

dallas voice

The Premier Media Source for LGBT Texas

February 1, 2019 | Volume 35 | Issue 39 | FREE | Friday, February 1, 2019

Inflection *points*

New productions from the 1990s
revisit gay life in the era of AIDS

by Arnold Wayne Jones
Stories begin on Page 16

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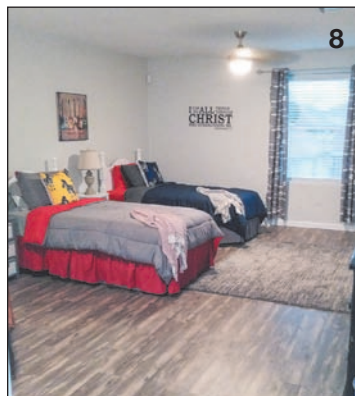
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Nick Adams, star of 'Falsettos.'
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Judge rules against lesbian couple refused apartment at retirement home



Mary Walsh, 68, and Bev Nance, 72, have been legally married about 10 years. They have been a couple for about 40 years. And yet earlier this month, a federal judge in Missouri ruled in favor of the Friendship Village senior living facility, which had rejected the women's application for an apartment there because their marriage is not "understood in the Bible," according to ABC News.

Julie Wilensky, the attorney representing Walsh and Nance in their lawsuit against Friendship Village, said the women wanted to move to the facility because they had friends already living there and because it would allow

them to "stay together there for the rest of their lives."

But officials at the not-so-friendly Friendship Village said the facility does not "condone" homosexuality and that only married couples consisting of "one man and one woman" are allowed there.

Nancy and Walsh's lawsuit alleges "discrimination on the basis of sex," but Judge Jean C. Hamilton said "sexual orientation rather than sex lies at the heart of the plaintiffs' claims."

Judge Jean C. Hamilton, however, provided a different view of the case's merits.

Hamilton then dismissed the couple's claim on the basis that the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which covers Missouri and other Midwestern states, ruled in 1989, in *Williamson v. A.G. Edwards & Sons*, that existing federal civil rights law "does not prohibit discrimination against homosexuals."

As ABC News points out, the 1989 case is being currently challenged in court in a lawsuit, *Horton v. Midwest Geriatric Management*, and the U.S. Supreme Court is debating whether to hear appeals on several cases addressing whether federal laws banning "sex discrimination" also apply to cases like this.

— Tammye Nash

AIN opens new Daire Center

Howie Daire died two years before his vision of an adult daycare facility for people living with

AIDS opened. A new Daire Center opened this week near AIN's new office.

The original Daire Center provided respite care for people living with AIDS who couldn't be left alone during the day while their partner, roommate or friend worked. Today, the Daire Center provides meals and non-medical support including art therapy and stabilization in a safe space as well as respite care.

The new Daire Center held its official opening on Monday, Jan 28 near AIN's new office located in a strip center at 2600 N. Stemmons Freeway it shares with Children's Hospital and KD Conservatory.

Along with Candy Marcum, Daire founded Oak Lawn Community Services where the Daire Center originally operated. AIN CEO Steven Pace served as an early executive director of OLCS. When that organization closed in 1999, it made perfect sense for some of its programs including the Daire Center to move to AIN where Pace had recently been appointed.

Daire is remembered as a pioneer in providing AIDS services in Dallas and was honored for his work by being named first grand marshal of the Pride parade. He died in 1986 at the age of 37.

—David Taffet

Kentucky governor's attorneys say Kim Davis liable for costs of lawsuit

Attorneys for Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin, in briefs submitted to the U.S. 6th Circuit Court

of Appeals citing "conduct that violates civil rights," are calling on the court to rule that Kim Davis alone is responsible for the nearly \$225,000 in legal fees and court costs racked up by the four same-sex couples who sued her in 2015 after she defied a U.S. Supreme Court ruling and refused to issue marriage licenses to the couples, according to reports in the Lexington Herald-Leader.

Davis is the former Rowan County clerk who got famous by refusing "on God's authority" to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples in the wake of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that made marriage equality the law of the land. Davis — who has been married four times to three different men — spent a brief time in jail on contempt of court charges and became the darling of the far right, thanks to her efforts to defend the sanctity of marriage against the evil gays.

Gov. Bevin, the Herald-Leader points out, has praised Davis as "an inspiration ... to the children of America," but the governor's attorneys are blaming her for the lawsuit and the costs associated with it, saying that she failed to do her job and, in briefs filed with the appellate court, that she acted alone without any state support.

Davis lost her bid to be re-elected to a second term as county clerk last November. She was beaten in that race by a Democrat, Elwood Caudill Jr., who was endorsed by the Kentucky Fairness Campaign, an LGBT advocacy group.

— Tammye Nash



David M. Lee, M.D. • Marc A. Tribble, M.D. • Donald A. Graneto, M.D. • Eric Klappholz, NP
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A close-up photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, 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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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.

FEBRUARY

• Through Feb. 8: Register for Senior Games

Register for Dallas 2019 Senior Games that take place Feb. 28-March 10. Fun walk and fun run, basketball, bowling, corn hole, golf, pickleball, swimming, table tennis, tennis, track & field and on March 16 cycling. Contact 214-671-1602 or pkrseniorprograms@dallascityhall.com. Info at DallasParks.org.

• Feb. 1-2 Out for Health

Out for Health is a medical conference organized by students from Texas Health Science Centers across the state to address the needs of the LGBT population. Offers continuing education credits. Students \$15, General \$50, Healthcare professionals \$120. UNT Health Science Center, Medical Education Training Building, 1000 Montgomery St., Fort Worth. Register at UNTHSC.edu/OutForHealth.

• Feb. 2: Rugby skills session

Learn the fundamentals of rugby with Lost Souls Rugby, which is entering the second half of its season and training to compete at the North American championships. Skills session is from 10 a.m.-noon at Bayles Elementary School, 2444 Telegraph Ave.



Lost Souls Rugby hold a skills session and a sock collection drive to benefit the Austin Street Center, both on Saturday, Feb. 2. See listings for details.

• Feb. 2: Jocks Collecting Socks

Lost Souls Rugby is collecting socks for the Austin Street Center. Bring new socks from 1-4 p.m. to the Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road.

• Feb. 2: TWCD Annual Gala

The Women's Chorus of Dallas annual gala includes food, drink, live music, dancing, silent auction and an art show local visual artists with a percentage benefiting TWCD from 7-10 p.m. at Sammons Center for the Arts, 3630 Harry Hines Blvd. Tickets at TheWomensChorusofDallas.com.

• Feb. 4: Tyler Transgender Support

Tyler Transgender Support Group meets at 7 p.m. in the Genecov Room, Tyler Chamber of Commerce, 315 N. Broadway, Tyler.

• Feb. 5: Classic Chassis Car Club

LGBT car enthusiasts meet from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Ojeda's, 4617 Maple Ave.

• Feb. 5: Prime Timers

Monthly lunch at 11:30 a.m. at Golden Corral, 3312 Forest Lane.

• Feb. 9: Love Equality

The Equality Texas Dallas Steering committee presents Love Equality, a night of dancing with drinks and light food, benefitting Equality Texas, will be held from 8-11 p.m. at 7 for Parties, 150 Turtle Creek Blvd. Ste. 107. Advance tickets are \$50 until Dec. 31, and \$75 from Jan. 1-Feb. 1, online at Secure.EveryAction.com/HZCrJuU7wUaaHF1ftkj1Sg2. Tickets at the door \$100.

• Feb. 9: Prime Timers

Brunch at 11 a.m. at Le Peep, 4835 N. O'Connor Road, Irving.

• Feb. 9: Red Tie Reception

Coalition for Aging LGBT presents Red Tie Reception: A Lover's Celebration with dance, drag show and raffle prizes from 4-7 p.m. at Hurst Convention Center, 1601 Campus Drive, Hurst. Free tickets at CFA.lgbt.

• Feb. 9: LGBT Speed Dating

Real Live Connection presents LGBT speed dating fundraiser happy hour from 5-8 p.m. at Alexandre's, 4026 Cedar Springs Road.

• Feb. 10: Underwear Auction

Team Metro underwear auction to raise money for the Greg Dollgener Memorial

• **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 counselor Candy Marcum; **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 pegassussquares@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; **LGBT Sex Addicts Anonymous** meets at 6 p.m. every Friday at 1919 Independence St., Room 19, Plano. 972-316-9188 for details; **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.; **DVtv in Spayse**, news and entertainment discussion live streaming every Friday, 4-5 p.m., on the Spayse Station YouTube channel.

AIDS Fund from 5-9 p.m. at Dallas Eagle, 5740 Maple Ave.

Feb. 10: Prime Timers

Visit then games at a private home from 2:30-5 p.m. RSVP by text or call 214-218-0912.

Feb. 12: Grief support group

LGBT grief support group for people who have lost a same-sex partner from 7-8:30 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road.

Feb. 12: Tyler PFLAG

Parents, family and friends of LGBT people meets at 6:30 p.m. in the Genecov Room, Tyler Chamber of Commerce, 315 N. Broadway, Tyler.

Feb. 12: Prime Timers

Dinner at 7 p.m. at Saltgrass Steakhouse, 13561 N. Central Expressway.

Feb. 13: Pride Night-Falsettos

Pride Night at the national tour of Falsettos in collaboration with the Turtle Creek Chorale at 7:30 p.m. at Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. Discounted tickets \$30-60 at ATPAC.org.

pet of the week / TRIXIE

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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.

Trixie 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



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A voice of kindness

A small Fort Worth church is working to house homeless LGBT youth

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Fellowship of Love Outreach purchased a building in the Northside neighborhood of Fort Worth in 2017 to create a place where homeless LGBT youth can “live and be loved.”

FOLO may be a small church with about 100 members, according to The Rev. Stacey Fox, but it is a small church with big plans.

Some of the members of the church are LGBT. Some members came through the foster system or were adopted. Others have fostered themselves.

Working with the homeless has been part of the church’s mission since its founding in 1987, according to Karen Seimears, director of education for the church. So establishing HOME — church members are careful to avoid calling it a shelter — seemed the obvious thing to do. But no one told them how much work it would be. Still, they’re taking things one step at a time as they apply for permits and licenses needed to operate a facility serving homeless teens.

So far they provide food and clothing, and “Currently, we have GED classes and a volunteer therapist,” Seimears said.

The therapist is Tanya Seimears, Karen’s wife.

In its brochure, the church explains its goal: “We are striving to provide a home for the homeless, lend a helping hand where we can and love for those who have felt unloved.”

And they even quote from the Bible to explain their mission: “Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from rela-

tives who need your help.”

To show how serious they were about establishing a home, this small congregation bought an 18,000-square-foot building. The church meets downstairs, and upstairs is HOME. Volunteers are building the space into 10 bedrooms and several offices. Others donated furniture.

“The bedrooms don’t look like juvie,” Karen Seimears said. “We have colorful comforters, real towels.”

Tanya Seimears will be the executive director. As a clinical social worker, she’ll provide mental health and chemical dependency counseling. Residents will register in local schools or receive on-site training leading to equivalency diplomas. And everyone will receive emotional support.

The need is huge. The National Coalition for the Homeless estimates there area 1.7 million homeless youth across the country. Fort Worth ISD has identified 1,100 homeless students in its schools, but that doesn’t include Fort Worth youth who have dropped out of school as they struggle to survive.

Estimates on how many of those homeless youth are LGBT vary widely, but at least 20 percent of them identify as LGBT, and in some areas as many as 60 percent may be LGBT.

While FOLO is gearing its outreach to LGBT youth, they won’t turn away any youth in need of their services. Pastor Fox chokes up as he talks about it.

“So many kids are thrown out because of a religious belief,” Fox said. “We want them to know God didn’t throw them away.”

He said the church decided to concentrate on LGBT youth, because often foster families won’t take in LGBT youth. And LGBT kids are less likely to go to shelters, because they’re victimized there. When they can, they’ll couch surf, but many do not have a permanent home.

Fox said he has seven children himself, and knowing there are minors living on the street just hurts him deeply.

“I’ve heard parents say, ‘I would rather you be dead than gay,’” he said. “I can’t



The Rev. Stacey Fox stands in one of the rooms ready to become HOME.

imagine anything my kids would do that I would turn them out on the streets.”

Fox and both Tanya and Karen Seimears are realistic. They know they can’t help every child, but they hope to begin housing at least five or six. Eventually they’ll fill HOME’s 10 bedrooms.

“We will make them feel like they have a place to live,” Tanya Seimears said.

She understands that means more than just providing a bed. She envisions providing a home until the youth are ready to go off to college or connecting them to training so they can move into their own apartment.

And just as parents would normally help their own kids find a place they can afford, Tanya Seimears sees their job as training these young people with the life skills they need to live on their own and then continuing to provide some help with things like utility deposits or providing basic furniture for their first apartments.

But right now, FOLO is taking things one step at a time.

“It surprised me how much I didn’t know,” Tanya Seimears said. “Starting a facility has all those state and federal guidelines,” although she understands that all the regulations are in place to make sure no more harm comes to any of the youth they’ll be serving.

Fox said there are a lot of legalities and red tape, but they’re prepared for that, and they’re taking it slowly.

Every child, he said, will have a room, a closet, a school, food, shelter and clothing.

“And love,” Karen Seimears said several times.

She said some members of the LGBT community don’t like that this home is being put together by a church, and some mainline churches have expressed reservations about this being primarily for LGBT youth. But, “We’re going to be true to who we are,” she said. “We just want to be a voice of kindness.” ■

The church can be contacted on its website FOLOChurch.org. Donations earmarked for HOME can be made through the website.

TENT fighting discriminatory 'religious liberty' bill

TAMMY NASH | Managing Editor
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Gov. Greg Abbott and Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick both have said that so-called “bathroom bills” targeting transgender people would not be a priority for them in the 2019 session of the Texas Legislature. Even so, transgender advocates in Texas remain on high alert, knowing that they are a popular target for the right wing.

The ongoing need for diligence proven when, as January came to a close, state Rep. Bill Zedler, R-Arlington, filed House Bill 1035, a “religious liberty” measure that would allow people to cite their religious beliefs justify discrimination.

Senate Bill 85, filed last November during the pre-filing period by Sen. Bob Hall, R-Rockwall, would allow mental health professionals to refuse to treat transgender people. But HB 1035 goes further.

“Essentially, what you have here is a broad religious refusal bill, what I refer to as masturbation on steroids,” said Emmett Schelling, executive director of the Transgender Education Network of Texas. “It attacks literally every person who may identify as LGBT, and it’s putting folks a step outside the parameters of whatever an individual’s religious doctrine is.”

This measure, like similar bills popular in state legislatures around the country these days, basically says that “one person’s religious liberty allows them to rob other individuals of their basic rights,” Schelling continued. “But I don’t think



Emmett Schelling

that is the intention of actual religious liberty. Harming people, putting them at an even higher risk of discrimination is nothing to be proud of.”

Zedler’s bill is “entitled an act relating to protecting freedom of conscience from government discrimination.” It would amend Section 1, Title 5 of the state’s Civil Practice and Remedies code by adding Chapter 110A “Free to Believe Act,”

defining “discriminatory action” to mean “any action taken by a governmental entity to” keep government grants and contracts from going to an individual, organization or company which discriminates against LGBT people as part of his/her/its religious doctrines.

“It’s important to highlight the actual language of the bill,” Schelling said, pointing out that it repeats the words “withhold,” “reduce,” “refuse” and “terminate,” and specifically spells out “all the different arenas where people would have the sanctioned right to discriminate.”

“All they have to do is say ‘I don’t believe in your lifestyle,’ and then it is OK for them to discriminate,” Schelling said. “But who I inherently am is not a lifestyle. This bill is attacking every area of what existing in public looks like.”

After hearing from Texas’ leaders that the 2019 legislative session would be about “vital issues affecting the every day lives of Texans — things like the state’s public education system and tax reform — instead of wasting a whole session and the taxpayers’ money, this kind of language is very disappointing,” he said.

TENT, Page 14

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In the interim

Richard Burns revives a 40-year relationship with Lambda Legal and brings his experience in nonprofit management to bear in smoothing the way for the agency's next CEO

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
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Since Kevin Cathcart retired as executive director of Lambda Legal at the end of April 2016 after 24 years at the helm, the legal advocacy organization has been through a bit of a rough period.

Rachel Tiven followed Cathcart as executive director in 2016, but, amid a wave of staffer discontent that saw numerous longtime employees leave the agency, she resigned at the beginning of

August last year to concentrate on the 2018 midterms.

But now an old friend of Lambda Legal had stepped into the top office and is turning his considerable experience to the task of preparing the agency to move into the future.

Richard Burns came on as interim executive director for Lambda Legal at the end of last August. But his association with the agency, he told Dallas Voice this week, goes back decades.

Burns said he first became aware of Lambda Legal in the late 1970s when he became a plaintiff in one of the agency's cases. He explained that he was working as managing editor of Gay Community News, a national LGBT newsmagazine based in Boston, when the federal Bureau of Prisons deemed his publication, along with the newsletter for what was then called the National Gay Task Force, to be obscene. Until then, Burns said, GCN and the Task Force's newsletter had been sent, free of charge, to LGBT people in prison. But after being declared

obscene, the publications were banned from the prisons.

"Now, you might have been able to declare [GCN] boring perhaps. But there was no way you could legitimately deem it to be pornographic," Burns said. "So we sued."

Over the course of the next year, Burns said, he went to Washington, D.C., to be deposed as part of the lawsuit. Lambda Legal was the firm representing GCN and the Task Force, and Nan Hunter with the Women's Law Collective was the attorney.

"That was an eye-opening year," he recalled.

In 1978, even though he was not at the time an attorney, Burns helped co-found Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, or GLAD, another LGBT legal advocacy organization, and served on its board until 1986.

In 1980, Burns became a member of Lambda Legal's first national board of directors. And after his involvement with the GCN lawsuit, he decided to attend law school himself. That's where he met several other future leaders of the LGBT movement, including Urvashi Vaid and Cathcart.

In the meantime, Burns said, "AIDS happened," and he became part of the growing movement of "what we called back then gay liberation activists."

In 1986, as the LGBT rights and HIV/AIDS movements were growing ever stronger and more visible, Burns became executive director of New York City's LGBT Community Center, a job he held for 22 years.

"We were at war during the Reagan years and the Bush years," Burns said, noting that it was during his time with the LGBT Community Center that the center became the birthplace of activist organizations like ACT UP and the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation ("the GLAAD with two As," he explained).

And while those were "some heady years," they were also years of never-ending struggle and frequent disappointments. The LGBT community was being devastated by AIDS and constant battles against discrimination at every level of government and throughout society. No one escaped completely unscathed.

In early 2009, Burns said, he stepped down from his post at the New York City LGBT Community Center. "I came crawling out on my hands and knees, burnt to a crisp," he said. And he had no

intention of heading up any other organization.

"But then I heard about this niche of being an interim CEO," Burns said, explaining that being a management consultant and serving as an organization's CEO gave him the chance to put his years of experience as an activist and a manager to good use without having to spend years in one place, with one organization.

It started when Paula Ettelbrick, an attorney and activist he knew from Lambda Legal, was diagnosed with cancer and asked Burns to step in for her as interim CEO of the Stonewall Community Foundation while she underwent treatment and recovered. But then Ettelbrick's condition worsened and she died. And Burns spent 10 months as interim CEO there.

"So, for these last eight years, this is what I have been doing," Burns said. "Lambda Legal is number seven on the list of organizations I worked for as interim CEO. The last one before I came here was the Johnson Family Foundation. I was there for 16 months."

Any time the top officer leaves a company or organization after a long tenure is a challenging time, Burns said this week. Times of leadership transition are always turbulent times. And anyone who follows a 20-plus year organization director "is going to have a hard time of it," he said.

It is also common, he added, to see a large number of staff members leave in the wake of a CEO's or executive director's departure.

But it is Burns' job, as a professional interim CEO, to calm those turbulent waters and help make the transition as easy and as seamless as possible.

Especially in a time when the federal government is in right-wing hands and the federal courts are skewing more conservative, Burns said, Lambda Legal and its work are "critical to our movement." And that's why his job is so important.

"It's true that the last couple of years [of transition] for Lambda have been a bit bumpier than usual," Burns acknowledged. "But it's my job now to help smooth things out. 'I am here to send the message that there is someone in [the CEO's] chair to keep things going, and to set the next CEO up for success.'"

Pick up the Feb. 8 issue of Dallas Voice for our interview with Avery Belyeu, Lambda Legal's new South Central Regional director based here in Dallas, and her outlook on the agency's priorities moving forward. ■



Richard Burns

South Bend's gay mayor running for president

LISA KEEN | Keen News Service
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The openly gay mayor of South Bend, Indiana, has announced that he will be a candidate for the Democratic nomination for president in 2020.

Pete Buttigieg (pronounced BOO-duh-judge) announced Jan. 23 that he has formed a presidential exploratory committee, an announcement usually followed some weeks or months later with a formal declaration of candidacy. He is now the first openly-gay candidate for the Democratic nomination for president — and a long shot by any measure.

But despite his relative obscurity and the fact that there are more than 140 candidates who have signed up to run for the Democratic nomination, Buttigieg's name and photo have been included in brief profiles of the top party hopefuls in almost all mainstream media summaries.

Those other hopefuls include a large number of Democratic leaders popular with the LGBT community, including U.S. Sens. Kamala Harris of California, Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Kirsten Gillibrand of New York.

South Bend voters elected Buttigieg mayor in 2011, when he was just 29, with 74 percent of the vote, then re-elected him in 2015 with 80 percent of the vote — just months after he came out publicly as gay.

Buttigieg came out in an opinion piece he wrote for the South Bend Tribune in June 2015, just before the U.S. Supreme Court released its opinion striking down state bans on marriage for same-sex couples.

Buttigieg was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Harvard University and a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford. Right out of college, he volunteered with the presidential campaign of Democratic Sen. John Kerry and then did brief stints with a business advisory group led by former Defense



Pete Buttigieg

Secretary William Cohen and the international management consulting firm of McKinsey & Company.

Buttigieg served as an intelligence officer in the U.S. Naval Reserve in Afghanistan in 2014 and, in 2017, and ran for the chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee.

Richard Socarides, a long-time Democratic Party activist and openly-gay aide to President Clinton said, "I like Pete Buttigieg very much. He is smart, thoughtful, charismatic and practical. He seems to understand and connect with traditional Democrats and millennials at the same time. He certainly starts off as a long shot, but as we know, anything is possible.

"He very much deserves serious consideration," Socarides added. "And if you are an LGBT voter, all the more reason to give him a look."

Fivethirtyeight.com, the political analysis site founded by openly gay data guru Nate Silver, says Buttigieg's core base are millennials (early twenties to mid-thirties), but "If Buttigieg can become the preferred choice of young voters ... it would give him a powerful toe-hold in the race ..."

But Buttigieg's candidacy is still a long

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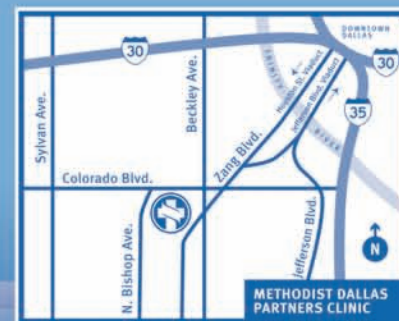
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HHS green-lights discrimination in adoptions in S.C.

Spokesman says Texas has
also asked for an exemption

LISA KEEN | Keen News Service
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The Trump administration has given foster care agencies in South Carolina a green light to discriminate based on religion, an action that LGBT legal activists say will likely harm LGBT youth and prospective parents who are in same-sex relationships.

The action came in the long-running conflict between faith-based groups and laws prohibiting discrimination, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on Jan. 23 weighed in on the side of the faith-based groups.

HHS did not answer a direct question about how many requests for exemptions it has received, but a spokesman for Wagner's agency, the HHS Administration for Children and Families, said the office is considering a request for exemption from Texas.

In a letter to the governor of South Carolina, dated Jan. 23, an HHS official granted a waiver that significantly undermines the federal department's existing policy against federal funds going to organizations that discriminate based on religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and other characteristics.

The waiver is the latest volley in a longstanding dispute between faith-based organizations who want government funds but don't want to abide by government rules concerning non-discrimination. It's also an effort by the Trump administration to undermine a pro-LGBT policy instituted under the Obama administration.

In the letter to Gov. Henry McMaster, HHS Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Steven Wagner granted South Carolina the right to funnel federal grant money to foster care agencies in the state even if the groups violate the HHS regulation that prohibits discrimination based on religion. The request for an

exemption was prompted by a Christian-run foster care group called Miracle Hill, which does discriminate based on religion and sexual orientation.

The regulation at the center of the controversy states: "It is a public policy requirement of HHS that no person otherwise eligible will be excluded from participation in ... or subjected to discrimination in the administration of HHS programs and services based on non-merit factors such as age, disability, sex, race, color, national origin, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation. Recipients must comply with this public policy requirement in the administration of programs supported by HHS awards."

In granting the exemption to South Carolina, Wagner noted that the federal Foster Care Program Statute prohibits discrimination on the basis of only race, color or national origin. Wagner's letter also notes that the state's chief legal counsel agreed that "the request for an exception was narrowed to the religious nondiscrimination provision."

Wagner added, "Please note that this exception does not relieve the S.C. Foster Care Program of its obligation to comply with any other requirements" of the HHS policy. Jenny Pizer of Lambda Legal noted that while Wagner's note is "an important narrowing as a legal matter," it is unlikely to "reduce the discrimination [against LGBT people] as a practical matter."

"Based on what's happened in the past, we think it's highly likely that Miracle Hill will continue to turn away LGBT prospective parents regardless of the parents' religion — that is, even if they identify as born-again Christians. And then Miracle Hill will argue that they are entitled to refuse any prospective parents who don't comply with [their] condemnation of same-sex relationships and views about gender identity."

The conflict between faith-based organizations providing foster care and laws and policies prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation has been going on for more than a decade. Catholic Charities in Massachusetts, California, Illinois, Washington, D.C. and several cities have chosen to shut down their foster care services rather than obey state and local non-discrimination laws.



Henry McMaster

In Michigan, openly-gay state Attorney General Dana Nessel announced last week that she would attempt to broker a settlement between a lesbian couple who seeks to adopt children and foster care agencies who refuse to consider their application. Michigan and nine other states have laws permitting foster care agencies to discriminate against same-sex couples.

A 2006 report by the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute found that one-third of child welfare agencies in the U.S. rejected applications from prospective parents because they were lesbian, gay or bisexual. Lorri L. Jean, executive director of the Los Angeles LGBT Center, said a study commissioned by her group also found that nearly 20 percent of youth in need of foster care are LGBT youth.

In 2011 under the Obama administration, HHS issued a memo encouraging child welfare agencies to better serve LGBT youth and better utilize LGBT prospective parents. But just days after President Trump's inauguration, a purported draft for an executive order was leaked that sought to prohibit the federal government from taking "any adverse action against a religious organization that provides federally-funded child-welfare services, including promoting and providing adoption, foster, or family support services for children ... on the basis that the organization declines to provide ... such services due to a conflict with the organization's religious beliefs."

Wagner indicated in his letter that he was responding to a letter Gov. McMaster sent in February last year asking for an exception. McMaster's letter informed HHS that South Carolina would have "difficulty" finding homes for children in foster care unless it could rely on "certain faith-based organizations," and that the existing HHS policy forced such faith-based organizations to "abandon their religious beliefs" in order to receive

federal funding.


McMaster apparently argued that the HHS non-discrimination policy violated the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act, a federal statute prohibiting government from imposing a "substantial burden" on the free exercise of religion without identifying a "compelling" need to do so. It also states that the federal government must not take any adverse action against an individual or religious organization because that organization has "spoken about moral or political issues from a religious perspective."

Julie Kruse of the national Family Equality Council pointed to a May 2018 Heritage Foundation panel in which HHS official Shannon Royce openly solicited faith-based organizations to seek waivers from non-discrimination policies.


"Those of you who are faith-based foster and adoption agencies, ... and there is something that you believe substantially burdens your religious expression, we would encourage you to file a request for religious accommodation" under RFRA, Shannon Royce, a former Family Research Council official and now director of HHS's Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiatives, said then.

"Faith-based organizations that provide foster care services not only perform a great service for their communities, they are exercising a legally-protected right to practice their faith through good works, said Lynn Johnson, assistant secretary for the Administration for Children and Families. "Our federal agency should not — and, under the laws adopted by Congress, cannot — drive faith-motivated foster care providers out of the business of serving children without a compelling government interest, especially now that child welfare systems are stretched thin as a result of the opioid epidemic."

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PRESIDENT

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shot, the site notes.

"Beyond standing out in a crowded field and finding footholds with key Democratic constituencies, Buttigieg's campaign also raises the question of whether Democrats are ready for an openly-gay nominee," said fivethirtyeight. But win or lose, "he'll begin to hone a national message and help normalize the idea of an openly-gay president. That alone makes him worth keeping an eye on."

Buttigieg, 37, married middle school teacher Chasten Glezman last year. In a 2015 essay in the Tribune, Buttigieg said that he was "well into adulthood before I was prepared to acknowledge the simple fact that I am gay. It took years of struggle and growth for me to recognize that it's just a fact of life, like having brown hair, and part of who I am."

He said, "Being gay has had no bearing on my job performance in business, in the

military or in my current role as mayor. It makes me no better or worse at handling a spreadsheet, a rifle, a committee meeting or a hiring decision. It doesn't change how residents can best judge my effectiveness in serving our city: by the progress of our neighborhoods, our economy, and our city services."

His campaign website is peteforamerica.com.

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TENT

, From Page 9

"I don't feel like most people want a repeat of 2017, with the legislature arguing about who gets to serve people, who gets to discriminate and who gets to use the potty," Schelling added. "I hope our leaders will stick to their word and stick to the meat-and-bones issues that affect the quality of life of all Texans."

With transgender Texans still in the crosshairs of discriminatory efforts, TENT and its coalition partners — Equality Texas, the Human Rights Campaign, ACLU of Texas and the Texas Freedom Network — is once again planning a Transgender Lobby Day and is urging transgender Texans and their allies to take their concerns directly to their representatives in Austin.

This year, Transgender Lobby Day will be March 7. Organizers will offer morning sessions to educate participants on all the legislation, good and bad, affecting the trans community, then lunch followed by training to help participants be more comfortable and effective when talking to lawmakers.

After the training sessions, participants will converge on the Capitol to speak to as many lawmakers as they can "about the issues affecting our community's quality of life," Schelling said.

Organizers are asking for a \$5 suggested donation for tickets to the education and training sessions and lunch, but Schelling said there are options for those who cannot afford to pay.

He said organizers are also working to coordinate travel options transportation from locations throughout the state to help those who can't afford to make the trip to Austin on their own.

"We want to cover all the bases," he said. "We want to make sure that a person's financial situation is not a hindrance to participating."

Those interested in participating in Transgender Lobby Day are encouraged to sign up at the TENT website, TransTexas.org, to get on an email list to receive updates and to find out about options for attending.

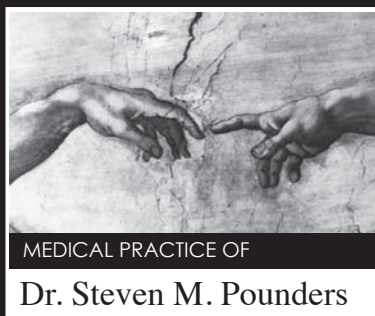
Equality Texas and its coalition partners are planning Equality Day, an LGBT lobby day event, for March 18 (visit EqualityTexas.org for information), and the newly-formed Texas LGBT Chambers of Commerce will hold its first Advocacy Day at the Capitol on Feb. 20 (visit TexasLGBTChambers.com for more information).



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Take Brazil off the vacation list

South American country leads the world each year in the number of murdered trans people. But the same hate continues to brew here at home

In the 1990s, I had a U.S. passport. It had a guy's picture on it and an "M" under "Sex." I applied for a new one recently, and in spite of the government shut down, I received my brand new passport, complete with a picture of a gracefully aging woman with a sex designation of female.

No fuss, no hassle.

But there is one place I will not be using my new passport to visit for vacation or any other reason. That's Brazil.

That country, more than any other, is a slaughterhouse for transgender women. Every year since we've been keeping track, Brazil has led the world in the number transgender women being murdered.

I offer a warning here to those who may not have the emotional strength to hear of one more horrific crime: Please know that I understand. But the gist of this column is to call out Brazil as a nation and Donald Trump as a leader.

Brazil's tacit approval of the treatment of trans women combined with the Trump administration's immigration policy is putting asylum seekers in mortal danger, and it's breaking my heart!

So, to my dear readers who are not up to reading these gruesome facts, I will bid you farewell until my next column (which I hope will be more uplifting).

Again, if you are tender of spirit, please read no further.

I remember the first Transgender Day of Remembrance I attended. It was in 2013 at Cathedral of Hope. The names of the trans people murdered worldwide were read one at a time.

It wasn't just the sheer number of names read out or ages attached to those names that was so horrifying. It was the facts of the horrific ways in which they died. These women and girls — and some men — were shot, stabbed, beheaded, set on fire.



Leslie McMurray
Accidental Activist

2018, another deadly year. There were 369 trans, non-binary and gender-variant people were worldwide. And again, Brazil, far and away, led the list with 167 trans murders.

And it isn't slowing down.

Just this week came the report of the particularly gruesome slaying of a 35-year-old trans woman named Quelly da Silva. Her killer, identified as Caio Santos de Oliveira, allegedly was intimate with her and then the next day, he ripped her chest open, pulled out her heart and wrapped it in cloth to take it with him. Then he covered the wound in her chest with the image of a Catholic Saint.

He has confessed to the crime and is being held on charges of robbery (he stole her phone) and murder. He told police he killed Quelly because she was a demon.

I don't share these details lightly. I share them because Quelly is me; her life was no more or less valuable than mine. But I can't conceive of someone hating me so much they would cut my heart out after sharing intimacy.

I can't imagine a country where this goes on virtually unchecked. There is no campaign I'm aware of to educate the Brazilian population to help end this hatred. Far from it, in fact.

The new Brazilian president, Jair Bolsonaro (Portuguese for "Trump"), began lashing out at the Brazilian LGBTQ community shortly after being elected. He's been quoted as saying he'd rather his son die in a car accident than be gay, and is been on record as encouraging parents to "beat the gay out of their children."

As you might imagine, this nut's behavior is encouraging many LGBTQ

These murders were personal. They were driven by hate and a culture that gives no value to the lives of our precious brothers and sisters.

Then came

Brazilians to seek asylum here. Maybe they haven't heard about our president? But, as you've heard, "caravans" are not welcome, and if Trump has his way, a giant, medieval wall will be built atop what used to be America's welcome mat for "your tired, your poor, your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free."

We should be welcoming these terrified travelers with open arms. Instead, we are turning them back, exposing them to government retribution, violence and starvation.

Trump's wall isn't just targeting Mexicans. It's a thousand-mile-long, ugly gray message to the rest of the world: You are not welcome here.

Our immigration policy is going to cost lives. How many more of our trans brothers and sisters have to suffer such a senseless end, victims of violence born of hate and religion run amok?

The truth is, though, things aren't much better here. While we have been encouraged by the recent passage of a comprehensive anti-discrimination bill aimed at protecting the LGBTQ community in New York, our home state of Texas is having none of it. And the federal government under Trump has been hell-bent on erasing trans people from society practically since their day one.

The fact is, the same toxic attitudes that created the slaughterhouse in Brazil are brewing in Washington and in Austin. The best we can hope for is some small measure of safety from cities like Dallas, Austin, San Antonio and a few others that have passed laws protecting trans people.

So stay safe. Watch out for yourselves and for each other.

I refuse to live my life in fear. But to ignore the very real face that there exist people who would take my life just because of who I am would certainly be ill-advised. So, when thinking about vacation spots, we are going to spend our tourist dollars in places that value us not just as tourists, but as humans deserving of equal treatment.

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



Hi, Felicia

LIFE+STYLE

stage

Out actor Nick Adams on the transformative experience of 'Falsettos'

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

When William Finn's musical *Falsettos* opened on Broadway in 1992, it not only won Tony awards for its book and score, it also shook up the culture in its portrayal of contemporary gay life. A year before *Angels in America*, it portrayed characters dealing with coming out... and coming to terms with what would become the AIDS crisis. It showed a same-sex couple living together and raising a child — unheard of at the time.

Of course, the culture has changed since then. HIV is more treatable, and same-sex marriage is the law of the land. But for Nick Adams — who plays one of the main roles in the new national tour, following the successful Lincoln Center revival in 2016 — the show seems just as relevant as always. Adams wasn't even alive at the time the musical is set (Act 1, called *March of the Falsettos*, in 1979; Act 2, called *Falsettoland*, in 1981), but as a long-time activist in the gay community, he was familiar with queer history. At least he thought he was, until he delved deep in it with Finn and co-author James Lapine, and spoke with AIDS survivors to get a first-hand take on the work and the world.

Falsettos kicks off its national tour at the Winspear Opera House for a one-week engagement starting Feb. 12 (with a special Pride Night performance on Feb. 13), but in the midst of rehearsals, Adams — who originated the role of Felicia in the original Broadway production of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* — took time to discuss finally getting his "dream role," his history of drag parts and why activism is a big part of his mission. ■

Dallas Voice: You were not even born during the time *Falsettos* is set, so you didn't really experience the AIDS crisis like these characters do. You were 9 when the original production opened on Broadway, so much of the show must feel a little historic to you. What are your earliest memories

about understanding the AIDS crisis, and how has this show, if at all, changed those perceptions? Nick Adams: What I love about *Falsettos* is, it is clever and funny and honest but deals with such heavy issues. I think it's still so topical it doesn't feel like a period piece. Where it takes you is so profound and beautiful. I saw the Lincoln Center production [in 2016] and it devastated me, but to see it is one thing — to perform is a whole other level. I have to live in that world of the show, and it's heartbreaking and also terrifying to think about the way it was, when [HIV/AIDS] didn't even have a name but was just a plague taking lives left and right. I grew up in Erie, Penn. — a small town — and I remember in high school being told I needed to be terrified of this disease. But my education was so different than what it has been since meeting people [who lived at the time] and talking through it. With this show, I think I have allowed myself to be afraid of [the sadness at what people lived with]. I have talked to survivors in order to wrap my head around it, and it has been emotional.

I was telling my dad after we ran the show that I have to take a break after [the performance]. I feel wrung out like a dish towel. At the core, it's about some things we are still dealing with as a society — humanity and family and what a family looks like, what is “normal” and how we refine it. I think [its continued relevance] even surprised James [Lapine] — he cannot believe how it has touched people of this generation.

And it's not an easy show to learn, I would imagine. Finn is known for his twisty lyrics and melodies, so what is the best and/or hardest part about doing the show? It's been fast and furious. It's dense, almost an operetta, so there's a lot to learn and stage. What's interesting is that it's very daunting looking at the magnitude of it on the page — to learn and have ready to go is a big thing. But the way it's written is so smart, and the psychology of the characters follows a train of thought, so it's been a clear path for memorizations. Finn is so clear with what you're trying to say that it's easier to retain. And the melodies are just so well-meshed in the piece that it takes you emotionally where you need to go. That's what is so singular about this musical — it's its own experience without a lot of dialogue. I've really just enjoyed the process.

When I was looking at your career as a whole, it seems you have actually done quite a bit of drag acting — Mary Sunshine from *Chicago*, one of the Cagelles from *La Cage aux Folles*, and you originated the leading role of Adam/Felicia in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*. Now in *Falsettos* you play



Whizzer, who is actually the jock in the show. Was that a conscious effort at butchering up your image? I know!

It's just so random. *Mary Sunshine* was my first Broadway credit, then *La Cage* happened. I was really resistant to doing it — I said I didn't know if I wanted to be a drag queen — but it ended up being a huge critical success. And then I did *Priscilla* right after that, and the producers were able to see me in *La Cage*... so, it's been bizarre.

Do you have a favorite role? *Priscilla* was a huge charting point in my life because it was just so massive and fun and ridiculous. I look back at that experience with such joy, but I've also grown so much since then.

But it has actually been a dream of mine to play Whizzer since college. Sometimes during rehearsal I just think, “Is this my life?” This is probably gonna be the most satisfying role in a different way. There are sides of me I get to explore [dramatically]. It's so real and beautiful.

In a strange twist, you appeared in the movie *Sex and the City 2* as part of the wedding chorus. Others in that chorus were Andrew Rannells, who played Whizzer at Lincoln Center, and Max von Essen, who co-stars with you as Marvin in this production.... Yes! Andrew and I are great friends. I'll never forget that experience. I also [played Fiyero] in *Wicked*, and [my *Falsettos* co-star Eden Espinosa] played Elphaba. We all have this weird circle of Broadway friends.

You've been pretty forward in your gay activism, from calling out a club owner on Twitter for treating you and your boyfriend homophobically to donating your time to fundraising. How important is that side of your calling? I've done a lot of work with Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, I've done AIDS walks... I've raised tons of money and done so much for so long for all those organizations very intentionally. What I do for a living creates an audience. I have the ability to spread a message and have an impact in that way. With the accessibility of social media it becomes a responsibility to use your voice where people can hear it. I've been given a small platform where I can share a message of something I'm passionate about and not be so ego-driven.

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L+S stage

All the Dietz



Jamal Sterling and Denise Lee in Amphibian's reimagined casting of 'Lonely Planet.'

Amphibian updates Steven Dietz's AIDS play 'Lonely Planet' for a new millennium

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

In 1993, at the height of the AIDS crisis, a (straight) playwright wrote a two-hander on the tolls the epidemic took not only on the physical health of so many people (especially gay men), but on the sense of community as a whole. Since then, the AIDS cocktail has altered the urgency of the crisis but not the urgency of being in touch with our own humanity.

"I think that is probably true, in terms of longevity since it's 25 years old, that *Lonely Planet* is probably the play I'm most known for... and I'm happy with that," says Steven Dietz from his home in Austin. (He and his wife split their time between Texas and Washington state.)

The latest production of *Lonely Planet* — whose plot concerns two (usually white) gay men named Carl and Jody as they come to terms with how HIV is decimating their friends as chairs show up in Jody's shop, reminding him of the human cost — is now open at Fort Worth's Amphibian Stage Productions,

LONELY PLANET

Amphibian Stage Productions,
120 S. Main St., Fort Worth.
Through Feb. 24.
AmphibianStage.com.

Gliding toward victory



Ashley Cain and Timothy LeDuc

LeDuc, Cain bring a coveted skating title to Dallas

In an historic victory, the North Texas-based team of Ashley Cain and Timothy LeDuc annihilated the field on Jan. 25 to win their first U.S. National Pairs Figure Skating Championship. Delivering an elegant and commanding performance to music from the *W.E.* soundtrack by Abel Korzenio-wski, Cain and LeDuc bested the field in convincing fashion and captured the gold medal by more than 10 points.

After only a few hours sleep, the

openly-gay LeDuc was up early Sunday to face a long day of appearances, photo shoots, rehearsals and another performance in the Skating Spectacular that caps every National Championship. He still managed to find time to send a quick text message.

"OMG we won Nationals!!!" wrote LeDuc. "It still hasn't sunk in for us because we've dreamt of this for so long and it feels so good to finally have this title. We weren't sure we'd even be able to compete here after the incident in December, but Ashley has been such a

■ VICTORY Page 23



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TEEN PRIDE HATE

With the 2018 Lexus RX 350L, longer is better

CASEY WILLIAMS | Auto Reviewer
autocasey@aol.com

Our society teaches our little brains that longer is better, whether we're talking about hot dogs, vacations, or... um, car hoods. But longer is not always better. Nobody needs a longer workday, dentist visit or hurricane. But a longer Lexus RX crossover with a third-row seat? Yeah, that's definitely better.

The RX L projects the same origami sheetmetal as shorter models, showcasing Lexus' large, gaping "spindle" grille, sharp creases, floating rear roof and shimmering LED headlamps. Look closely and you'll notice 4.3 inches of additional rear length and a steeper rear window to enhance third-row headroom. Base models come with 18-in. wheels, but we stepped up to the sportier 20-in. alloys.

Most of the interior changes took place in the aft compartment where a 40/20/40 split/fold middle row seat, which slides and folds forward, allows relatively easy access to the rearmost row. Optional middle-row captain's chairs allow walk through access. Paying attention to third-row comfort, the RX L has raised second row seats to enhance third-row legroom and added tri-zone climate control with rear vents. Side curtain airbags extend over all three rows of seats.

Designers kept all of the features that make the RX both loved and despised. It feels quite expensive up front with intricately stitched dash and door coverings plus laser etched gray sapele wood with aluminum slats that beautifully curves up the side of the console. A power moonroof, 835 watts of Mark Levinson audio and heads-up display with navigation directions add comfort

and convenience. I could do without the cumbersome joystick controls for infotainment, but some like it. Safety was paramount given families would be frequent passengers. The pre-collision system with pedestrian detection, lane keep assist, blind spot monitor and dynamic radar cruise control add margins of safety, as do rear cross traffic auto-braking and forward collision mitigation.

On the road, you'll have plenty of power to kick it forward. You can get a hybrid powertrain, but we moved out with a 3.5-liter V6 that delivers 290 horsepower and 260 lb-ft. of torque. All of that was sent to the pavement through an eight-speed automatic transmission and optional all-wheel-drive. Lexus claims 0-60 mph in 7.9 seconds. Fuel economy is rated 18/25-MPG city/highway.

You wouldn't think 4.3 inches of length would matter much, but you can feel the difference between regular and L versions from behind the wheel. That length puts extra weight on the rear, making the RX

feel more like a full-size crossover than a mid-size one. The suspension was surely calibrated to handle additional weight, giving the vehicle a softer ride. It's all good, though, because the RX handles well, rumbles over rough pavement as smoothly as a Lexus should, and there's adequate power whether creeping through city traffic or hammering the Interstate on long trips.

Does added length make a better Lexus? Mostly. Having the option to carry a couple of extra passengers with virtually no downsides makes a pretty compelling case. The entire cabin is beautifully crafted, but I sure wish Lexus would ditch its infotainment controls. Simple touchscreens would be so much better. All in, Lexus built a tough competitor for vehicles like the Buick Enclave, Ford Explorer Platinum and Acura MDX. Prices start at \$47,670, rising to just over \$62,000 as-tested. ■



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Michael Trusnovec & Parisa Khobdeh in "Promethean Fire" Photo: Paul B. Goode

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The Dallas Morning News

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L+S books

'Sugar' high

How a West Texas author left the Lone Star State, only to get drawn back to write a novel about rural lesbian life

RICH LOPEZ | Contributing Writer

With its main character lesbian and the setting a Texas state prison, Tammy Lynne Stoner's debut novel *Sugar Land* has all the seeming elements of erotic fiction. But the reality is far from it. The book, which came out this fall, is often accompanied with the terms "Southern fried" or "homespun." Think *Fried Green Tomatoes* or *Steel Magnolias*, only here, Stoner puts a different spin on coming out in a different time.

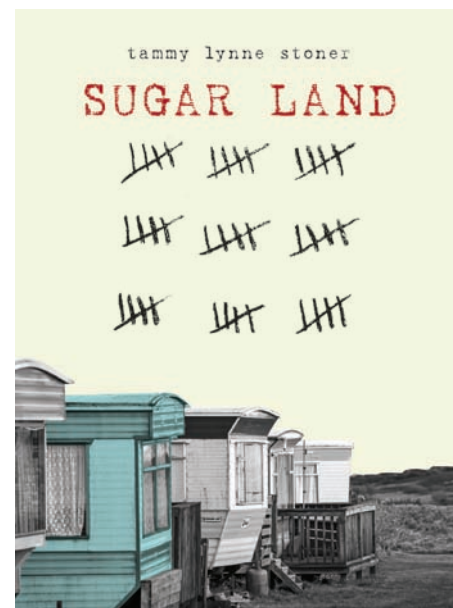
The story begins in 1923 in Midland, Texas, where a young Miss Dara falls for her best friend Rhodie. Soon they have a falling out, and Miss Dara heads to Sugar Land to work — almost quarantine herself — at the imperial State Prison Farm for men.

A prison setting for men was ironically the impetus for Stoner's lesbian story.

"I had read about the musician [and Deep Ellum native] Lead Belly, who was in jail. I read he had sung for his release and was granted a pardon," she says. "That was so bizarre to me especially at that time when you have this giant African-American and then this white governor who had a platform of not pardoning. That became a great thing to craft my novel around. His music — as famous as it is — was far less a point in this."

Although a Texas native (she was born in Midland), Stoner had moved away with her family when she was a young child. She worked as a gas station attendant, a waitress, a college instructor and even a biscuit maker. Before *Sugar Land*, she's written short stories and is the publisher of the Gertrude, which is the longest consecutively-published queer journal around. Her path has taken her to Pennsylvania, back to Austin and now to Portland with her wife (or "lady friend" as she prefers) Karena and their three children. But the South kept an influence on her.

"It feels cozy to hear words like 'pie' with that Southern feel to it," she says



with a laugh. "The South is always where I wanna be. It feels real comfortable. I was the most southern of anyone in my family."

To start the book in the city where she was born had some bit of cathartic intention behind it.

"There is some mystery on my family there. I don't know much about my Texas grandparents, but they were also the type to talk around things. I could reconnect to some questions that I won't ever get answered, but it was an excuse to learn a little more about the place."

She only remarked on development related to the oil industry and the surprising progressiveness she found in a conservative city, but she was also stunned to learn that the small LGBT community here has made strides with a transgender symposium, a park Pride event (in nearby Andrews) and *Drag Race* drag queens that have performed there.

While writing Miss Dara's story, Stoner discovered a parallel that added a layer to her developing story. In *Sugar Land*, the author starts the coming out story in 1923, and Miss Dara's journey of self-discovery heads into the '60s.

"Halfway through, I noticed that she was following the timeline of gay rights and civil rights. In the beginning, she had a crush but not the terminology for it in her small Texas town. All that terminology wasn't there then," she explains. "By the end, she was aggressively accepting herself which is at the time Stonewall happened."

As that came into view, Stoner adds that she made a conscious effort to manipulate Miss Dara's timeline to follow the trajectory of society and acceptance in the movement.

"There was a cultural change happenings and readers can follow the

■ STONER Next Page

■ **VICTORY** From Page 19

warrior through this recovery process, and her strength inspired me to push through the fear. We're so grateful to everyone that has helped us on this journey back from six weeks ago. Our coaches and our team have been amazing!

"I'm very grateful and humbled to be the first openly-gay U.S. champion in figure skating," LeDuc continued. "I stand on the shoulders of so many amazing athletes that have paved the way with their bravery so I can continue queer visibility in sports. We're very excited to continue our season at the Four Continents Championships and the World Championships and to bring home some medals for Team USA!"

The incident LeDuc referred to above occurred while the two were competing at the Golden Spin of Zagreb. A fall on a lift element left Cain with a concussion and earned her a trip to a Croatian emergency room. Following required concussion protocol, she was off the ice for two weeks to heal before resuming training and being cleared to compete in Detroit. The rest, as they say, is now

■ **STONER** From Previous Page

bouncing dot of Dara, but also, I didn't want this to be a soapbox. It just sort of follows the reality."

Like any creative, Stoner doesn't want to get boxed in as a queer author or Southern author, but she's intent on keeping a queer identity to future works.

"My agent wants another southern-style book, but there are other things I want to write. LGBT characters aren't intentional, but also, I want to write about the near-future where one doesn't identify with a gender. But also, I want representation in everything I write. That's not reflected enough in stories that are literary."

Sugar Land is available on Amazon and at book retailers. Learn more about Stoner and the book at tammylynnestoner.com.

Stoner helped found Gertie Book Club, a monthly subscription of queer literature. Every three months, subscribers receive a box — much like a meal planner or pop culture membership — of two books by LGBTQ authors along with some additional fun stuff.

"This is all about supporting literature but also that queer writers can be considered literary and not just placed on the gay bookshelf," she says.

Customers can subscribe to the Boy Box, the Girl Box or the Queer Box for a variety of stories, signed editions and swag. Learn more at gertrudepress.org.

history. LeDuc made some history of his own. There are other gay champions in the sport, but they all came out after their competitive days were behind them. LeDuc is the first U.S. pairs skater to come out while under the glare and spotlight of elite-level competition.

With the World Championships in Japan in March and Four Continents starting in just over a week, the fierce and fabulous Cain & LeDuc have proven they've got the moxie and the mettle to bring home more medals. Gold rush! ■

— Coy Covington



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but features a twist: Two African-American actors, including one woman (M. Denise Lee), take on the roles. Playwrights can legally exercise full authority to approve (or not) casting choices, but Dietz enthusiastically embraces Amphibian's decision.

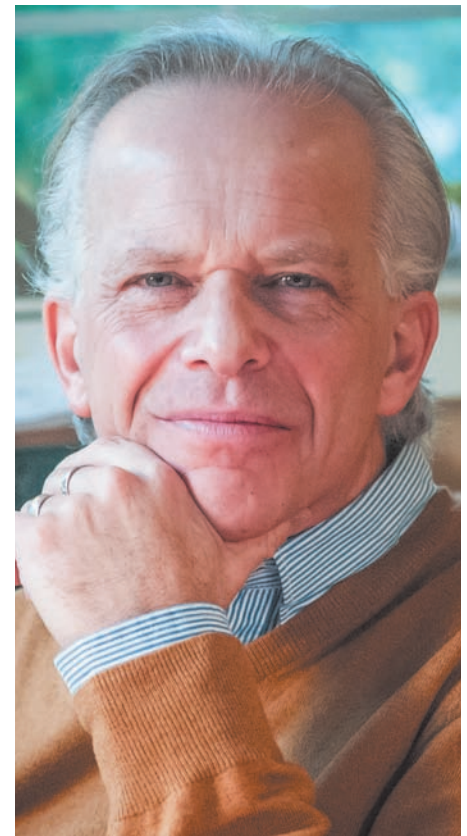
"I've made a story that I want to be told, and I would never disabuse someone of their passion to do my play," he says. "I've seen productions with two women, with teenagers, [even] a junior high production where instead of chairs

it was bicycles. To each his and her own as a playwright of course, but it has never been my experience that someone wanted to make a change to the context or casting to flip the meaning of the play. I think my work is being honored by being tested. I think the play is strong enough to hold up [to such changes]."

Director William Earl Ray — who saw one of the original productions in Seattle decades ago — says he and Amphibian Artistic Director Kathleen Culebro have a very specific reason for

choosing the cast they did. "Kathleen spoke with a young African-American who works with an AIDS organization and [learned] that the people [most affected] are in the African-American and Hispanic communities," he says. "I felt the need to open the audition process to both men and women of color."

It helps that Amphibian has cast two powerhouse performers — Lee and Jamal Gibran Sterling — in the roles. "They were the best combination that closed out the casting process," Ray



Playwright Steven Dietz.
(Courtesy Bret Brookshire)

says. (Lee will play the role as a woman, not as a man.)

"I'm excited that these terrific, experienced artists and their diversity will test the play further," Dietz says. "There are playwrights who believe in definitive productions; I have favorite and less favorite productions, but I don't want a definitive version."

Because *Lonely Planet* is so widely performed by a variety of companies, Dietz can't see all of them, but due to the play's recent 25th anniversary, he has been revisiting the text recently; in October, he directed a version in Seattle, where the two actors he originally wrote it for performed it. And he has a deeper understanding of the relevance of the work even today.

"I think in historical time, the play is not in the same world now as [when I wrote it]. The way we deal with the advances medically [with HIV] are terrific though not complete. The play is not a time capsule, but there are younger people who didn't live through that time, and I hope it's a window into that. The pressuring mechanism is AIDS, but the story of *Lonely Planet* is, there's something out there I am really afraid of, and now that thing is right in this room. It's still an urgent play about friendship, and the urgency of that time was [profound]. I don't think how we rely on our friends at a time of crisis is any less urgent."

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Friday 02.08

China's Beijing Dance Theater combines movement with story in an innovative 'Hamlet'

How pervasive is the impact of Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*? Well, how about this: Even a dance troupe in China has found a way to adapt it to their culture and medium. Beijing Dance Theater unites story and movement in the dance drama of *Hamlet*, set in a non-specific time and place in a struggle of good versus evil, all set to choreographer Wang Yuanyuan's dancing and the designs of Tan Shaoyuan and Hanjiang. The company makes its Dallas debut with this piece.

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

**Friday 02.01 —
Sunday 02.24**

World premiere musical opens at Theatre 3

Local theater pros Michael Federico and Ian Ferguson have a history of helping to create inventive musicals that defy easy categorization (for instance, Federico co-wrote last year's amazing *Pompeii!!*, which Ferguson performed in). They have reunited for *The Manufactured Myth of Eveline Flynn*, about a woman whose birth heralds great change in the universe.

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



**Tuesday 02.05 —
Wednesday 02.06
Saturday 02.09**

Kids are the center of the Arts District with 2 matinee-only shows

The AT&T Performing Arts Center has

booked two shows this week, both of which target kids with entertainment (and some learning). Midweek, *Doktor Kamboom!* combines science with showmanship in four matinees over two days (aimed at grades 4–8). Then on Feb. 9, Lightwire Theater demonstrates the dazzling work of dinosaurs through puppetry and light in the glow-in-the-dark adventure *Dino-Light*, pictured.

DEETS: Doktor Kaboom, Wyly Theatre, 400 Flora St. 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Dino-Light, Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 2 p.m. ATPAC.org.



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ARTSWEEK

THEATER

The Book of Mormon. The national tour of the hit musical returns to North Texas. *Final weekend.* Fair Park Music Hall, 909 First Ave. DallasSummerMusicals.org.

Incognito. A play about the quest for understanding the human mind. Written by Nick Payne; directed by Alex Organ; starring Drew Wall. Presented by Second Thought Theatre. Bryant Hall on the Kalita Humphreys campus, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through Feb. 23. SecondThoughtTheatre.com.

Lonely Planet. Steve Dietz's play, a meditation on the AIDS epidemic, produced with a twist. Amphibian Stage Productions, 120 S. Main St., Fort Worth. Through Feb. 24. AmphibianStage.com.

The Manufactured Myth of Eveline Flynn. World premiere original musical by Ian Ferguson and Michael Federico about a woman whose birth signaled a change in the world. Theatre 3, 2900 Routh St. (in the Quadrangle). Through Feb. 24. Theatre3Dallas.com.

Sweat. Lynn Nottage's Pulitzer play about the effects of unbalanced labor economic on real people. Presented by Dallas Theater Center. Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Through Feb. 10. DallasTheaterCenter.org.

Spring Awakening. Uptown Players presents a season add-on production of the acclaimed Tony-winning musical for one weekend only in the Downtown Arts District. Moody Performance Hall, 2520 Flora St. Through Sunday. UptownPlayers.org.

DANCE

Dorrance Dance. New York-based company specializing in tap makes its Dallas debut. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. 8 p.m. ATPAC.org.

CIRCUS

Cirque du Soleil: Amaluna. The latest from the French Canadian troupe of acrobatics, music and clowning, this time with a substantially female cast. Lone Star Park, 1000 Lone Star Parkway, Grand Prairie. Through Feb. 17. From \$45. CirqueDuSoleil.com/Amaluna.

FINE ART

An Enduring Legacy: The Eugene and Margaret McDermott Collection of Impressionist and Modern Art. The recent death of Dallas arts patron Margaret McDermott, at age 106, led to a bequest of 32 works from her private collection, housed in her own home until recently, and now on display with three previously-donated works to the DMA. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 Harwood St. Through Feb. 17. DMA.org.

Ida O'Keeffe: Escaping Georgia's Shadow. The work of the "forgotten" sister of Georgia O'Keeffe, a promising artist in her own right, gets an exhibition. Dallas Museum of Art 1717 Harwood St. Through Feb. 24. DMA.org

FRIDAY 02.01

COMMUNITY

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

BROADCAST

RuPaul's Drag Race: All Stars. The fourth installment of returning queens competing for the crown. VH1 at 7 p.m.

MONDAY 02.04

CABARET

Mama's Party. Weekly cabaret night with special guest performances. Uptown Theatre, 120 E. Main St., Grand Prairie. 7:35 p.m. \$10

TUESDAY 02.05

KIDS

Doktor Kaboom! Science and showmanship combine in a presentation for kids. Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. Tuesday and Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. ATPAC.org.

FILM

Desk Set. One of the weaker entries in the nine films pairing Tracy-Hepburn, a comedy about the "modern age" that seems (slightly charmingly) dated. Screens as part of the Tuesday Big Movie New Classic Series, which now includes a matinee. Landmark's Magnolia Theatre in the West Village, 3699 McKinney Ave. Screens at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY 02.07

CABARET

Glitterbomb Denton. Weekly queer variety show with a new lineup every Thursday, now at a new locale and new time. Andy's Bar, 122 N. Locust St., Denton. 8 p.m.

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Cassie Nova

When tops try to bottom

Hi all. I wrote the following the morning before they "reopened" the government. I'm glad folks are getting to go back to work, but let's see where we are in three weeks. Enjoy!

Hello everybody. I wish I could say that this New Year has gotten off with a bang, but it is truly off to a rocky start. Every day I am flabbergasted — yes, I said flabbergasted—the government is still shut down. So many people's checks are being held ransom for a fucking wall. Of course, our government's officials are getting their checks with no problems. We have become a joke to the entire world, and I am ashamed at how America's people are being treated by our leaders.

Part of me thinks the Democrats should just cave and give that big baby his useless wall if that means our people can go back to work and get the money they deserve. Part of me thinks, never give in to the wants of a child having a tantrum... but at some point you just want that baby to stop screaming and would do anything for some peace and quiet. Someone needs to shut down the shutdown.

My heart breaks for the people not getting to work. My heart races when I think of

the idiots making these decisions, and my heart skips a beat when I think,... How the fuck did we get here. I'm going to have a freaking heart attack, and I am not even directly affected by this craziness. I can only sympathize with all of our workers that have been furloughed.

I have a feeling that if there was a prequel to *The Handmaid's Tale*, it would just be footage of our nightly news. These are scary times we live in, and I think someday soon our earth is just gonna shake us off like a dog getting out of the bath tub. Bitch... I sound like I am in a dark place, I'm actually in an okay mood, so let's talk about something a little less depressing.... like Greek tragedies.

I just finished the book *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller. I loved it. Set before the fall of Troy, speckled with petty gods and goddesses, two young boys, Patroclus and Achilles, fall in love, constantly in fear of what the prophecies have foretold and fighting the forces trying to keep them apart. Of course, it ends tragically yet beautifully, but it really was a lovely chariot ride of a read.

There is a British movie called *The Man in the Orange Shirt*. It's a love story about two



British soldiers during World War II and the heartbreak of not being able to be together. It's sexy, sad, sweet and upsetting, but a great tale of past and present love.

I know it is a work of fiction, but it got me thinking of all of our lesbian and gay sisters and brothers throughout history whose love stories will never be known. I know there must have been millions of stories of secret gay love, and I like to imagine that for every one that ended in tragedy, a hundred more loved fully and found happiness. So for every *Brokeback Mountain* there are a hundred *Bird Cages*... at least in my mind.

Any who! Time to get out of my feelings and start trying to help you with yours! WARNING! This next section is about gay butt sex, and it's going to get graphic, so if this puts you off, look away or skip ahead. Last chance to turn the page. You have been warned!

Dear Cassie, I have and will always be a size queen. I love me a big cock. The issue I'm having is that I predominantly have always been the TOP. I have the fantasy of being "swept away" being the bottom and fully enjoying myself. That goes back to my youth of reading Anne Rice's *Sleeping Beauty* books and watching *Exit to Eden*.

I was always considered a twink but only bottomed for a few of my boyfriends. I've been with my boyfriend for 17 years now, and he *loves* when I top. He is versatile, and I'd like to think that I am versatile, the issue is when I'm in the mood to be the bottom, he's too rough. I don't know if he has TOPPED enough to understand that it can't be like it is in gay porn. He always hurts me. He doesn't know how to "ease it in." I want to please my husband, but I usually end up stopping the whole thing because he doesn't know what the hell he is doing.

Do you have any advice as to how we can

fix this situation? He does have a bigger... "situation" than I do, and I just don't know if he gets that it doesn't "fit" the way mine does. He says he loves me being his top, but I know he likes topping too. He's just rougher when it comes to me being the bottom. HELP! Signed, MC 2tite

Dear MC 2tite, Great name by the way; mine would have to be MC 2loose! Jk! First of all I have to say that if ya'll haven't gotten this shit figured out in 17 years, ya'll may have bigger problems than "dat dick too big!"

Communicate before ya'll ever even get into bed that you don't like it that rough, but here are a few pointers that you could try, before and during, to help the situation. You get on top so you have control of how fast his dick goes in. Tell him not to move until you tell him to, then you take your time and work it in at your pace. Threaten that if he starts jabbing or ramming it in, you will jump off and no ass for him.

If you want to be ready in the moment and know he is just going to ram it in, be prepared before you even get in bed. Take a moment to yourself in the shower or while you are alone and use your fingers or a small dildo to loosen your hole. If his dick is crazy big, have a few different size dildos to work your way up to his dick. This doesn't have to be something you do alone. He may even enjoy getting you ready. Include him in the process; you might find a new routine that works for you when you want to be bottom. Try douching, because a clean hole makes for a confident bottom. Good luck, and follow my tips and you will go from MC 2tite to MC JustRite!

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

Email questions to AskCassieNova@gmail.com.

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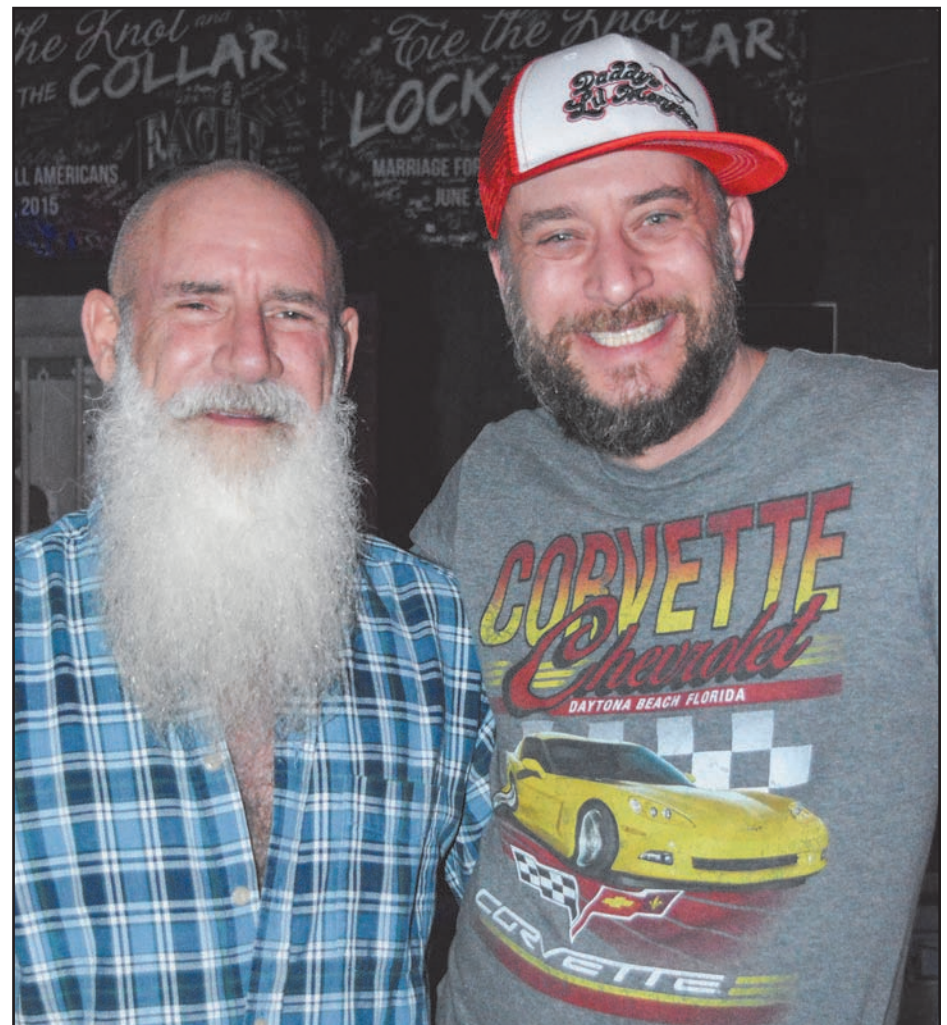


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- **515 Bar:** Super Bowl Party from 5-10 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Alexandre's:** Girls Night Out with Peggy Honea on Friday. Wayne Smith on Sunday. K-Marie Sings Broadway on Tuesday. Vero Voz on Wednesday.
- **Cedar Springs Tap House:** Two-for-One Burger Day at 11 a.m. on Thursday.
- **Club Reflection:** Imperial Court Show at 6 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Dallas Eagle:** United Court Presents Studio 44 on Saturday at 7 p.m.
- **Hidden Door:** Super Bowl Watch Party on Sunday.
- **JR.'s Bar & Grill:** Raquel Blake and Bleach at 11 p.m. for Double Trouble Tuesday.
- **Liquid Zoo:** Super Bowl Party with food and fun begins at 11 a.m.
- **Marty's Live:** Dallas Rudeboy from 10 p.m.-2 a.m. with Kickback Wednesdays.
- **Round-Up Saloon:** RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars Watch Party at 7 p.m. Friday. Sunday Funday Dance Party at 4 p.m. Boys! Boots! Boxer Briefs! at 10 p.m. on Monday. Lip Sync Battle at 11 p.m. on Thursday.
- **Sue Ellen's:** Dreo's Peace Crush on Saturday. The Mescaline Americans and The Gaudy Almighties on Sunday. The Queer-Off Season 2 at 10:30 p.m. on Wednesday.
- **TMC: The Mining Company:** Sasha Andrews hosts Latin Dance Contest at 11:30 p.m. on Wednesday.
- **Urban Cowboy:** Break-A-Leg Wednesdays: Come sing show tunes with Domita Sanchez from 10 p.m.-2 a.m.
- **Woody's Sports & Video Bar:** Super Bowl Watch Party from 5-9 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Zephyr:** Girl Scout Troop 886 sells cookies from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays through February.

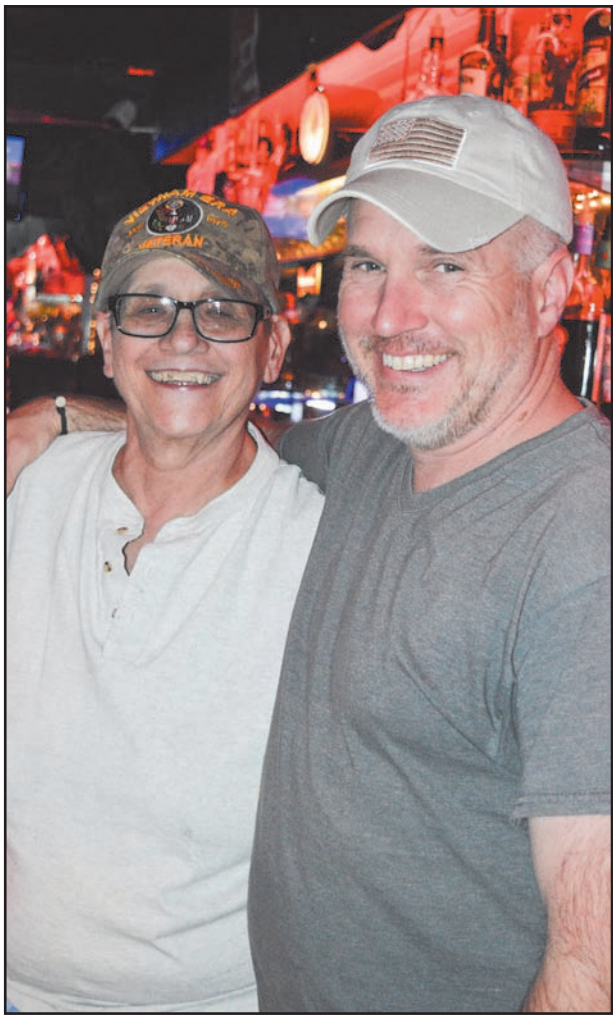
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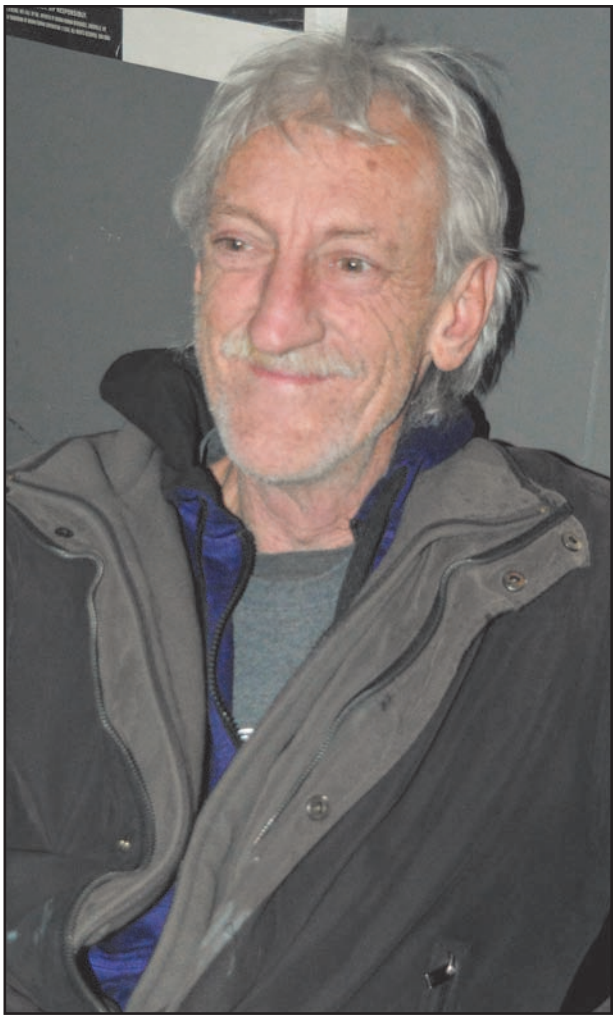
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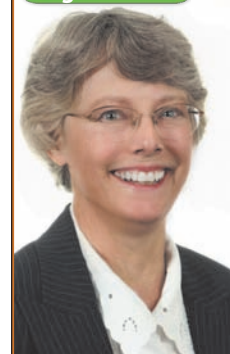
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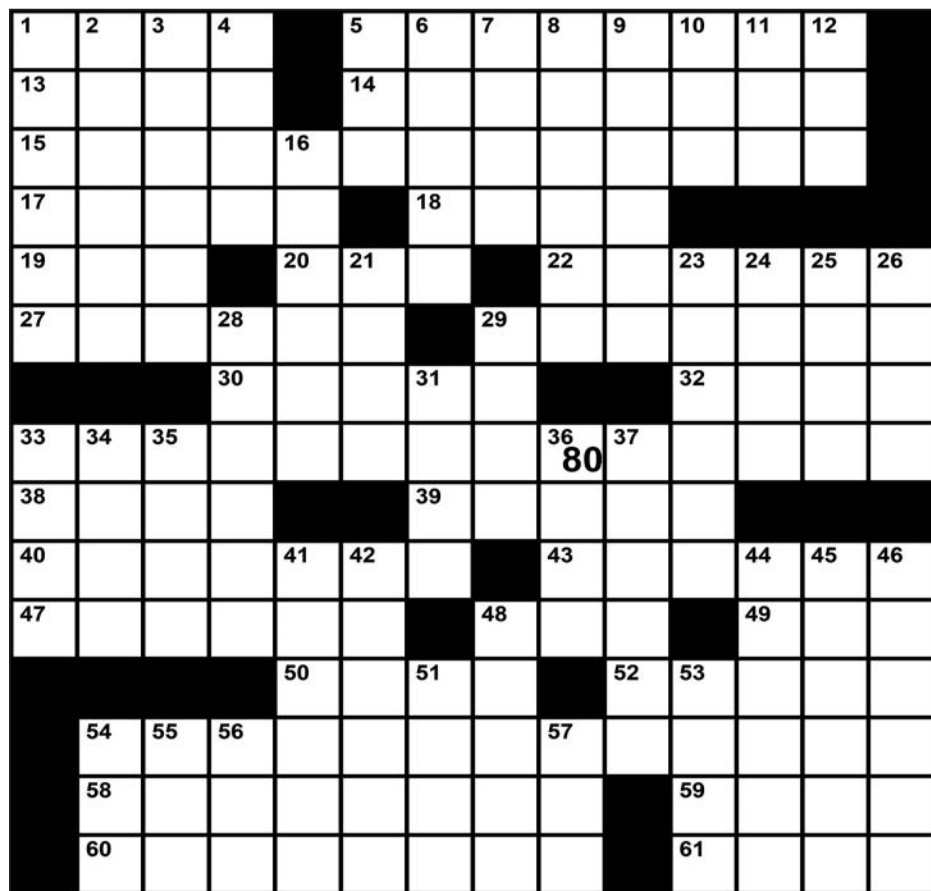
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Solution on Page xx

Across

- 1 LesbiaNation.com and Gay.com
 5 Gig for Michael Carbonaro
 13 He cruised for 40 days straight
 14 Without dissent
 15 Beloved Dolly portrayer (1921-2019)
 17 "...farewell, auf Wiedersehen, ___"
 18 JFK predictions
 19 Zadora in *Hairspray*_
 20 *Annie Get Your* ___
 22 Trunks of Mapplethorpe's photos
 27 Heated arguments
 29 Make grief-stricken
 30 Clark of fashion
 32 Killed, to King James
 33 Start of a quote by 15-Across
 38 Street urchin
 39 Supporter for Cassatt
 40 Tinged with gold
 43 Treat badly
 47 Type of arm tattoo
 48 Guns N' Roses frontman Rose
 49 Long of *If These Walls Could Talk 2*

- 50 Current band of the past?

- 52 Lets up
 54 End of the quote
 58 Worked at Barneys, e.g.
 59 Mr. Right-now, e.g.
 60 Use Viagra successfully
 61 *Sex and the City* creator Darren

Down

- 1 Opens bottles
 2 Worker under Ricky Martin
 3 Rope to catch a long little dogie
 4 Where a cobbler puts the tongue
 5 Britten's raincoat
 6 Visibly shocked
 7 Whipping boy
 8 Present from birth
 9 L-word bleeper, perhaps
 10 Friend of Rimbaud
 11 Pink-slip
 12 *Star Trek* sequel, briefly
 16 Landau's *Ed Wood* role
 21 R. Nureyev's land, once
 23 Hawk at a flea market
 24 Casa part

- 25 Out partner

- 26 Works under Edith Head, perhaps
 28 Chewy candy
 29 Sappho's B
 31 Comment about watching gay porn?
 33 Christmas poem opener
 34 Word before ass
 35 Wilde country
 36 Throw in the trash
 37 Disney dog Old ___
 41 Virtual reality stand-in
 42 Computer whiz
 44 Oust, as a homophobic incumbent
 45 Nap for Lorca
 46 Judy Garland's parade day
 48 Remembers some S&M
 51 Oscar ___ Renta
 53 Totals
 54 Jackie O.'s second husband
 55 Kevin Bacon in *Footloose*
 56 Truncation abbreviation
 57 Ending for a fruity drink



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