 30-year high, but resources are available

Suicide has become an epidemic in America. It is at a 30-year high, and it is the second-leading cause of death in the U.S. behind motor vehicle accidents, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The recent tragic deaths of fashion icon Kate Spade, 55, and travel and food guru Anthony Bourdain, 61, catapulted the catastrophe to the consciousness of the nation. But people from all strata of society — and especially in the LGBTQ community — face the risk as well.

Most of what is known about suicide in the LGBTQ community comes from the research of youth issues, because the latest information, a 2016 statistical analysis by the American Association of Suicidology of that year's 44,965 victims, contains no data based on sexual orientation.

The various agencies studying suicidal behavior in LGBTQ youth maintain that suicide is the second-leading cause of death among young people ages 10 to 24, and that lesbian, gay and bisexual youth are three times more likely to seriously consider suicide and five times more likely to have attempted killing themselves than their heterosexual counterparts.

A study of transgender people revealed that 40 percent had made a suicide attempt and that 92 percent of those 40 percent tried to kill themselves before age 25.

Researchers, psychologists and others involved in mental health care believe that LGBTQ youth are more susceptible to suicide because of bullying that includes verbal and physical abuse, little support from family and friends, low self-esteem and the stress associated with minority status.

As a result, LGBTQ youth are more likely to turn to alcohol and other drugs to tackle feelings of chronic hopelessness and worthlessness that exacerbate their problems. All of these factors can be translated to older groups of LGBTQ people who remember experiencing the same treatments and feelings in their youth and may still suffer the



David Webb
The Rare Reporter

consequences as adults.

In a report on June 7 of this year, the Centers for Disease Control reported that the 2016 statistics reflected a 30 percent increase in suicides among

Americans age 10 or older since 1999. The release of the report announcing the spike ironically coincided with the deaths of Spade on June 5 and Bourdain on June 8.

The 2016 analysis showed that white men in their middle ages (45 to 64) made up the largest percentage of deaths, and that group has shown the largest increase in suicides in recent years. Of the 44,965 deaths, the breakdown was as follows: males, 34,727; females, 10,238; whites, 40,164; non-whites, 4,801; older adults (65-plus), 8,204; middle ages (45-64), 16,196, and young people (15-24), 5,723.

All of the states reported significant numbers of suicides, with California in the lead at 4,294, followed by Texas at 3,488 and Florida at 3,143. The District of Columbia had the least number of suicides at 40, and Vermont and Delaware leveled out the bottom with 118 and 119 respectively.

Regionally, the South had the most suicides with 17,593, and the Northeast had the least with 6,078. The West showed 11,516, and the Midwest showed 9,778.

The use of firearms represented the most common method of suicide (51 percent) in 2016, followed by hanging and other suffocation (26 percent) and poisoning, 15 percent. Suicide by hanging and suffocation showed a dramatic increase — 52 — percent compared to other methods in a study of statistics from 1999 to 2010, according to a U.S. National Library of Medicine report. Firearm use remained level during those years, while poisoning increased by 19 percent.

Both Spade and Bourdain committed suicide by hanging, and their deaths could be expected to spark an increase in the suicide

rate if trends noticed in previous years continue. Crisis prevention hotlines are already reporting more calls.

A study by Columbia University noted that when actor Robin Williams, 63, hung himself in 2004 suicides rose by 10 percent in four months. A similar increase was noted in 1962 when actress Marilyn Monroe, 36, died as a result of barbiturate poisoning.

The phenomenon is known as “suicide contagion,” and it is believed to be spread by massive media coverage of celebrity suicides. Most U.S. newspapers and other media abstain from publishing news about suicides unless it involves celebrities or politicians at least in part because of the danger of copycat suicides.

In the days following massive media coverage of suicides, people who are thinking about suicide may be more likely to act on the impulses. Research by mental health professionals shows that suicide victims often showed no signs of despair, nor did they have a history of mental illness. The suicides of both Spade and Bourdain took family and friends by surprise.

LGBTQ youth are arguably the most vulnerable group to suicide because they are less likely to know of resources or to be able to access them. Youth who lack strong support from family, peers or adults such as school officials are particularly at risk. Research indicates crisis prevention services such as hotlines can be effective interventions for youth in trouble.

Any youth experiencing suicidal thoughts can call the Trevor Project at 1-866-488-7386. Anyone who is aware of a youth in crisis can also call counselors for advice. A compassionate trained counselor will answer, “What’s going on?”

Adults who are in crisis can call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. Adults concerned about other adults also can speak to the counselors. ■

David Webb is a veteran journalist with more than four decades of experience, including a stint as a staff reporter for Dallas Voice. In 2016, he received the Press Club of Dallas' Legends Award, bestowed in large part for his work with Dallas Voice. He now lives on Cedar Creek Lake and writes for publications nationwide.

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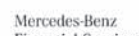
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Actor-singer Blake McIver goes to a new place for himself — drag — in 'Priscilla Queen of the Desert'



Photo courtesy Mike Morgan.

Blake McIver vividly remembers his first real introduction to drag. Although he had been acting since he was a wee sprout — he appeared on three seasons of the iconic sitcom *Full House*, and originated the role of Little Boy in the U.S. premiere of the stage musical *Ragtime* — his exposure to The Art of Female Impersonation was limited.

“I had seen a production of *La Cage* but had never been to a proper drag show,” he admits.

Then one day his dance teacher, Patsy Swayze — mother of you-know-who — was staging a production number at her studio. McIver innocently walked into the restroom and was startled.

“I remember walking to go into the bathroom and seeing 17 beautiful women and thinking, ‘I had made a grave mistake,’” he recalls. It took a moment before he realized all those beautiful women were men.

Now, he gets to be one of those beautiful women. McIver stars in Uptown Players’ upcoming production of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, the 2011 stage version of the camp cult classic 1994 film about three drag queens — two cisgender gay men and one transwoman — who traverse the wilds of the Australian Outback in a broken-down bus to perform their very urban act for rubes in the provinces. McIver plays Adam aka Felicia (remarkably, not of “Bye, Felicia” fame), who ropes his friends Tick aka Mitzi and Bernadette into the road trip ... actually a pretense for visiting the child he has from a failed attempt at heterosexuality. And aside from one gambit on Halloween some years back, it’s McIver’s first foray into drag.

“[Uptown Players] put a lot of faith in me [by casting me],” he says. “They knew I could act and sing, but they had no idea of my drag and dance abilities. And I have to say, in [drag makeup], my features are so prominent I call myself Idina MAN-zel. But we’ve been having a really good time.”

One of the hooks for McIver, aside from the “honor” of doing drag in Texas in the middle of July, is the story itself.

“I think [Priscilla] was the first movie [to explore what is often] a blurred line between gay men in dresses, which is what Tick and Adam are, and a transwoman, like Bernadette, that’s done in a very beautiful, very respectful way. My character is so transphobic at the beginning,

and when I read the script I was like, ‘My god, do I really have to say that?’ But all of these issues hit the audience unexpectedly and underneath [there’s real heart]. There is all the glitz, all the fun, all the glamour, but it tells a real story about what parenting looks like when you’re gay, and there’s almost a gay-bashing in the show... Being able to hit all those beats in one show, one informing the other, is great for an actor.”

Even before he donned one of the 20-plus bougie-glamorous costumes he wears as Felicia, McIver was a fan of the movie, and enjoys the chance to sing songs that were already old-school when he was still wearing short pants. Without knowing all the songs’ firmament in the lip-synch/disco canon — among them “It’s Raining Men,” “I Say a Little Prayer,” “Don’t Leave Me This Way” and “I Will Survive” — he was immediately drawn to its queer appeal.

“I immediately responded to the campiness of the lyric from the Charlene song in the movie [which is not in the stage version, “I’ve Never Been to Me”]: I’ve been to Nice and the isle of Greece / While I sipped champagne on a yacht?!? How could you not?!?” he says. “I’m a huge fan of variety shows, and there’s one line we sing as a trio on ‘Color My World’ that sounds like a Burt Bacharach horn section with the words added. It feels like we are jumping right out of *The Dean Martin Show!*”

■ OUTBACK Next Page



**PRISCILLA QUEEN
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OUTBACK From Previous Page

BLAKE SINGS BARBRA
Kalita Humphreys Theater,
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In a strange irony, the film of *Priscilla* debuted in the U.S. the same year as another signature event in McIver’s life: Barbra Streisand’s return, after a 27-year absence, to the concert stage. His obsession with La Streisand, after seeing the HBO special that filmed her concert, forms the basis for a one-man cabaret McIver will be performing for a one-night-only concert the same week *Priscilla* opens at the Kalita.

“It’s a celebration of that entire world tour that started in Vegas on New Year’s Eve 1993/New Year’s Day 1994,” he says. “I delve deeply into this one concert and what was happening in my life at the time,” as a young proto-gay coming into his own, as countless before him, while listening to Babs belt out “A Piece of Sky” and “On a Clear Day.” But though he sings a concert entirely performed by a woman, he does it as Blake.

“I perform it as a boy the entire time — there is no impersonation, no drag element,” he says. “It’s very much in the vein of when Rufus Wainwright did Judy Garland at Carnegie Hall.”

Which ties into most gay boys’ first exposure to drag in a roundabout way: “In my show, I get into this in my actual experience wrapping a towel around me and singing ‘My Man’ into a bathroom mirror after the first time I saw *Funny Girl*,” he says. “I go to the personal level [of what Streisand means to me], and get into the mechanics of what she does that I think is special enough to give her lasting power over a six-decade career.”

And he doesn’t need a dress to make you believe it. ■



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Size matters

'Ant-Man and the Wasp' packs a sting; the strange truth of '3 Identical Strangers'

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

If there's one specific that sets the Marvel Cinematic Universe apart from its cognate at DC, it has to be a sense of humor. Try to remember any moment since *Superman II* when you laughed at an intentionally funny bit in a DC movie. By contrast, even bloated portmanteau epics like *The Avengers: Infinity War* find room for levity.

But even Marvel has a hierarchy of humor: The first *Iron Man* set the tone (as have Robert Downey Jr.'s performances ever since then), and *Thor: Ragnarok* is almost as much comedy as adventure, but no property was more goofy than *Ant-Man*: Paul Rudd and Michael Pena are terrific deadpan comedians, and even Michael Douglas has the makings of a classic

straightman.

So the fact that new film, *Ant-Man and the Wasp* — the (*gasp!*) 20th film in the MCU franchise — delivers more biting laughs per minute than any other film probably should not come as a surprise; the fact it's also a rollicking action pic is a great bonus.

As we last learned in a throw-away line from *Infinity War*, Scott Lang aka Ant-Man (Rudd) has been under house arrest for his participation in the rebellion from *Captain America: Civil War*. We catch up with him at that same point from *Infinity War*, three days before his ankle bracelet comes off. But Scott has a weird dream, seemingly tied to the moment in *Ant-Man* when he went subatomic, that makes him reach out



The visual effects of 'Ant-Man and the Wasp' are improved, but the humor is what gets you.

to fugitive dad and daughter Hank Pym (Douglas) and Hope van Dyne (Evangeline Lilly). Could their wife and mother (Michelle Pfeiffer), missing for 30 years, still be alive in the quantum realm?

It's not as complicated as it sounds (or rather, it is, but doesn't matter), but as the trio try to create a tunnel to the nether world, they are interfered with by a meddlesome moth — a creature called Ghost (Hannah John-Kamen) who phases in and

out of corporeal state and needs their tech to save her own life. And she is willing to commit insecticide to have her way. Blah blah blah.

Ant-Man and the Wasp is an improvement on the last *Ant-Man* film, whose visual effects were more quaint than dazzling; they seem to have worked out the bugs, and director Peyton Reed has ramped up the way

■ SIZE Page 24



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Just Sean! (Cue jazz hands)

Iconic actor and activist Sean Hayes, on changing TV — and the culture — as Jack on 'Will & Grace'

Where would our queer world be without *Will & Grace*? That's where my head was just before Sean Hayes phoned, recalling my lonely teen years, when gay white men on TV alone — here's to evolved representation! — was unprecedented and life-changing for people like 15-year-old, closeted me.

It's not enough to say Hayes portrays Jack McFarland on the NBC sitcom, then, because some roles become legend, upstaging even the actor giving him life. Jack is one such character. And so a call from Hayes is like being a kid and spotting your fifth grade teacher at the grocery store: It doesn't quite feel real, and yet Hayes is a real man with a real life and even a real husband, music producer Scott Icenogle. But to the late-'90s TV landscape, it was the actor's half-fiction as Jack and his exploding-rainbow persona that cut through heteronormative programming with gay jokes even your grandma could get down with.

And then, there's Karen. You obviously don't need me to ramble on about Jack's best socialite friend (played by Megan Mullally), who never met a martini she didn't like. You know her, you love her. And together they truly make all of our friends out to be absolute fucking bores. The sitcom's recent revival reinstated #friendshipgoals when the snarky pals, along with titular housemates Will (Eric McCormack) and Grace (Debra Messing), came swishing back last September for a ninth season after ending its initial 1998-2006 run.

Hayes isn't Jack, exactly, but you could be fooled if he called you, too, his usually-unflashy voice sometimes picking up wind and taking on the kind of rapid-fire cadence his famous Cher-worshiping alter ego is known for. With season 10 premiering Oct. 4, and nine now available on DVD and digital, we caught up with Hayes, 47, to talk about those who've long criticized Jack for being "stereotypically" gay, the history of the legendary Karen-Jack slap fights, and who helped *him* be OK with being gay.

— Chris Azzopardi

Dallas Voice: It's hard to put into words exactly what it feels like to talk to the man who gave me such an iconic gay character when I needed it most. Sean Hayes: Oh my god. That's so sweet. I really appreciate that. And you just answered the reason why when people ask me what's the best part about playing it — that's the best part.

Is it? One hundred percent.

When did you first know that *Will & Grace* had impacted the LGBTQ community the way it has? Just a couple of weeks ago! [Laughs] No, I'm joking. You know what's so funny — first of all, you have no idea how much that means to *me*. You saying how much I mean to you, it means equally as much to me, so thank you.

So when did I know I had an impact? I think when I was young and doing the show I was so wrapped up in myself, in acting, in getting the part: "Am I going to get fired? Am I gonna learn my lines?" I was just happy to have a job.

It's such a fascinating thing to discuss, and I'm so glad you asked: I felt normal growing up, so when I got a job, playing a gay character on a television sitcom I just thought, "Oh, I just have to be me, kind of, a heightened version of myself." I didn't think it would have that much of an impact because of the bubble I grew up in. I surround myself with people who are accepting of me, so naively I was like, "The rest of the world must be OK with it." I mean, I knew the stories out there. I grew up and knew it wasn't accepted, but I just didn't think on any big level it was any big deal, so that gave me the confidence to play him as outrageously as I could because, again, I'm surrounded by writers and actors — everybody else — who embrace this, so I felt loved, I felt supported and I felt confidence. So, I wasn't going to work thinking about how this is going to affect anybody.

It was a wonderful byproduct later, and I was like, "Oh, ohh!" And once it started and all the press and blah blah blah, and we never got any backlash for being political in that sense, meaning how they politicized gay people, which is wrong. That's *another* interview.

Over the years, people have criticized Jack for being "flamboyant." How aware were you of that concern when the show returned for its revival season? Oh, I never heard that. This is the first time hearing it. So



you're saying people were worried, but I was playing him — I call it outrageous because “flamboyant” means a certain type of gay person, I think, and that’s another conversation to have. I was playing him as outrageously as I was before. So people were concerned that I was playing him a certain way?

People wondered if Jack was too stereotypical for TV in 2018 and expressed some

concern over what the straight community might think of us. I think that’s insider homophobia. Because I know people like Jack, because one part of me is like Jack, and so if you’re saying people in the gay community were concerned that I was playing Jack a certain way and people would “worry” that gay people act like that, they *do* act like that.

■ SEAN Next Page

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And there's people who act like Will. There are people on all spectrums of human behavior in the gay community, just like there are people on all spectrums of human behavior in the straight community, so I nix that and I say "bye" to that — I say, "bye, Felicia!" — because that doesn't make any sense to me.

Similarly, Cam of *Modern Family* was criticized for being an over-the-top and exaggerated version of what a gay person is, and I'm like, what exactly is a gay person supposed to be in 1998 or 2018? Yeah, exactly. What are they supposed to be? And by the way, they are exaggerated, some of them. And so are straight people. Look at Jim Carrey, look at Robin Williams. There are lots of straight people who are exaggerated as well. I hate that argument — no, I'm glad you brought it up. I'm just saying I love talking about it, because it's ridiculous.

As a kid coming to terms with being gay, who was your person? If you're talking about a famous person, Andy Bell [of Erasure]. Because I was in college and I was 17, 18, and I was shocked that somebody was out and proud, making a living in the arts or in pop culture by being who they are and not apologizing for it. I thought that was mind-blowing because "A Little Respect" was the No. 1 song on the radio and I was like, "Wait, the guy is gay and everybody is OK with that?" The truth is not a lot of people knew because we didn't have the internet, but I knew and all my gay friends knew. And I was like, "That's amazing." So that was inspiring to me, that you could be gay and make a living by singing, acting, whatever. But as far as actors go, Marty Short and Steve Martin were my inspirations in comedy, and Marty's a good friend now and I love him. He is the funniest person, I think, in the business.

What has it been like to be a part of a show that has existed during two very different times, culturally and politically, for the LGBTQ community? First of all, I feel very fortunate and lucky to be part of the chorus of the movement. I may not be a single voice, but I'm enjoying being a part of the chorus. And I think that we're lucky to have the voice and the representation for people to talk about it again, because I don't think it should ever stop being talked about because everything is *not* OK. There are still gay kids being bullied. And look at that [gay] couple [who was assaulted] in Florida in the bathroom during Pride. It just doesn't end. The hate doesn't end overnight.

So we have to keep doing things, and again, my contribution may not be as an activist, because I just don't feel comfortable doing that, it's just not who I am. It's not in my blood, it's not in my DNA to stand at a podium and speak in sound bites about how we need to prevail over the government and the system. I leave that to people who are good at it — I'm not good at it. What I'm

good at is being comfortable in my own skin and showing people that I have a husband and we make stupid Facebook videos and try to show people that we're as normal as any other human, so I try to do my best at that. So I'm happy the show is back because there's still tons of work to do. The power of comedy is so incredible; that's why we broke so many boundaries the first time. And hopefully we can continue to do that.

Megan Mullally has said that you're her "second husband," after her real husband, Nick Offerman. How does your chemistry with Megan after all these years compare to the first time that you stepped onto set and shot the pilot? It's so funny that she calls me her second husband because Nick and I were born on the exact same day, same year, about 30 miles apart from each other. Isn't that hilarious? But it's like working with your sister. There's a shorthand that nobody else would understand, so it's like, "I'm gonna do this," and she's like, "I'm gonna do that," and then we just do it together and there it is. So, we now know how to cut through all the stuff that you need to in order to get to a comedic moment in a scene, and that's what's great about all this time that's passed. I understand her, she understands me, we understand each other, so the chemistry has only gotten hotter.

Tell me the history of the slap fights between Karen and Jack. There's an episode called "Coffee and Commitment" where Jack is trying to get off of coffee and Karen's trying to quit alcohol, so that episode was the first time we slapped each other. It just, on paper, was "Karen slaps Jack, Jack slaps Karen," but of course Jimmy Burrows, who is incredible at physical comedy and directing, of course, said, "Let's make a dance out of this." So, we rehearsed the rhythm of it, because I think that's what makes you laugh — that's what makes *me* laugh: the pauses and then the slapping again and then the pause and the slap-slap. It's music, so you have to rehearse the beats and the rhythms in order to get that. It makes me laugh even thinking about it.

What do you envision for Jack's future?

Well, I don't want him to change too much because our friends are our friends from high school because they never change, right? Maybe get married, but still remain Jack somehow, or find a long-term relationship. Or maybe — *maybe!* — there's someone close in his own life that might be a suitable partner for life. Who knows.

Will? I have no idea.

Could you see them together? Could I see Will and Jack together? Maybe!

You've said you want to see him with

Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson. Just so you know, I'm here for it. I think that would be a hilarious episode, and I hope Dwayne comes to his senses and comes to the *Will & Grace* stage to play and have a good time.



***Would You Rather? A Memoir of Growing Up and Coming Out* by Katie Heaney (Ballantine Books 2018) \$16; 256 pp.**

Where do you go when you're looking for love? For Katie Heaney, it was, well, pretty much anywhere. She'd always wanted a boyfriend and she'd had lots of crushes in her life but she was never meaningfully kissed. At age twenty-one, she went to Madrid for a semester with the hopes of meeting someone, but there were only seven men in the group of a hundred students.

In Spain, though, after binge-streaming *The L Word* and falling for Shane, she began to think that maybe she might be a lesbian. Musing, she messaged her best friend, who let Heaney talk it out and decide that there was a big *maybe* involved.

Even so, she never saw herself with a girlfriend. She grew up in the cold of Minnesota, had planned on spending the rest of her life close to home, and moved into an apartment near Minneapolis with her straight best friend but that was too cozy-comfy. Heaney on-and-off flirted with the possibility of being gay and she met a woman who was, no question, lesbian, which made her decide to shake herself out of her complacency. She visited New York, and then moved there.

Being in The Big Apple was a big deal, but Heaney remained frustratingly dateless. By age 24, everyone she knew had dated and she began blogging about it, she wrote a book, and she noticed that

that affected the way men acted toward her. Four years later, her "attraction to men was just... gone" and picturing herself with a woman came "pretty easily," which was all it seemed to take: shortly thereafter, Heaney met Lydia online, and her almost-thirty-year dating desert became an oasis. She not only imagined herself with a woman, she *was with a woman* and nothing felt more right. And now, says Heaney, "I am living with the best roommate I have ever had."

Sometimes funny, sometimes self-deprecatingly cringe-worthy, *Would You Rather?* is a refreshing change over the I've-known-since-I-was-a-child LGBTQ memoirs. Readers may also notice that it's a bit overboard.

Heaney writes of her journey with a charming awkwardness that endears her to any reader who's ever felt as though the different drummer they're marching to is actually playing the bongos: same beat, different crowd. This book will resonate with all who feel left behind in a world where peers are hooked up solid, and frustration mixes with indecisiveness mixes with self-questioning. Once readers have gotten to the happy not-quite-ending, though, Heaney continues to examine her situation which, while it doesn't completely ruin the books' earlier allure, bruises the story somewhat.

Still, this book is worthy, if nothing but for its unique coming-out POV. For that, *Would You Rather?* fits perfectly for memoir-lovers, Heaney fans, and those who bloom late.

—Terri Schlichenmeyer

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■ **SIZE** From Page 19

the effects are used. Wasp is kick-ass and lightning fast (she flies!). They use the ability to shrink and expand instantaneously not in a dizzying over-produced way, but as buttons to the action, punchlines to the jokes. And the post-credits cliffhanger, while predictable, still stirred up the audience at the press screening. Even in a comedy, some revelations still sting.

In 1980, a 19-year-old named Robert

attended the first day of his freshman year at college and was amazed where everyone seemed to know who he was. Finally one classmate realized he had not just a Doppelganger but an actual twin, separated at birth, named Eddy. The newspapers covered the coincidence as a human interest story, but it grew stranger; the same day the story was published with a photo of the two young men, it turned out a third brother, David, realized he was the missing triplet. Each had been adopted by a differ-

ent family — working class, middle class and affluent — but otherwise their similarities were beyond appearances. They became immediate fast friends and welcomed each others’



Separated at birth... the question is ‘Why?’ in ‘Three Identical Strangers.’

families into their own. The triplets skyrocketed to celebrity overnight.

But their adoptive parents all had the same question: Why weren’t they ever told their adopted son was one of a set? Who had the right to split up this minor miracle of mitochondria multiplication and not inform them?

The parents might have been pissed, but the boys were boys, living outside New York City with a certain cache during the height of the disco era. They were too happy to care about the implications of a decision made while they were in diapers. Until it turned out they really needed to know what the adoption agency hid from them. “[Their] lives were orchestrated by scientific researchers putting their needs above the best interests of the children, someone plaintively observes.

It’s a now-common format for a documentary to be structured as a mystery to be solved, though the initial reveal in *Three Identical Strangers* — while shockingly horrific — isn’t entirely unexpected. A pall hovers over the entire film from the get-go, but as the cover-ups continue to mount, so does the audience’s frustration.

Through current interviews, old clips and plenty of reenactments, director Tim Wardle constructs a surprisingly loopy tale that uses the brothers as a hook for what happened not only to them, but to others. That’s where things begin to unravel a bit. The story gets repetitive at times (maybe Wardle is aiming to “twin the scenes” as a gimmick, but it doesn’t work), and he makes vague gestures toward certain larger implications (the Holocaust is mentioned — “When you play with humans you do something very wrong,” one person observes), but the narrative loses focus. It coasts for a long while on our amazement at the arrogance of shadowy, autocratic researchers, but the more I thought about *Three Identical Strangers*, the less I was sure exactly what I had spent 100 minutes watching, and its broader import gets murky. Then again, truth really is stranger than fiction... and it doesn’t always wrap itself up in a tidy way.

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**Friday 07.06 —
Saturday 07.07**

3rd annual Dallas Cabaret Festival continues at Bath House

Denise Lee has been on a mission to give cabaret music — those intimate, interpretive songs of R&B, Broadway, jazz and standards — its due on local stages, and her Third Annual Dallas Cabaret Festival

is a big part of that. Moving this year from the Women's Museum to the Bath House Cultural Center, the festival features performances from T. Oliver Reid, Saycon Sengbloh (pictured) and Lee herself. Come, chill and listen to music by people who know how to interpret a song.

DEETS: Bath House Cultural Center, 521 E. Lawther Drive. \$15–\$30. Eventbrite.com.

Wednesday 07.11

Culture Club, B-52s, Tom Bailey co-headline retro music tour

If you were alive in the 1980s, you teased your hair and drank Tab while listening to Boy George and Culture Club, The B-52s and Thompson Twins' Tom Bailey. Well, pull out those shoulder pads and frayed jeans — you get to relive the experience when the three supergroups return for a concert of their greatest hits at the Verizon on Thursday. Rave to "Rock Lobster," "Karma Chameleon," "Hold Me Now" and more memorable tunes from the pop past.

DEETS: Verizon Theatre, 1001 Performance Place, Grand Prairie. 8 p.m. Tickets from \$40 AXS.com.



Saturday 07.08

Sunday 07.15

You can't stop the motion of the ocean... or the fun of 'Hairspray'

For its big summer musical, the Dallas Theater Center has teamed with AT&T Performing Arts Center to present *Hairspray*, the ebullient musical adaptation of John Waters' camp classic about race relations and bubblegum pop in early 1960s Baltimore. Michelle Dowdy, who played Tracy Turnblad on Broadway, leads a cast that also includes David Coffee and Liz Mikel.

DEETS: Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. ATPAC.org.



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ARTSWEEK
THEATER

The Cherry Orchard. Local playwright Ben Schroth adapts Chekhov's comedy for the newly-formed Classics Theatre Project. Directed by Joey Folsom. Trinity River Arts Center, 2200 N. Stemmons Freeway. Through July 14. TheClassicsTheatreProject.com.

Enemies/People. Local actor, director and playwright Blake Hackler loosely adapted Ibsen's health-crisis social drama *An Enemy of the People* for a modern environmental rights age. *Final weekend.* Bryant Hall on the Kalita Humphreys campus, 36346 Turtle Creek Blvd. 2TT.co.

Les Liaisons Dangereuses. Christopher Hampton's biting adaptation of the 18th century novel about sexual gamesmanship near the end of the French aristocracy. *Final weekend.* Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. Theatre3Dallas.com.

The Lion King. The Tony Award-winning megahit returns for three weeks; based on the Disney animated film. *Final weekend.* Fair Park Music Hall, 901 First Ave. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

CABARET

Dallas Cabaret Festival. Denise Lee presents her annual celebration of cabaret music, now at the bath House Cultural Center. Feature jazz, R&B, showtunes and standards from Lee, Tony nominee Saycon Sengbloh and vocalist T. Oliver Reid. Bath House Cultural Center, 521 E. Lawther Drive. July 6–7. \$15–\$30. Tickets available by searching Eventbrite.com.

FINE ART

Sign and Symbols: Mobile Tagging Art by Pedro Morales. The gay artist's modernist work continues at the Uptown museum. The Museum of Geometric and MAD! Art, 3109 Carlisle St. Through July 15. GeometricMADIMuseum.org.

Laura Owens. The controversial, eclectic artist is featured at a show at the Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through July 29. DMA.org.

FRIDAY 07.06

COMMUNITY

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

SATURDAY 07.07

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.

THEATER

Hairspray. The dragtastic Broadway musical arrives courtesy of a partnership between Dallas Theater Center and the AT&T Performing Arts Center. Michelle Dowdy, who was in the Broadway cast for three years, stars. Directed by Joel Ferrell. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. July 7–15. ATPAC.org.

TUESDAY 07.10

FILM

The Night of the Hunter. Oscar winning actor Charles Laughton directed only one film, this influential thriller about an insane preacher (Robert Mitchum) who stalks two children whose mother he murdered. 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.

FRIDAY 07.13

THEATER

Priscilla Queen of the Desert. The Oscar-winning film, about three drag queens traversing the Atrulian Outback in a rattly bus dubbed Priscilla, becomes a jukebox musical of disco hits. Presented by Uptown Players. Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. UptownPlayers.org.

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Cassie Nova

Cassie learns a lesson about families

Hello, all. The horrible Texas heat is upon us, so if you are like me, you find reasons to hide indoors until (late) evening. I ate Spam the other day just so I wouldn't have to go to the store during the day. I think I may be legitimately allergic to the extreme heat. I break out in bitchin' and nap needin'. (It's a real thing — look it up.)

About a year ago, I was contacted by a guy at the Dallas Public Library asking if I was interested in doing a drag queen story time with the kids. I've seen stories of it being done in other cities, and I always thought it was a cool idea. So when the suggestion was made to me, Jenna Skyy and I jumped at the opportunity. I thought that it would be a cool thing to have on my drag resumé.

At first, I thought it would be simple: show up, read to the kids and leave. But nope. First we had to pass a background check (no big deal, I've never been caught breaking any laws — I hid the bodies pretty well). We had to take a class that taught us to be more interactive during story time and how never to ask a kid an open-ended question. Boy, did that part help us out. After that meeting, I was starting to get excited about Drag Queen Storytime, and actually nervous as well.

In my life, I am rarely around kids or in places where I should watch how I speak or act. I cuss like I'm the person sailors learn to cuss from, and the harder I try not to cuss, the worse it

fucking gets. (See?) I was worried that I would let an F bomb slip in front of the kids. In the end, there was nothing to be concerned about. I set it in my mind that I was going to do a character for those kids and I stuck to it. My character was good with children and didn't cuss.

I loved doing the Drag Queen Storytime, which was actually called Tall Tales and High Heels. I wore a full-length white and silver dress with these puffy sequined sleeves and rhinestones all over it. I looked like a mix of Glinda the Good Witch and a monster fairy princess with huge super red hair. I think it was probably the only costume I have that is OK for children to see. Most, if not all, of my costumes are very short hooker dresses. (I like my dresses to be short so you can read my lips.)

The first storytime was at the Downtown library. Those poor homeless people out front did not know what to think when Jenna and I walked by. We walked into the children's theater they have to oohs and ahhs from about 25 kids and their parents. The kids sat comfy on the floor on pillows and cushions and we got started. I read a book called *What Color Is Your Underwear* by Sam Lloyd. Each page has a different animal and



it asks what color is Harry the horse's underwear, and you lift the flap to show he is wearing yellow fuzzy underwear and the kids all laugh. The last page asks what color is the elephants underwear, you lift the leaf covering his backside to reveal he isn't wearing any underwear. The crowd went nuts. I joked that they just got mooned by an elephant. There were cheers, a few "Ewww grosses" and some blushed faces, but they loved it.

One of the great things about it was that I was able to entertain not just the kids but also the parents. I took inspiration from the cartoons like Spongebob or Powerpuff Girls — absolutely made for kids but enough adult humor to keep the parents interested. One of the other books I read was *My Cat Jack* by Patricia Casey. It's about a cat that likes to stretch and as I am encouraging the kids to stretch like a cat one kid yells at me that his cat likes to show everyone his butt hole when he stretches. I about fell out! I joked with the parents that they knew what I was thinking and left it at that.

I was really surprised at just how smart those kids were. Some of them understood the concept of drag and couldn't wait to tell me who their favorites were on *RuPaul's Drag Race*. It was hot that day so Jenna and I both had big hand-held fans that we kept popping to cool off with. A few of the kids wanted us to teach them how to pop a fan like a queen. I was told by many little girls that I looked like a princess and that they loved my dress — it made me feel special. Jenna was told by one little boy that she sounded like a boy a few times. She would just say, "About that..." and then change the subject. It was adorable.

Some of the kids were curious, some shy, others were loud and opinionated. All of them seemed to be having fun. We never brought up the subject of gender — we left that for the parents to explain — but the truth is, I don't think the kids cared or even thought about that. One boy asked me why I was wearing the dress with the poufy sleeves. I told him I was a like a superhero and this was my uniform. It made me feel powerful. He just said, "Oh," like it was no big deal.

I have to say that one of my favorite memories was a little boy about 7 or 8 walked in wearing a cute red dress with white polka dots. He was not overly feminine at all. He was just a normal little boy that on this day decided to wear a dress. His two moms let him dress however he was feeling. I told him I loved his dress; he said thank you then told me he liked to wear dresses especially when it was hot, then he did a little hip shake to show me how comfortable he felt. It was the cutest thing ever.

The parents were all awesome. Gay couples, straight couples, lots of moms with toddlers, larger families with lots of kids... seriously every familial makeup you could think of in every color. It was like the most diverse group of people I have ever been around, and I was in the student U.N. in high school.

The second time I did the Storytime it was at the Dallas Museum of Art for their Pride Night. It was in their children's theater that seats 250 people. About 15 kids sat up front on the floor, and every seat in the theater was filled and many people were standing against the walls. In other words, most of the folks there did not have kids. Lots of curious gays — many of them were fans of The Nova!

I will say that before these events, I was a little worried about protesters or churchies coming to try to disrupt our storytime. A week before the first event, there was a video circulating where a "preacher" interrupted a drag queen storytime in another city yelling all kinds of crazy and mean stuff. I had some fear of that happening here. After all we are a red state and in this unrecognizable new America we live in... anything can happen. I am so proud to say that we were met with nothing but love. I have a better understanding of not just my community but our community.

These kids and their open-minded, awesome parents made me feel hope for our future and I have not felt that in a very long time. I'm proud of what we did and can only imagine the well-rounded, open-hearted young adults those kids will grow into. I can't wait to do it again.

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

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The staff at The Grapevine



Divas at The Hidden Door

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- **Alexandre's:** *Girls Night Out with Peggy Honea* on Friday. *Mi Diva Loca* on Saturday. *K-Marie Broadway* on Tuesday. *Carymel* on Wednesday. *Spencer West* on Thursday.
- **Cedar Springs Tap House:** *Drag on Tap* at 9:30 p.m. on Monday.
- **Club Reflection:** *Barbie Doll birthday bash* at 6 p.m. and show at 7 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Dallas Eagle:** *ILSb-ICBB fundraiser* from 6-10 p.m. on Friday. *United Court show* from 6-10 p.m. on Saturday. *Line dance lessons with Yoshi* from 2-4 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Hidden Door:** *Hump Day* at the Hidden Door on Wednesdays.
- **JR.'s Bar & Grill:** *Cassie's Freak Show* at 11 p.m. on Monday.
- **Liquid Zoo:** *Comedy Night* at 9 p.m. on Thursday.
- **Marty's Live:** *Chanel Champagne's* happy hour from 1-9 p.m. on Mon-

day through Wednesday.

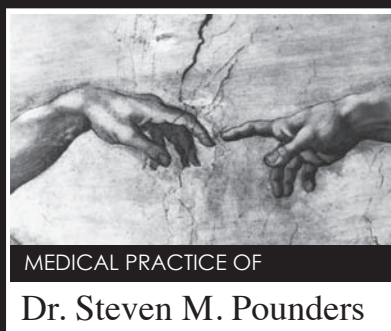
- **Pekers:** *Totally Twisted Karaoke* at 9:45 p.m. on Saturday.
- **Round-Up Saloon:** *Jockstrap Sports Happy Hour* at 6 p.m. on Friday.
- **Sue Ellen's:** *Radio Love Bus* on Saturday. *Southpaw Preachers* from 3:30-5:30 p.m. and *Anton Shaw Band* at 6 p.m. on Sunday. **Raquel Blake** hosts the **2018 CEBA All American King Pageant** at 10 p.m. on Wednesday.
- **The Rose Room:** *Zori Zannell* on Friday-Sunday. **Tuckers Gift presents K-Von Takes the Big D** with **Melodee** and **Angela Karmichael** at 7 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets \$25-35 at **Eventbrite**. **Mr. Gay Texas America** at 9 p.m. on Monday. \$20. **Miss Gay Texas America** at 9 p.m. on Tuesday-Wednesday and 10:30 p.m. on Thursday.

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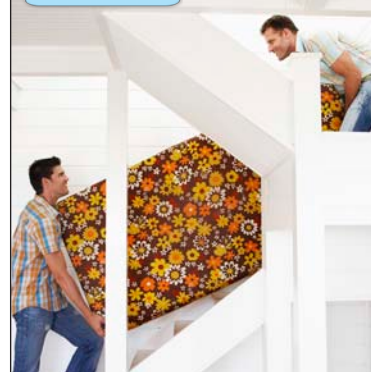
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Olly Olly Oxen Free

Solution on Page 26

Across

- 1 Stage show with "Sodomy"
- 5 Large split
- 10 E.M. Forster's fellow
- 14 Vineyard measure
- 15 Greeting for Dolly
- 16 Unthinking repetition
- 17 Start of a quote by Olly Alexander
- 20 Caesar's X
- 21 Tomlin's role in a Netflix comedy series
- 22 Mom's specialty, briefly
- 23 Pigeonhole
- 25 Hoffman title role
- 27 End of the quote
- 31 Utter nonsense
- 34 Yes, to Yves
- 35 Gets wind of
- 39 Larry Kramer and classmates
- 40 Head of costume designing
- 42 Exam taken in H.S.
- 43 Exhausted
- 45 "I Ain't Got Nobody" singer Smith
- 47 L. Cruz and C. Torres, on *Grey's Anatomy*
- 48 Child of the Divine Miss M?
- 52 Venom source
- 53 "Hello" singer
- 55 Poet Dorothy ____ Ratcliffe
- 56 Appendage
- 58 Olly Alexander's band
- 61 *The Right Stuff* org.
- 63 Bey and Cher
- 64 Triangle ratio
- 67 2001 biopic about Murdoch
- 68 Langston Hughes' "The Weary ____"
- 69 Mireille of *World War Z*
- 70 Shout at an open call
- 71 Begin in earnest
- 72 Say whether you're coming

Down

- 1 "____ la vista, baby"
- 2 Remembers some S&M
- 3 Jeremy, who did the voice of Scar
- 4 Prepare to drag
- 5 ____ new course (seek new direction)
- 6 Greek queen of heaven
- 7 Ball of film
- 8 Lube brand
- 9 Seles of tennis
- 10 Early man's opening
- 11 Bookstore category
- 12 Not straight
- 13 Vice homophobe
- 18 Zimbalist of "The F.B.I."
- 19 Expat Sylvia
- 24 Handy
- 26 Looks like a voyeur?
- 28 Poet McKuen
- 29 ____ generis
- 30 Seizure for Caesar
- 31 Drag queen ____ Lettuce
- 32 "What now?!"
- 33 Totally gay guy
- 36 Sondheim musical
- 37 Pay hike
- 38 Many go down on them
- 40 WSW opposite
- 41 Home of *Game of Thrones*
- 44 Head output
- 46 Barry Humphries' Dame
- 49 Type of Mary
- 50 1997 Kevin Kline movie
- 51 Online video source
- 54 Rock-bottom
- 57 Brian of figure skating
- 59 Potential partners for Adam and Steve?
- 60 Petrol station choice
- 61 AnaÔs the diarist
- 62 "Diamonds ____ a Girl's Best Friend"
- 65 Mo. to elect pro-gay pols
- 66 Sixth sense



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