

dallas voice

The Premier Media Source for LGBTQ

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Everybody's *talking ...*

Black, gay C&W rapper Lil Nas X made headlines with his smash hit song in 2019. See what else everybody was talking about last year.

by Arnold Wayne Jones, Page 14

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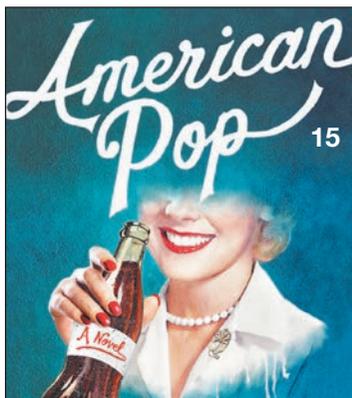
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Lil Nas X at the 2019 BET Awards.
Photo by Richard Shotwell/
Invision/AP

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Parade registration opens Jan. 6



Registration for the 2020 Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade begins at 9 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 6.

The Pride festival takes place on Saturday, June 6 and the parade on Sunday, June 7. For the second year, both will be held in Fair Park.

For sponsorship information, parade registration prices and information and festival information, visit DallasPride.org.

— David Taffet

Police patrolling Cedar Springs after threat on Grindr

Someone posted a threat on Grindr during the week of Christmas that Cedar Springs would be “the next Pulse,” a threat referring to the Orlando LGBT nightclub where 49 people

were killed and more than 50 others injured by a lone gunman on June 12, 2016.

Dallas police were notified of the threat and immediately increased patrols in the area, according to DPD LGBT liaison Amber Roman.

Roman asked the community to “be vigilant,” saying, “As always if anyone has any information, please encourage them to report it and remain aware of your surroundings.”

That information should be reported directly to 911.

Anyone with more information on this or other such threats against the LGBTQ community is asked to let us here at Dallas Voice know so that we can pass the information along to the community. Contact us at nash@dallasvoice.com.

— David Taffet

Castro suspends campaign

Texan Julián Castro announced Thursday morning, Jan. 2, shortly before 9 a.m., that he is suspending his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination.

It is “with a heavy heart and profound gratitude, that today I will suspend my campaign for president of the United States,” Castro, 45, said in an email, time-stamped 8:50 a.m., announcing his decision. “With the Iowa caucuses just around the corner, and given the circumstances of this campaign season, I have determined that it simply isn’t our time.”

Castro, the former housing secretary and former mayor of San Antonio, was the only Latino candidate in the Democratic Primary. While he has “struggled in the polls,” he “remained a policy pacesetter on immigration and fighting poverty,” according to the New York Times.

In the email, Castro said, “We’ve accomplished so much together and made our mark on history. We’ve stood up for the most vulnerable Americans — folks who are left out, cast aside, marginalized. We’ve fought for not only the middle class, but also the poor and those who are struggling the most.”

Castro noted that his campaign had “put forward some of the most bold and comprehensive policy that rivals any candidate,” and that his campaign was the first to “release polices on immigration, lead exposure, police violence, Indigenous communities, farmworkers, foster care and hunger. And we set the pace on so many other important issues.”

He continued, “We’ve told the truth at a time when lies come easy out of the White House. We were the first to call for Trump’s impeachment. We said frankly from the debate stage that police violence IS gun violence. And we said that it’s time for a state other than Iowa or New Hampshire to vote first, so that our primaries reflect the diversity of our party and nation. This campaign left our politics better than we found it”

Castro also pledged that he is “not done fighting. I’m going to keep working to build an America where everyone counts, and where Democrats win races up and down the ballot.”

— Tammye Nash

Diplomat who defended a gay couple declared persona non grata

U.S. Ambassador to Zambia Dan Foote has been declared persona non grata in that country after he defended a gay couple arrested there for having a consensual relationship. Foote, a career diplomat rather than a political appointee, had been in his position since December 2017.

Foote said he was “horrified” by the arrest of the couple.

According to Bob Satawake, Foote’s previous assignment was in the Dominican Republic where he worked with Ambassador Wally Brewster, Satawake’s husband. Brewster and Satawake now live in Dallas.

Although some news reports said Foote was recalled by Washington, Satawake spoke directly to Foote on Sunday, Dec. 26, during the Lambda Weekly broadcast on 89.3 KNON FM, telling Satawake he was declared “PNG” — persona non grata. Satawake explained that usually when there’s a disagreement between the host country and an ambassador, the country, through diplomatic channels, makes its displeasure known in hopes that the home country will withdraw the ambassador and avoid a diplomatic dispute.

While the Trump administration made no comment on the situation, it refused to recall Foote. So Zambian officials declared Foote persona non grata, a tactic rarely used, which forced him to leave the country.

— David Taffet

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THE GAY AGENDA



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

JANUARY

• Jan. 4: Stonewall Democrats Primary Screening

Members hear from candidates in all of the primary races and vote on endorsements from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Sue Ellen's, 3014 Throckmorton St.

• Jan. 7: Brewing Up Business Plano

Develop new business relationships by giving your 30-second commercial/elevator speech, exchanging business cards and learning more about this month's sponsor from 8:30-9:30 a.m. at 3100 Independence Parkway, Suite 300, Plano. \$10 in advance. \$20 at the door. Free to Chamber members.

• Jan. 7: Pride Night at The Color Purple

Dallas Hope Charities and Cathedral of Hope present Pride night which includes an after-show party with the cast and crew at 7:30 p.m. at Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. ATTPAC.org.

• Jan. 10: DFW Pride Happy Hour

LGBT Chamber of Commerce presents its first happy hour of the new year from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Crab House

Seafood & Oyster Bar, 2508 Maple Ave. LGBTChamber.com.

• Jan. 11-12: Stonewall Democrats Primary Screening

Members hear from candidates in all of the primary races and vote on endorsements from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday and 2-6 p.m. on Sunday at Sue Ellen's, 3014 Throckmorton St.

• Jan. 12: Sweat for a Cause

Join Equality Texas-Dallas and Barry's Bootcamp for a feel good workout. Each spot for this class is \$32 with the proceeds befitting Equality Texas from 2-3 p.m. at Barry's Dallas, 3600 McKinney Ave., Suite 150. EqualityTexas.org.

• Jan. 14: Mingle with TWCD

Mingle with The Women's Chorus of Dallas with 25 percent of your dinner bill going to support the chorus from 4-9:30 p.m. at Rocco's Uptown, 2717 Howell St. TWCD.org.

• Jan. 14: Same-sex partner grief group

Grief group for those who have lost a same-sex partner through death from 6:45-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road.

• Jan. 15-19: Creating Change

The annual LGBTQ activist conference. The first two days are all-day institutes. Friday-Sunday are workshops, plenaries, entertainment and plenty of time to visit with activists from around

the country at the Sheraton Dallas, 400 Olive St. CreatingChange.org.

• Jan. 16: THRIVE Game Night

Game night with food, drinks and friends. Free event for LGBTQ adults 50+ from 6-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road. Questions to THRIVE@myresourcecenter.org.

• Jan. 18: Gaybingo

MyResourceCenter.org.

• Jan. 18: Bowling with the Dallas Bears

An evening of bowling from 6:45-9:30 p.m. at USA Bowl, 10920 Composite Drive. RSVP to social@dallasbears.org no later than Jan. 15. DallasBears.org.

• Jan. 17-19: Women Lead

Human Rights Campaign presents Women Lead Summit: Leading into the Future at Westin Dallas, 1201 Main St. HRC.org.

• Jan. 20: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

• Jan. 20: MLK Day of Service with HRC DFW

Volunteers will help by sorting donations and cleaning up around the shelter from 8 a.m.-noon at Jonathan's Place, 6065 Duck Creek Drive, Garland. No photography. volunteersignup.org/WLJWH.

• Jan. 23: Toast to Life mixer

Learn more about Resource Center's

signature event Toast to Life from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Mama Tried Deep Ellum, 215 Henry St. MyResourceCenter.org.

• Jan. 23: THRIVE Discussion Group

Peer-led discussion group called "Let's Talk!" for LGBTQ adults 50+ from 6-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road. Questions to THRIVE@myresourcecenter.org.

• Jan. 24: Educare

Educare presents Becoming Visible: LGBTQ+ Care from Theory to Practice with keynote speaker Tim Johnson from SAGE discussing serious and unique health challenges due to historically unfair and cruel treatment from 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, 9200 Inwood Road. Register at EduCareDallas.com.

• Jan. 28: Get Centered tour

Tour Resource Center and learn about its programs from 5-6:30 p.m. at 5750 Cedar Springs Road. MyResourceCenter.org.

• Jan. 28: Same-sex partner grief group

Grief group for those who have lost a same-sex partner through death from 6:45-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road.

• Jan. 31: Business and Community Excellence Awards

Awards luncheon at Renaissance Dallas Hotel. LGBTChamber.com.

• Weekly: Lambda Weekly at 1 p.m.

on Sunday on 89.3 KNON-FM with David Taffet, Lerone Landis and the late Patti Fink; **Silver Pride Project Coffee and Convo for LGBTQ+ seniors** meets Mondays from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Oak Lawn Library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road, Tuesdays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Grauwlyer Park Branch Library, 2146 Gilford St. Wednesdays for Breakfast Club from 10 a.m.-noon at Reverchon Recreation Center, 3505 Maple Ave. and Thursdays for Rainbow Rec from 10 a.m.-noon at Reverchon Recreation Center, 3505 Maple Ave.; **Unwired Group of Crystal Meth Anonymous** meets Sunday at 5:30 p.m., Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday at 11:30

a.m. at Resource Center, 2701 Reagan St. First Monday is birthday night at 5750 Cedar Springs Road; **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@myresourcecenter.org; LGBT square dancing group **Pegasus Squares** meets the second and fourth Sunday from 2-4 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 at Oak Lawn Park, near the intersection of Turtle Creek and Hall Street, every Wednesday at 7:15 p.m. and every Saturday at 8:30 a.m.; **Leadership Lambda Toastmasters** practices and develops speaking and leadership skills from 6:30-8 p.m. on Mondays at First Unitarian Church, third floor of the Hallman Building, 4012 St. Andrews; **Thrive**, program of Resource Center for LGBTQ adults 50+ support group every Monday from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. followed by free lunch at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road; **Lambda AA** meets at noon, 6:30 p.m., 7:45 p.m. and 11 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 6525 Inwood Road. 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.

FEBRUARY

• Feb. 6: *Casablanca* screening

The Texas Theatre presents a pre-Valentine's Day screening of the 1942 Humphrey Bogart-Ingrid Bergman classic *Casablanca* at 8 p.m. at the Majestic Theatre, 1925 Elm St. Tickets at prekindle.com.

• Feb. 11: Same-sex partner grief group

Grief group for those who have lost a same-sex partner through death from 6:45-8 p.m. at Resource Center, 5750 Cedar Springs Road.

• Feb. 15: Gaybingo

MyResourceCenter.org.

• Feb. 15: Love Equality

An event benefitting Equality Texas is a night of celebration and dancing with drinks and light food from 8-11 p.m. at Seven for Parties, 150 Turtle Creek Blvd. Suite 107. Tickets at Secure.Everyaction.com.

• Feb. 17: President's Day

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• Feb. 21: Toast to Life Sponsor Party

MyResourceCenter.org.

• Feb. 21: LGBTQ Global Symposium on Equality and Human Rights

A coalition of Dallas-based organizations presents a symposium on equality and human rights. A diverse group of LGBTQ and ally presenters will highlight Dallas' rich history of moving from openly opposing to vocally championing human rights and equality from 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. at Southern Methodist University. Tickets at DFWWorld.org.

• Feb. 22: Turtle Creek Chorale gala

Idina Menzel performs at a gala benefiting the Turtle Creek Chorale at 7:30 p.m. at The Statler, 1914 Commerce St. TurtleCreekChorale.com.

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Cedar Springs construction begins

Upgrades and beautification are meant to attract new business, slow down traffic for safety

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Construction intended to beautify the area and make it safer has begun on Cedar Springs Road. Some of the specifications of upgrades are meant to slow traffic and attract more business to the area.

The city is paying for the project through bond package money designated to the neighborhood by former Dallas City Council members Angela Hunt and Pauline Medrano. Cedar Springs Road divides the two council districts now represented by David Blewett and Adam Medrano.

The delay in construction has been due to different proposals by local businesses, residents and the city. At one point, the city drew up plans to narrow Cedar Springs to one lane in each direction. That's something that's worked in other entertainment districts, like Bishop Arts and Lower Greenville. But on Cedar Springs Road, it would have halted traffic every day as beer trucks made their deliveries to the many bars along the street.

After years of back and forth, a design was approved earlier this year, and construction has begun. A traffic light is being added at the corner of Knight Street and Cedar Springs. Several fatal accidents have occurred at that corner, and near misses continue to occur as cars race through the flashing pedestrian lights.

Because there's a jog in the street at that corner, each of the four corners has been dug up, and the bases for traffic light poles have been poured. New handicap-accessible sidewalks are being installed, and brick will be incorporated into the design.

At Reagan Street and elsewhere along Cedar Springs Road, cutouts are meant to slow traffic by narrowing the street. Landscaping will be added, which also tends to slow traffic. Brick will be used in the design to beautify the crossing.



Top: New traffic lights are being installed on the corner of Knight Street on Cedar Springs Road to slow traffic on the Strip and make the intersection safer for pedestrians. Right: Brick pillars and a fence will surround the Melrose Hotel's new parking lot. Above: Roy G's is taking shape at the Crossroads. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

Entrance gates to the district will be placed where Cedar Springs intersects Oak Lawn Avenue and where it intersects Douglas Avenue to mark the district.

The last design element that will be added — and an indication construction is coming to an end — will be the rainbow crosswalks.

The crosswalks will be maintained by the North Texas LGBT Chamber of Commerce and are being privately funded in a campaign headed by former Dallas City Councilman Chris Luna.

In a lot behind the Melrose Hotel, a mid-rise addition to the hotel has been postponed a number of times but is now on hold. The lot that formerly housed a vintage 1920s building that was home to the restaurant The Bronx for decades has been paved. The new parking lot will be surrounded by a fence built in a style to match the hotel's architecture.

And up the street, a new restaurant is taking shape. Roy G's — after the acronym for remember the order of the colors of the rainbow — features rainbow colors. The bar/cafe is being developed and will be run by members of the Street family, pioneers who helped turn a run-down Cedar Springs Road into the gayborhood in the 1970s with their original Black-eyed Pea restaurant. ■

ASD announces new VP/COO

Jones comes to ASD from UT Southwestern Medical Center

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Yolanda Jones has been named vice president and chief operating officer of AIDS Services of Dallas, effective Thursday, Jan. 2, ASD officials have announced.

"ASD is an amazing organization providing a holistic approach to housing and care. It is indeed an honor and privilege to be a part of innovative programming," Jones said. "I have dedicated my entire career to this population, and I'm not giving up anytime soon."

Jones graduated from Texas Southern University with a bachelor of arts degree in intercultural communications. She earned her master's degree in public administration, with an emphasis in public policy, at the Barbara Jordan-Mickey LeLand School of Public Affairs.

Jones is a lifetime member of the Texas Southern University National Alumni Association and Dallas Alumni Chapter president. She also serves as the chaplain for Collin County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.

ASD officials noted that Jones has "dedicated her entire life to empowering individuals, families, and communities affected by HIV/AIDS to create and sustain healthy lives."

Born and raised in Dallas, Jones previously served as program director of Dallas Family Access Network at UT Southwestern Medical Center, working in the area of primary medical care and support services to the HIV/AIDS community. She also serves as chair of the Allocations Committee for the Ryan White Planning Council for the city of Dallas and co-chair of the Care Coordination Committee.

Jones said that one of her passions is freeing and advocating for youth impacted by sex trafficking, and she serves as a volunteer and mentor for Traffick911, a Texas-based non-profit organization that



Yolanda Jones

works to free American youth from sex trafficking through prevention, identification and empowerment.

Jones has a proven track record of federal, state and regulatory program development and compliance at the leadership level, ASD officials. She has served as the quality compliance director for The Resource Group in Houston where she provided oversight and management of the quality management programs, specifically those funded in Ryan White Part A, B/State Services C, D, F, MAI, and HOPWA.

In addition, Jones served in critical positions at AIDS Foundation Houston, including a role as the Part D Program coordinator managing a housing program for HIV-positive young adults between the ages of 18-24. That program worked to provide life skills and guidance as the youth transitioned out of homelessness or foster care and into adulthood. ■

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Religion VS. Equality

SCOTUS to take up 2 cases involving religious nonprofits and LGBTQ employees

CHRIS JOHNSON | Washington Blade
Courtesy National LGBT Media Association

Cases the Supreme Court has recently agreed to take up on the right for religious nonprofits to hire and fire employees consistent with their faith could have major implications for LGBTQ workers at those institutions, LGBTQ legal advocates are warning.

The Supreme Court has announced it has granted a writ of certiorari, or agreed to hear, two cases now consolidated as one: *Our Lady of Guadalupe School v. Morrissey-Berru*, *Agnes* and *St. James School v. Darryl Biel*.

In both cases, Catholic schools are seeking an expanded right to conduct employment practices — such as the hiring and firing of employees — consistent with their religious beliefs under the ministerial exemption granted by the First Amendment.

Shannon Minter, legal director for the National Center for Lesbian Rights, said a ruling for the Catholic schools “could significantly expand the ability of religious schools and other religious employers to disregard anti-discrimination laws when hiring and firing employees.

“In practice, the impact of any such broadened exemption would be especially serious for LGBTQ workers, since many religious employers view being in a same-sex relationship or undergoing a gender transition as contrary to their doctrines and beliefs and thus grounds for termination,” Minter said.

On their face, the litigation has nothing to do with LGBTQ workers and instead is about former teachers alleging wrongful discrimination on the basis of age and disability.

• In the *Our Lady of Guadalupe School* case, the Hermosa Beach, Calif.-based

school refused to renew the contract of Agnes Morrissey-Berru, a fifth-grade and sixth-grade teacher, who’s now alleging age discrimination under the Age Discrimination Employment Act. The school has said it refused to renew her contract because she didn’t fulfill her cathecist certification requirement. That was established in 2012, years after Morrissey-Berru was first hired in 1999.

After filing a complaint with U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 2015, Morrissey-Berru sued in district court. The judge, however, determined her claim was barred under the ministerial exemption and granted summary judgment in favor of *Our Lady*. A panel on the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the ruling, which led the school to file a petition for certiorari before the Supreme Court.

• In the *St. James School* case, the Torrance, Calif.-based school refused to renew the contract of Kristen Biel after she disclosed she had breast cancer. (She is now deceased and is represented by Darryl Biel.) The school declined to renew Kristen Biel’s contract after telling her she would be unable to keep her job because she couldn’t maintain order in her classroom.

The EEOC granted Biel a right-to-sue letter in 2015. However, a trial court ruled she was serving in a ministerial position, thus the school was in its right to terminate her. A divided panel on the Ninth Circuit reversed the decision, prompting the school to file a petition for certiorari before the Supreme Court.

The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, the same non-profit behind high-profile litigation that sought exemptions under the Affordable Care Act before the Supreme Court in the *Hobby Lobby* and *Little Sisters of the Poor* cases, is behind both lawsuits.

“Parents trust Catholic schools to as-

sist them in one of their most important duties: Forming the faith of their children,” said Montserrat Alvarado, executive director at Becket. “If courts can second-guess a Catholic school’s judgment about who should teach religious beliefs to fifth graders, then neither Catholics nor any other religious group can be confident in their ability to convey the faith to the next generation.”

Although the Supreme Court has previously ruled religious institutions under the ministerial exemption are absolutely free to hire and fire whomever they want as ministers, it has not specified what position, exactly, is a “minister.”

The decision in these cases will determine whether the jobs at stake in the lawsuits — teaching positions at parochial schools — qualify as ministers. As such, the ruling could impact whether gay teachers have a legal right to sue a Catholic school if they’re terminated for entering into a same-sex marriage, or transgender teachers if they’re fired for undergoing a gender transition.

It’s true LGBTQ people, as of now, have extremely limited explicit non-discrimination protections under federal law, and none in the workforce, but the EEOC has been accepting charges from LGBTQ workers alleging discrimination, and the entire situation could change soon.

At the same time the Supreme Court has granted certiorari in the Catholic school cases, it’s considering cases that will decide whether anti-LGBTQ discrimination is a form of sex discrimination, therefore illegal under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The two cases alleging anti-gay discrimination are *Zarda v. Altitude Express* and *Bostock v. Clayton County*, and the one case alleging anti-trans discrimination is *Harris Funeral Homes v. EEOC*.

It’s possible the Supreme Court could rule for LGBTQ inclusion under Title VII,

then essentially undercut that decision by determining in the Catholic school cases the ministerial exemption enables religious institutions to engage in anti-LGBTQ discrimination under federal law for an array of positions, including teachers.

If, on the other hand, the Supreme Court ends up ruling against LGBTQ inclusion, Title VII would end up providing no protections whatsoever for LGBTQ workers, making a ruling for an expanded ministerial exemption under Title VII irrelevant for LGBTQ workers in terms of federal law.

Nonetheless, such an outcome would still undercut employment protections for LGBTQ people as they exist under state laws and local ordinances. Twenty-one states explicitly ban discrimination against LGBTQ people in the workforce, and numerous municipalities prohibit anti-LGBTQ bias.

Jon Davidson, chief counsel for Freedom for All Americans, said a ruling for the schools would allow for a “greatly expanded exemption” under all non-discrimination measures — and not just laws barring discrimination against LGBTQ people.

“That would include laws prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation, and gender identity, as well as those prohibiting discrimination based on race, national origin and sex,” Davidson said.

The next step in the case is for the scheduling of briefings and oral arguments. Although the Supreme Court elected to take up the litigation half-way through its term, it may well render the decision before the term ends in June 2020.

Chris Johnson is Chief Political & White House Reporter for the Washington Blade. Johnson attends the daily White House press briefings and is a member of the White House Correspondents’ Association.



Trial by internet

Don't make judgements based just on soundbites and headlines

WILL KOLB | Guest Columnist

There can be no doubt that the internet has changed the way we live. In my case, I rarely get lost driving anymore; I have whole albums of selfies to select when I need to post something for an ego boost from strangers; I stay connected to friends across the globe, and anything I want to know is at my fingertips.

In addition — by choice — my opinions, thoughts and every move can be cataloged in a continuous online diary that people can either ignore or follow, as they choose.

But along with this comes a darker side, something I think of as trial by internet. And we are reveling in it as a society.

As we read less and ignore long-form journalism, we've been reduced to reactionaries of hearsay and headlines — a giant online community that has an opinion about everything, regardless of how much we know; a ferocious cabal of critics without credentials. Hidden behind screens, bogus screennames and cartoons as profile pictures, we gleefully comment away on anything and everything.

From celebrity scandals to nonfactual news, everyone has a voice now. Someone is angry at someone and posts it online? Within minutes the likes and vicious comments pour in from those knowing, at best, one side of the story and, at worst, nothing at all.

I went through this sort of trial a few years back. After starting a large network of online groups, I discovered that by putting yourself out there, you not only attract fans, you get haters. A small group of those charmers ignited an online attack campaign. Before I knew it, I was getting hate mail and texts from people



Will Kolb
Contributing Columnist

I had never met; the Amazon reviews of my novel were destroyed by people that never bought the book, and even folks at my place of employ-

ment were getting emails from anonymous strangers.

Most of these people didn't know me. They had read something that someone insisted was true. They didn't ask my side. They didn't evaluate my actions or character. They just knew. Because they read it on the internet.

It took years for that to die down.

Which brings me to two cases in the news at the end of 2019. The first is regarding our own *Real Housewife of Dallas*, LeeAnne Locken. Now in case you



LeeAnne Locken

don't watch or care about the show (and many of us don't, and you don't need to approve of these kind of shows to follow my thoughts here). Ms. Locken is embroiled in a scandal due to a comment she made on air. She called a fellow castmate a "chirpy Mexican." And boy did she get it.

The charges of racism and calls for her removal from the show came fast and furious. And they came from all quarters: fans of the show, non-watchers, people that simply read a headline, fellow cast members or friends and fans of fellow cast members.

Yet there is a backstory. The cast member called a "chirpy Mexican" is Kary Brittingham, the newest of the cast members of *Real Housewives of Dallas*. On numerous occasions, on air, she has called herself the "tough Mexican." But no matter. In a heated discussion, LeeAnne let slip her "chirpy Mexican" comment. Now, was that politically incorrect in this day in age? Yes. Did she need to apologize? Yes. Did she? Yes.

But was it racist? No, in my opinion. And even if you think repeating what a woman has called herself multiple times, Mexican, is racist, the question then becomes what was the intent and what have been the actions of the person accused of being racist?

Is LeeAnne Locken a racist? If you follow any of the sites on social media devoted to the show or the network, the outlook is glum. She simply must be a racist. After all, she said it, didn't she?

So, a lot of people's verdict is to destroy Ms. Locken as quickly as possible. And to my shock, many of those people gunning for LeeAnne are part of the LGBT community.

But those choosing to react to a heated conversation on air with all the pressures that go along with a definitive judgement of racism might also wish to investigate Ms. Locken's actual actions.

Those in the LGBTQ Dallas charity and social services community are quite familiar with LeeAnne. Long, long before it was fashionable or of any interest to heterosexual women to be involved, LeeAnne was charging ahead on the frontlines in defense of her LGBTQ friends. She didn't just talk the talk, she walked the walk. From headlining to chairing to hosting, Ms. Locken was there.

After her *Real Housewives* gig started, she didn't retreat; she got even more involved. And what does that have to do with racism you ask? Well, again, we'd

have to ignore the soundbite or headline and dig a bit deeper.

Closest to Ms. Locken's heart has been her work with Legacy Counseling and Founders Cottage. But who was she helping there? Her rich, stylish, white gay friends? Nope. LeeAnne focused on minorities of all colors. And it wasn't just service and fundraising galas. She was there — listening, loving, hugging and caring on each and every one of the clients and beneficiaries.

Those that work with her on her mission don't see racism in her heart. They don't see it in her actions. And perhaps while they flinched for her as she spilled out something that at the time seemed like a funny line but in retrospect is regrettable, those in the know are quite sure the intent and the heart are not what those so quick to try her by internet are determined to brand her: a racist. Simply put, she is not.

But the internet is determined — the actions, the heart, the love being wiped away by people who care to know the headline and not the story.

The *Housewives* shows by their very definition are designed for drama. Each has the same formula: Find a group of women; let one rise to the top and become the alpha (in the Dallas case, it's always been LeeAnne), and then let the others squabble and fight and kick at the pedestal until they can bring down the Queen Bee and assume the top spot themselves.

Rinse and repeat.

And by the reactions of the other *Housewives*, they think they finally have the weapon to do it. And while acceptable that none condoned the comment, not even one defended the heart of their castmate. They just went for the jugular, all the while knowing her record of service to minorities. And considering the skeletons in these women's closets, that surprises me a bit. I know a few of the ladies and racism, homophobia, hypocrisy and pettiness are not something that hasn't played a part in more than one of their lives. So far, they haven't been caught.

That's why it surprises me to see kettles so anxious to point at a pot, even when this indictment is mislabeled from making an insensitive and politically incorrect remark to deliberate and blatant racism.

In all fairness I know LeeAnne Locken. She's brash. She's outspoken. Occasional-



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ly she opens her mouth and words just fall out. Sometimes she regrets those words. But I am very clear on one thing: She isn't a racist. I've never heard her once say anything negative about any racial group. And if calling someone a Mexican makes her a racist instead of someone just using a word that may be improper in a politically correct era, I hate to say it, but I don't know anyone white over 40 that while having their every moment recorded or filmed wouldn't get caught in some similar transgression. We have all said something insensitive. We have all said something that can be viewed as politically incorrect. But we weren't all being filmed or recorded. And luckily, we weren't judged on the internet without a real way to show our true selves. Before you read a headline and simply judge her a racist, go to an event that LeeAnne is headlining. Watch her closely. Watch her eyes as she's speaking to anyone of any color, creed, orientation or social status. I have. And I'm a fair judge of character. Her eyes are attached to her heart, and all I've ever seen pouring out towards anyone not on a show where she's paid to be embroiled in drama, is love, kindness, compassion and an assurance that she finds herself no better or worse ... just another human. Which brings me finally to the second news item: Hallmark and the pulling of the lesbian wedding kiss advertisement from their network. Here is yet another trial by internet. We read the headline, and it was off with Hallmark's ornament-shaped head.

The headline was all we needed. Homophobic, horrible company was the verdict. BOYCOTT!

Yet those that went a little deeper discovered a few things. First, we discovered that the company has a 100 percent inclusivity rating from Human Rights Campaign. Their LGBTQ employees have benefits and protections. The company has frequently fought for tolerance and human rights. They have a full line of LGBTQ-themed products.

Now don't get me wrong, pulling the ad WAS homophobic, pandering to a very low hate group determined that their families have the only values that matter.

But again, it's about actions and intent.

Did some executive feel the heat from a right-wing conservative so-called Christian group and scare the network

into thinking all their heterosexuals were going to run away from Hallmark? Of course. Did they buckle? Sure did.

But within 24 hours the corporation had reversed the decision, made a lengthy apology and promptly reinstated the ads.

But didn't the gay community threaten to boycott the network, you ask? Absolutely. But were we watching them anyway? Doubtful. The Hallmark demographic is basically 1950s-longing families with 2.5 kids anxious to watch a lonely secretary find a man before Santa forgets to come to her house.

But isn't that just about money then? Well of course it is. It's almost always about money. Just ask any of our sainted LGBTQ celebs who come out after already making their millions or when their career was on the downslide. It's the money.

All networks play to their demographic. From Fox News pandering to the Trumpdalytes to Logo giving us a daily dose of RuPaul, networks play for those who watch. A boycott from the LGBTQ community would not have truly hurt Hallmark. They did the right thing after 24 hours because they did the right thing. They have a track record that shows that within their company.

And yet the trial by internet is determined. Everywhere you saw our community certain that the company hates us despite their record. Nothing they said, no apology was good enough.

The internet has taught us to react, to simply agree with whatever headline suits us. Humans tend to see what they want to see and hear what they want to hear. I'm certainly not immune. But before I decide someone or something is racist, homophobic, guilty of #MeToo moves, etc., I always dig deeper. I read more, and I mull it over. Life-destroying judgments are far more complex than a simple headline. They are more deserving of consideration than a reaction to a shared meme or post.

And I almost never comment online. Frankly, I presume someone so certain has already made up their mind, and I won't be able to convince them otherwise in a comment.

Having been through a trial by internet myself, I try to remember that once a judgement is passed, the accused has no way to counter the avalanche that the internet becomes. ■

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■ commUNITYvoices

Ditching the gender guessing game

I was pleased to see recently that Merriam-Webster (the dictionary people) had chosen “they” as their “Word of The Year” for 2019. This particular usage is as a gender-neutral singular pronoun, often used by those who identify as non-binary. It’s hard enough for those of us who are transgender to get those around us to get the pronouns right; for those who identify as nonbinary, it must be a nightmare.

Even having to explain the concept of nonbinary pronouns to, say, a grocery store checker who is trying to be polite and respectful but just wants to move the line along is hard. Do you just take the “sir” or “ma’am” and get on with your day?

I’ve been thinking about that a lot lately. I have been enjoying some time off from work over the holidays, and I spent time out running errands and picking up last-minute things for Christmas. This means a lot more interaction with clerks. I have also been more tuned in to just how pervasive identifying someone else by gender is.

I got my nails done over the weekend (one of life’s little pleasures), and although I’m a regular there, each time I come in I’m given a mini clipboard with a form asking for what services I want. This form also has my name on it. Still, I’m only referred to as “ma’am.” Not that I have any problem with it; it’s music to my ears. But why is it even necessary?

It’s everywhere!

My wife Katie and I like to play golf, so I was at a golf shop looking at something I wanted to get her. The sales associate stepped up and said, “Yes ma’am, how can I help you?” I described what I was looking for, and as he showed it to me, he asked, “Is this for your husband?”

That’s a lot of assumptions for a short conversation with a stranger. Not only did he make a guess as to my gender identity, but he went on to take a guess as to my relationship status. He was only 50 right; that won’t even get you an invitation the Gator Bowl.

There was a nice, awkward silence when I corrected him: “No, it’s for my wife.” I imagine I would have really sent him into a spin if I’d told him that my



Leslie McMurray
Accidental Activist

wife and I are both transgender.

I can only imagine how a nonbinary customer would fare.

Why is this even necessary?

Where did gendering people as a greeting come from? The service industry especially is rife with gender-based assumptions. Why? If you get it wrong, you are all but guaranteeing a bad experience. As a trans woman, it would ruin my night. It would also ruin your tip and all but guarantee I won’t be back.

To me it seems as ridiculous as guessing someone’s religion by how they look, sound or dress: “Hello Catholic. Welcome to Snarky’s. Oh, you’re Episcopalian? I’m so sorry.” “Excuse me, could you show me to the little Lutherans’ room?”



I get that we want to be polite, but guessing at someone’s gender identity as a show of respect is pretty high risk for a pretty low reward. If you guess wrong, I’m going to remember you. I also won’t even feel safe coming back to your store.

It’s another risk to guess someone’s relationship status. For instance, when a clerk asks, “Is this for your husband,” there are any number of uncomfortable possible answers: “No, my husband just passed away on Thanksgiving. This is for my son.” “No, my husband cheated on me, and we were divorced just last week. This is for me.” “Yes; I’m hoping that playing more golf will distract him from his porn habit.”

Who it’s for? Nunya. If I volunteer that information, then let’s talk. But asking can be risky.

Maybe ask if this is for me? Women play golf, you know. If I volunteer that information, then you can ask questions about swing speed or handicap to make sure this is the right fit.

Gender identity is considered legally protected medical information, so why is it relevant at Target?

I recently came across a restaurant in Toronto called “Hey Lucy’s” that has instructed staff to greet guests in a non-gendered manner. It’s a work in progress, but “Hey ladies” doesn’t fly. Their attitude is, “If you don’t know, don’t assume.” A customer shouldn’t have to share their gender identity in order to be served a meal.

A gender-neutral approach can not only be more respectful but also more profitable, too.

American Airlines realizes that as well, having just last week added nonbinary gender options when purchasing tickets. Maybe it’s time to ditch gender guessing and ask only if you really need to know, like if you’re my doctor.

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.

From memorable exhibition to ice cream vandalism, the stuff we talked about in 2019

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

The culture at large — across the U.S. and especially right here at home — was filled with excitement, strangeness and meme-able things to get us talking about. Not politics per se, and not movies or theater (we have separate categories for that), but sports, art and the community as a whole. Some things were inescapable, for good or bad; all defined the year.

Lil Nas X. Totally unsigned, he released the best selling single of all-time — a self-produced song that set him back all of \$35. Countless remixes. Straddling hip-hop and country charts to create a pop hybrid unlike any we've ever seen, especially from a black artist ... and a teenager, at that. Chalks up Grammy nominations. Then he comes out as gay and says "fuck it" to all the haters. 2019 was, like it or not, the year of Lil Nas X. And I like it — I like it a *lot*.

Dior at the DMA. The exhibit, the first of its kind in the U.S., was *the* ticket of the museum world ... not just in Dallas, but all over. Fashion as art never had a more comprehensive and respectful gallery treatment.

Bon Appetit names Dallas Restaurant City of the Year. The rest of the foodie world finally knows what we have known for a long time: That Dallas' restaurant scene is thriving (maybe too much!), diverse and delightful. We do more than tacos and steaks ... though of course, nobody does those better. (Not mentioned by the Bon Appetit article? Past Dallas Voice contributor **Jose Ralat** was hired by Texas Monthly as the nation's first official "taco editor.")

Elmgreen and Dragset at the Nasher Sculpture Center. The exhibit by these gay Scandinavian conceptual artists, including an installation where three people sit, for eight

hours a day, writing in journals, was the most provocative art exhibition of the year.

Garrett Smith. Bruce Wood Dance commissions a new dance from the international choreographer, and it becomes one of the best original works since the company's founder died.

Blue Bell licking. The prankish vandalism of the Texas ice cream maker, already reeling from adulteration controversies, disgusts more than it creates a meme, and further damaged the brand.

Ryan Russell, a three-year veteran of the NFL (one season with the Dallas Cowboys), comes out, one of only a few current or former pro football players to do so.



Bowen Yang becomes *Saturday Night Live's* first regular Asian cast member. Plus he's gay — very, very gay — and hilarious as hell, writing and performing in some of the best bits this season. Meanwhile, queer black playwright **Jeremy O. Harris** lights up stages with his "colorful" appeal (from his fashion-forward Insta to his controversial hit *Slave Play*).

Botham Jean's killer Amber Guyger is found guilty but sentenced to only 10 years (eligible for parole in five). Days later, Joshua Brown, **a key witness against Guyger,** is murdered on Cedar Springs Road with two gunshots fired from an automobile. Conspiracy theories proliferate.

Tornado alley. On Oct. 20, a devastating tornado rips across North Dallas, flattening homes and businesses including Marek+Richard and North Haven Gardens.

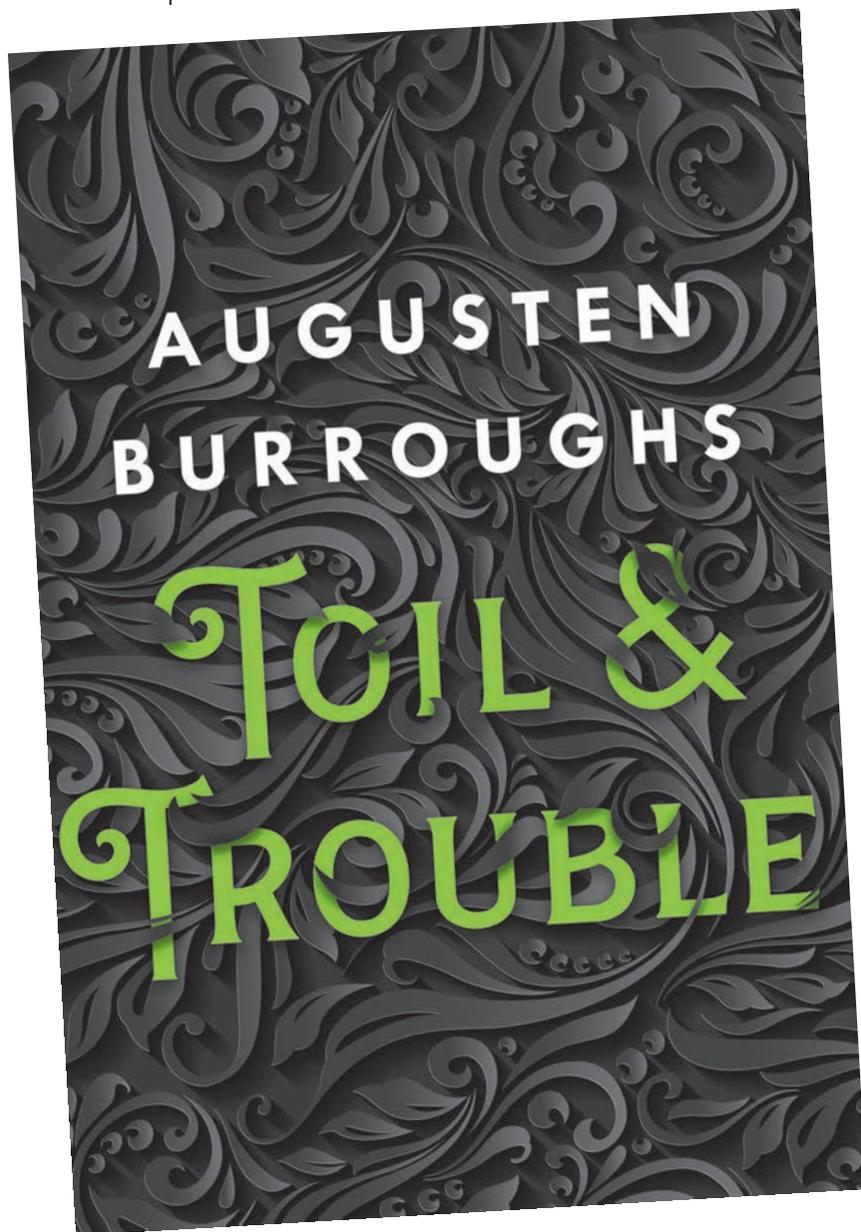


Books

The best of fiction and
nonfiction in 2019

Season's readings

So many books, so little time. That's what they say, and in 2019, it was the truth. Here are the can't-miss, shouldn't-skip books of the past 12 months



Fiction

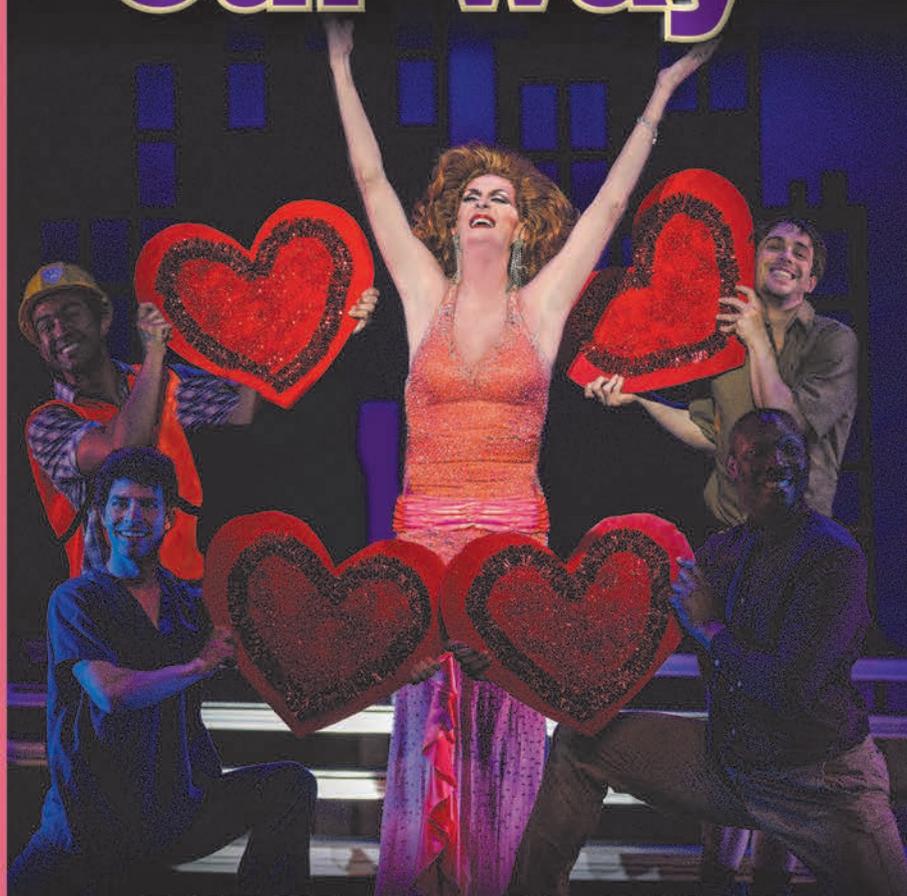
If the subject of death can be taken lightly, there's no better way than in *How Not to Die Alone* by Richard Roper. It's the story of a man who works in London as a finder: when someone dies, the people in his office are tasked with locating the survivors of the deceased. That's not the funny part; the humor comes in a blurted statement that lit-

erally takes on a life of its own and the lengths the man goes to perpetuate it. Clever, witty, perfect.

Lovers of Mark Twain's adventure books will relish *This Tender Land* by William Kent Krueger, the story of two boys who run away from an Indian Training School in 1932 and head down

■ READINGS Page 20

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Our critics weigh in on the best
albums of the 2019

year in review



Lizzo

We all have different tastes, and when it comes to music, sometimes we don't even make sense within ourselves. Case in point: Two of our critics picked their top albums of the year, and only one disc appeared on both lists (and in different spots). But considering how much music is out there nowadays — from traditional platforms to SoundCloud, YouTube and just hangin' out in clubs — it's a wonder we can agree at all. So listen up! And continue to listen throughout 2020.

CHRIS AZZOPARDI'S BEST ALBUMS

10. Miranda Lambert, *Wildcard*.

After flooding a sublime double-disc album with her post-divorce feelings (hey, divorce is hard!), Miranda Lambert got her groove back and then finally decided that life is "pretty bitchin'," a sentiment she shares on *Wildcard*. *Yeah, I'm a turner*, she sings on the stand-out "Bluebird," casually cool, earning your own optimistic tears. *I turn pages all the time. Don't like where I'm at, 34 was bad, so I just turned to 35*. In many

ways, Lambert also turned the page on what a country music artist could sound like, experimenting with a punch of classic-rock on "Track Record" and a charged psychedelic-rock edge on "Mess With My Head." Then there's Lambert, the observer, on the nod to her country roots, "Dark Bars," which will make you feel like even when you actually are drinking, you're never *truly* drinking alone. And the rest? Pretty bitchin', too.

9. Sturgill Simpson, *Sound & Fury*. Country-rocker Sturgill Simpson's

Sound & Fury was spectacularly insane. I was enveloped by it. I was scared by it. I couldn't stop listening to it. It rides in tame enough with "Ronin," before blasting into action and never letting up, each track fusing into the next, a big "fuck you" to ... well, to a lot. Including nosy music journalists. It bombards you with a constant procession of heavy, loud feelings that whips through you at a fast and furious pace, and if you've never walked into a fire after getting into a car accident, well, at least now

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Tanya Tucker

■ MUSIC Page 16

you can say you feel like you have.

8. The Highwomen, *The Highwomen*. Having Brandi Carlile, Natalie Hemby, Maren Morris and Amanda Shires join forces for these songs about women, written by women and sung by women is perfectly in tune with the times. With women's stories and experiences taking center stage in a broader sense, the leading ladies assembled as a powerful and necessary collective, The Highwomen, to show the male-dominated country music genre just what women can do. Their smart, witty and emotional self-titled debut explores love, family and politics with a keen sense of their place in the world. "Redesigning Women" already sounds like a modern-day classic, and the rousing story-driven title track honors persecuted women. Through and through, the quartet demonstrates what I've always known to be true: Women do it better than men.

7. Ariana Grande, *Thank U, Next*. Bop on bop on bop. Before *Thank U, Next*, I was half-sold on Ariana Grande, but I've finally come around to the pop star after this fusion of pop and hip-hop, stacked with moods and hooks and enough vocal flutters to give a clipped bird its wings. It's the first time I've truly thought of Grande as a tastemaker ... and also a human being. The proof is evident in what I found to be her warmest song to date, "thank u, next," which reshapes a cheeky kiss-off into a message of authenticity, positivity and self-love. And when Grande wasn't giving you reasons to love yourself, she was — with "7 rings," a satirical take on millennial greed — making you feel like you deserve anything you

want, with a wink.

6. Sharon Van Etten, *Remind Me Tomorrow*. I couldn't shake Sharon Van Etten's emotionally piercing fifth album, but it was "Seventeen" that made me want to roll down the windows, pop open my moon roof, and then, *Perks of Being a Wallflower*-style, cruise the interstate. Sung to her 17-year-old self, it is the centerpiece of Van Etten's latest work and also a downright masterpiece, with its Springsteenian lyrics capturing a mood relatable to anyone who managed to survive that year: "I see you so uncomfortably alone, I wish I could show you how much you've grown." If your 17 was anything like Van Etten's 17 (or my 17), you'll lament a time that seems so far gone now, but yet, through Van Etten's wistful lens, not so distant at all.

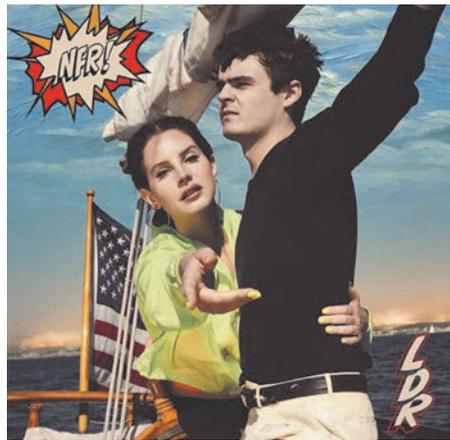
5. Tanya Tucker, *While I'm Livin'*. You get the impression Tanya Tucker, pictured, might not have made another album after her last, released in 2009, if it weren't for Brandi Carlile, one of the most talented singer-songwriters of our time and now a true gay saint for getting a country legend back in the saddle. Produced and co-written by Carlile, Shooter Jennings and Carlile's longtime collaborators, twins Phil and Tim Hanseroth, Tucker's resurgence takes a few notes from Carlile's own sincerely real methodology, delivered by way of Tucker's sincerely real (see: ragged, husky) voice. These are classic country songs that cut deep, and that's palpable on Tucker's version of "The House That Built Me," which movingly compliments Miranda Lambert's original cut. Lambert longed for home as a child who'd grown up and moved away; with a few lyrical tweaks, Tucker is the longing mother whose children are grown and gone. There's even more feeling packed into "Bring My Flowers Now," a heartbreakingly vulnerable piano elegy that's like looking at a life through the rear-view mirror.

4. Bon Iver, *i, i*. I once listened to Justin Vernon, the songwriter and frontman of the group Bon Iver, play underneath a blanket of stars. My body on scraps of grass, I just let him take me away. I approached listening to *i, i* in a similar way, which is to say, I didn't overthink his enigmatic verses and baffling non sequiturs. Based on the spiritual connection I feel — *feel*, since this is music that speaks to you in weird, discordant tones — I'm finally coming to the realization that maybe understanding any of this isn't the point anyway. By the end of *i*,

i, which I've only listened to alone — no stars, no festival crowd, just whatever language I may one day distill from all of this — I felt not alone but connected to something much bigger.

3. Carly Rae Jepsen, *Dedicated*. Where could Carly Rae Jepsen go after *E•MO•TION*? A career-defining body of work, it was also arguably the best pop album of 2015. It seemed nothing could even remotely come close to achieving that same level of pop greatness. Upon their release, songs from *Dedicated* felt looser, more low-key, though the coyly sexual, Cyndi Lauper-inspired, Squeeze-ish "Want You in My Room" was a sure bet from the get-go. For *Dedicated*, Jepsen let *E•MO•TION* be *E•MO•TION* and created something entirely special in its own intimate, pleurably dialed-back right.

2. Vampire Weekend, *Father of the Bride*. My favorite album of last year, Kacey Musgraves's *Rainbow*, imparted breath and light into our dark, disquieting global climate; that same serenity runs through Vampire Weekend's buoyant *Father of the Bride*. Recorded without former member Rostam Batmanglij, Ezra Koenig's sound isn't fussy, instead leaning into a majestic simplicity that stands out against Vampire Weekend's other albums, the haunting *Modern Vampires of the City* and the punchy *Contra*. In many ways, this feels like the band at their most earnest, with a relaxed, traversing sound as new and invigorating as daybreak.



1. Lana Del Rey, *Norman Fucking Rockwell!* Even if Lana Del Rey's *Norman Fucking Rockwell!* wasn't the best-sounding album of the year, it certainly would be one of the most important. But Del Rey's best work yet manages both feats. Elegant and cool thanks to Jack Antonoff's understated production, the album is fitted with Del Rey's casual delivery of a commentary (sometimes earnest, sometimes low-key

caustic) on American politics, celebrity and suitably, given our current patriarchal times, the perpetual state of men as disappointments (but she's not giving up just yet, as she concludes, *hope is a dangerous thing for a woman like me to have — but I have it*). One of modern music's greatest songwriters, Del Ray writes incisively and vividly about her longing for her past and the America we lost. The collective spirit of *Norman Fucking Rockwell!* is euphoric and seductive, and like a flower in bloom, fuller and even more captivating over time.

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES' BEST ALBUMS

In 1899, a patent commissioner declared everything that could be invented *had* been invented — one of the great misstatements in history. Then again, you have to admit that we spend a lot of time repurposing things that have come before. That felt especially true in 2019 when it came to music. The albums that stood out were all new ... but also throwbacks to prior eras, older styles, earlier genres. (Think no further than "Old Town Road," which blended hip-hop and country and became the biggest hit of all time.) Greatness can stand on the shoulders of greatness, as it did in these 10 albums, which I list without further comment, except to say the artists responsible for them showed how they have evolved — themselves and the medium — with creativity. From Broadway to gay-inclusive rap to indie pop, these albums conjured everything from Prince to Roy Orbison. It seems there's still more to be invented after all.

- 10 (tie). Various, *The Prom* and *Hadestown* original Broadway cast recording
- 9 (tie). DaBaby, *Baby on Baby* and *Kirk*
8. Tyler the Creator, *Igor*
7. Anderson.Paak, *Ventura*
6. Pink, *Hurts 2B Human*
5. Orville Peck, *Pony*
4. Brittany Howard, *Jamie*
3. Vampire Weekend, *Father of the Bride*
2. Billie Eilish, *When We Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?*
1. Lizzo, *Cuz I Love You*



For our list of the six best songs by women in 2019, visit [DallasVoice.com/category/music](https://dallasvoice.com/category/music).

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liberation.

the Mississippi to escape the adults who want them back. Lush, exciting, and irresistible, this novel will fill a good weekend or two.

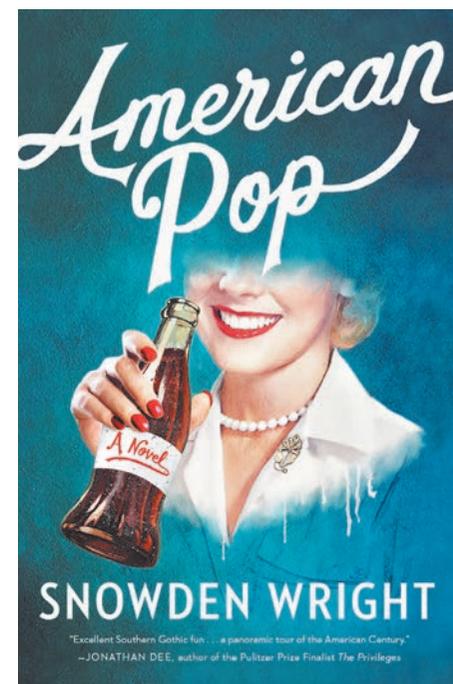
What can you say about a book that starts off with an attempted suicide? That's *Talk to Me* by John Kenney, and that's what happens after a TV newscaster insults a temporary worker, and because of it, his life falls completely apart. Media folks will particularly love it, but if you're a news junkie or a hard-line TV watcher, you'll love this story.

If you've already seen the movie about Harriet Tubman, then you know the kind of treat you're in for when you read *The Tubman Command* by Elizabeth Cobbs. Taking one small event from Tubman's life, this novel blows it up big and makes it exciting, all the while reminding readers that Tubman was a woman, first and foremost. For readers who need a novel that means something, this is it. (Tip: get it in an audiobook for the full effect of the excitement.)

Last but not least, *American Pop* by Snowden Wright is a sweeping, multigenerational novel about a family whose patriarch creates a drink sensation. When he passes the business down to his scheming children, interesting — and heart-wrenching — things begin to happen.

Nonfiction

For political animals and those who are tired of politics as usual, *Palm Beach, Mar-A-Lago, and the Rise of*



America's Xanadu by Les Standiford is still a book to read. It's a biography of a place and the people who made it, and it's also a history of *us* as a country, our need to explore and our fascination with celebrities. Historians and Floridians take particular note on this one.

Expect something a little different in *Toil & Trouble* by Augusten Burroughs, who reveals in this book that he's a witch. Not the bubbling cauldron type, instead one who knows things but can't explain why, but who still has to work to find love, home and happiness just like the rest of us. This book is sweet and quirky and exceptional.

You don't have to have visited Las Vegas, or even remember the Rat Pack to enjoy *Elvis in Vegas* by Richard Zoglin. Loving glitz, glamour, entertainers and scandal is really all you need to enjoy this book.

It's not cheating to put together *Bitten* by Kris Newby and *Mosquito* by Timothy C. Winegard in this best-of, because they really belong side-by-side on your shelf. Newby's book is about all the things that can bite you and maybe kill you; Winegard's book is about one thing that bites and kills more humans than any other creature. How can you resist books like those?

And then there's *The League of Wives* by Heath Hardage Lee, a book about the wives of the men who served in Vietnam and were captured, and what these brave women did for themselves, their husbands and others to bring their men home. A spectacular hidden history.

Season's readings!

— Terri Schlichenmeyer



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Dr. Marc Tribble and Dr. Donald Graneto named to D Magazine's Best Doctors in Dallas for 2017 in Infectious Disease and Family Medicine respectively.



Peter Triporo, NP named Top 10 in 2018 America's Top Nurse Practitioner Awards presented by Point of Care Network



Voted 2019 Readers Voice Awards
BEST Medical Group Practice
BEST HIV Specialists
and Dr. David Lee,
BEST General Practitioner

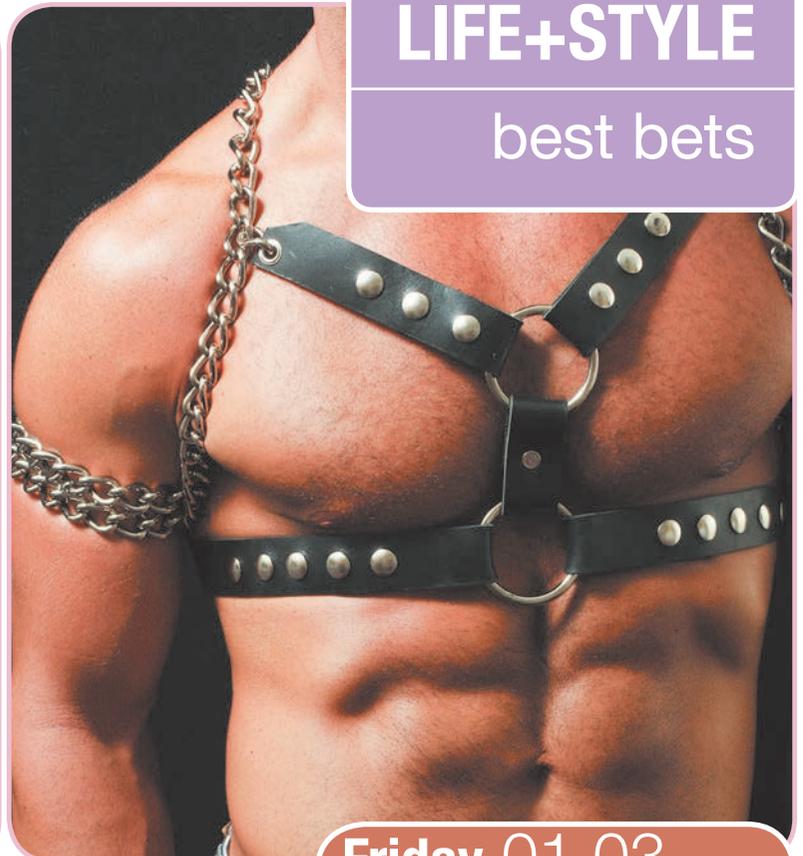


Sunday 01.05
Tuesday 01.07
 — **Sunday 01.12**

'The Color Purple' pulls a twofer in North Texas

The Color Purple, the stage musical adaptation of Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel about life in the rural South in the early 20th century settles into a week-long run at the Winspear this week, but you don't have to wait until Tuesday to see it. The show will actually launch locally with a one-night-only performance at Fort Worth's Bass Hall on Sunday. Either way, it's a powerful show about love and forgiveness. (Pride Night in Dallas on Jan. 7.)

DEETS: Bass Performance Hall, 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth, Sunday only. BassHall.com. Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. Tuesday-Sunday. ATPAC.org.



LIFE+STYLE

best bets

Friday 01.03 —
Saturday 01.04

Mr./Ms. Dallas Eagle contest adds bootblack category

For everyone infatuated with leather image, the Mr. Dallas Eagle contest is a stepping-stone to Mr. Texas Leather and, hopefully, IML. But this year, the contest, which also includes Ms. Dallas Eagle, adds Mr. and Ms. Bootblack Texas Leather to the line-up. The area's best leatherfolk will wrap up in their favorite fabric flash hot-wear and tight physique inside Dallas' go-to leather bar during this contest in celebration of the culture. Events begin on Friday, but the finals will be Saturday.

DEETS: Dallas Eagle, 5740 Maple Ave. Finals on Saturday beginning at 7 p.m.



Friday 01.03 — Saturday 02.01

New interactive VR experience PY1 debuts in Arlington

Guy Laliberté astonished the world 35 years ago by reinventing the idea of a circus with Cirque du Soleil. For his latest project — which gets its American premiere in North Texas this month — he's taking on interactive experiences. PY1 is a pyramid-shaped pop-up that goes on a techno-journey through an experience called *Through the Echoes*, but it's much more than that. It's also a family-friendly VR expo called *Stella — The Time Machine Journey*, and on Saturdays and select nights, a new kind of nightclub with themes (costumes required!) It's on view definitely until Feb. 1, but will probably stick around until March.

DEETS: Globe Life Park, Lot F, Arlington. For more information and schedules, visit PY1.com/en.

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calendar highlights



The Color of Death' continues at the Eisemann through Jan. 19.

EDITOR'S NOTE: During the holidays and chances of inclement weather, events can change. You may want to confirm community events are taking place.

ARTSWEEK
THEATER

The Color of Death! Pegasus Theatre, known for its In Living Black & White plays, goes outside the box for this first-ever three-act comedy spoof in which the second act is in full color. Includes the traditional New Year's Eve performance. Eisemann Center for Performing Arts, 2351 Performance Drive, Richardson. Through Jan. 19. PegasusTheatre.org.

FRIDAY 01.03

CIRCUS
Cirque de la Symphonie. A special circus performance of acrobats and more set to the music of Bizet with the DSO performing. Meyerson Symphony Center, 2301 Flora St. Jan. 3-4. MyDSO.com.

COMMUNITY
Mr. Dallas Eagle 2020. The leather competition weekend. Dallas Eagle, 5740 Maple Ave. Friday-Saturday. DallasEagle.com.

SATURDAY 01.04

COMMUNITY
FrontRunners. Gay jogging/walking group meets weekly at 8:30 a.m. in Oak Lawn Park at Hall Street and Turtle Creek Boulevard for a run along the Katy Trail.

MONDAY 01.06

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 01.07

FILM

The Last Picture Show. Peter Bogdanovich's elegiac drama about life in small-town Texas in the 1950s. Cloris Leachman and Ben Johnson both won Oscars for their performances. 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 01.09

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.

this week's solution

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20-freakin'-20!

Cassie looks ahead to the new year

Hello folks. Well, it is a new year — 2020! We are in the year 20-freakin'-20!

When I was young, millions of years ago, the thought of the year 2020 was almost unimaginable. Where the hell are the flying cars that are supposed to be in everyone's garage? Where are the hover boards that actually hover? Where are our teleportation devices?

This is bullshit. Most of us don't even have a phone that will hold its charge all day.

Okay, rant over. There are a lot of great things about the year 2020. Give me just a second, and I will think of one. Hold on ... one second more ... Oh! I got it: Television shows! There are so many awesome shows on nowadays. When I was a kid, we could only watch cartoons on Saturday mornings. And if you didn't like westerns, you were fucked on Sundays, because that is all they showed on daytime TV. Now you can get overwhelmed trying to decide what to watch. So many choices! It's a good problem to have.

I hope the year 2020 has less violence than the last few years have had. We have become so desensitized to mass shootings, because there are so many of them that we just shake our heads in sadness — partially because of the loss of life, and partially because it's not even shocking anymore.

Sometimes I wish that aliens from some far-off star would come and attack Earth, just so we as humans could come together for the common good. Maybe for just a moment we would stop fighting with each other and work together or at least communicate better with one another.

I watch way too many movies, because isn't that basically the plot to *Independence Day*.

A few years ago, I decided that I would stop making New Year's resolutions that were lies, and I would start making resolutions that were more ... achievable. Last year, my New Year's resolution was to get some Cassie Nova merchandise. And I did. And my Cassie Nova fans were a huge hit.

This year my resolution is to dress better when I am not in drag. When I am not in drag, I basically dress like a fat tourist on vacation or a nerd. I have lots of quirky floral prints and more *Star Wars* T-shirts than any grown man should have.

I am not saying I am dressing up every day before I leave the house, but I will wear slacks and a nice button up on more random occasions. Growing up super-poor turned me into a lazy dresser. I never had anything nice so I didn't worry about it. This year I resolve to quit being such a cheap ass when it comes to clothes. I splurge and buy nice fabrics for drag costumes, so I need to splurge more on my boy drag. I will never be someone who spends hundreds of



dollars on a shirt; I just won't. But I will try buying clothes at better stores.

Don't get me wrong, Target and Wal-Mart have some cute shit, but this year I think I am going to worry about quality over quantity. Oh, and fuck off to anybody who laughed at me for admitting to buying clothes at Target or Wal-Mart. I grew up poor and country, so that shit is ingrained in my DNA.

Of course I also want to lose weight and exercise more this year, but those are things I want all the time. Hopefully the New Year will be the motivation I need to do such a crazy thing.

I thought about Keto but *I LOVE BREAD* as much as Oprah. I'm not sure I could do without carbs. I'm getting depressed just thinking of cutting out carbs. They is my friends. I loves them. But hopefully I can pretend that carbs are that friend that moved away — the one you don't see as

much anymore, but when you do, it is magical. You miss your friend, but you know you will see them again.

Unfortunately for me, carbs live next door, upstairs and in my house. They are everywhere. Is having the celiac/gluten allergy contagious? Can I catch it? If so, who has it? Let's make out!

I hope this is a great year for all of us. I know there will be death, destruction and heartache, but that's just par for the course. It's life. But what I hope for this New Year is a lot of laughs, random acts of kindness and unforeseen joy. I hope you all smile more, are depressed less and take time for yourself to seriously enjoy the things in your life, big and small.

If you own pets, be thankful every day that they are healthy and happy. I guess that should go for the people in your life, too. Do things this year that will push you out of

your comfort zone. For me, I am going to add some choreography to a few of my drag numbers. If it works, cool. If I look a fool, cool. I am going to say, "Fuck it!" a lot more, but I am also going to try to push myself to be better in all aspects of my life.

I want to be a better husband, son, friend and entertainer. I want to be more present and in the moment. I want to enjoy life as it happens and not look back and wish I had done more. This isn't a New Year's thing, it is just a goal I will be striving for.

I won't always be in demand as an entertainer, and my health might not always allow me to work even if I am. So, I want to remind myself to take lots of mental snapshots, like Jim and Pam did on their wedding day on *The Office*. And of course, I hope I remember to always love more and bitch less, and I will always beeee fabulous! XOXO, Cassie Nova

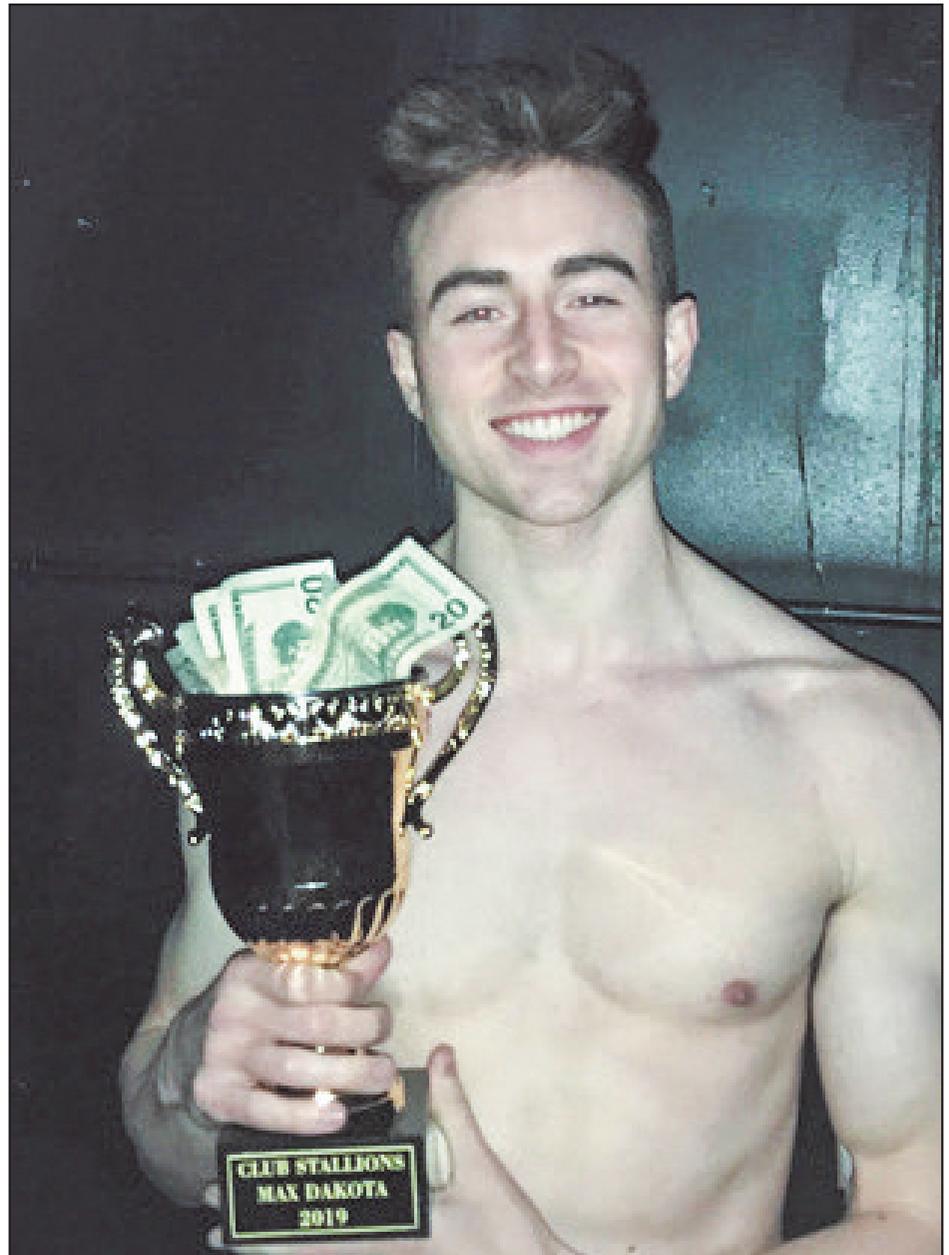


Making the SCENE the week of Jan. 3–9:

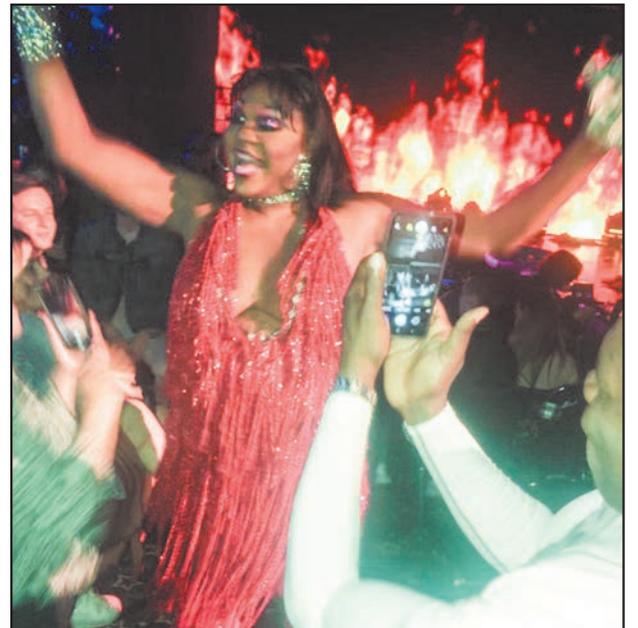
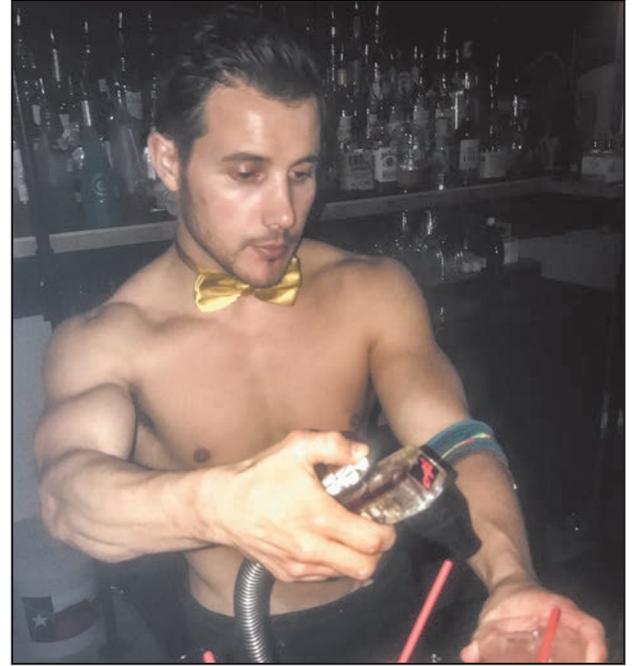
- **1851 Club:** Kiana Lee hosts **All Star Drag Show** at 10:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.
- **515 Bar:** **TV Tap Trivia** for cash at 8 p.m. on Thursday.
- **Alexandre's:** **Girls Night Out with Peggy Honea** on Saturday. Karaoke with **Wayne Smith** on Sunday. **K-Marie Broadway** on Tuesday. **Vero Voz** on Wednesday. **Chris Chism** on Thursday.
- **Cedar Springs Tap House:** **Drag on Tap—The Thirsty Games** on Monday.
- **Club Reflection:** **Imperial Court show** at 6 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Dallas Eagle:** **Dallas Diablos Cook Out** from 5-9 p.m. on Sunday.
- **Havana:** **Sunday Funday** show at 4 p.m.
- **JR.'s Bar & Grill:** **RuPaul's Drag Race UK** watch party with **Krystal Summers** or **Raquel Blake** at 8 p.m. on Thursday.
- **Liquid Zoo:** **Sapphire Davenport** hosts **Talent Night** with \$100 prize for winner at 10:15 p.m. on Tuesday.
- **Magnum:** **Friday 4-Play** at 8 p.m. on Friday. **DJ Joze** at 8 p.m. on Saturday.
- **Marty's Live:** **Sunday night with Miss Wanda** with **Ta'Male Ross** and **Julie Lane** from 9 p.m.-midnight.
- **Pekers:** **Karaoke** at 10:30 p.m. on Saturday.
- **Round-Up Saloon:** **Couples/Partner dance lessons** with **Mike** at 8:30 p.m. on Monday. Compete for a \$100 cash prize at **Boys! Boots! Boxer Briefs!** at 10 p.m. on Monday. **Line dance lessons** with **Yoshi** at 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday. **Line dance lessons** with **Ray** at 8:30 p.m. Thursday.
- **Sue Ellen's:** **The Queer Off All Star Winter Games** at 10:30 p.m. on Wednesday.
- **The Rose Room:** **Rising Star** at 11 p.m. on Thursday.
- **TMC: The Mining Company:** **Trashy Tuesdays** at TMC.
- **Urban Cowboy:** **Patrick Mikyles** presents **Vanity**, **Cordi Lux** and **Tara St Stone** at 11 p.m. on Thursday.
- **Woody's Sports & Video Bar:** **Karaoke** at 10 p.m. on Sunday and Wednesday. **Showtunes** on Tuesday. **Jada Pinkett Fox** variety show at 11 p.m. on Thursday.

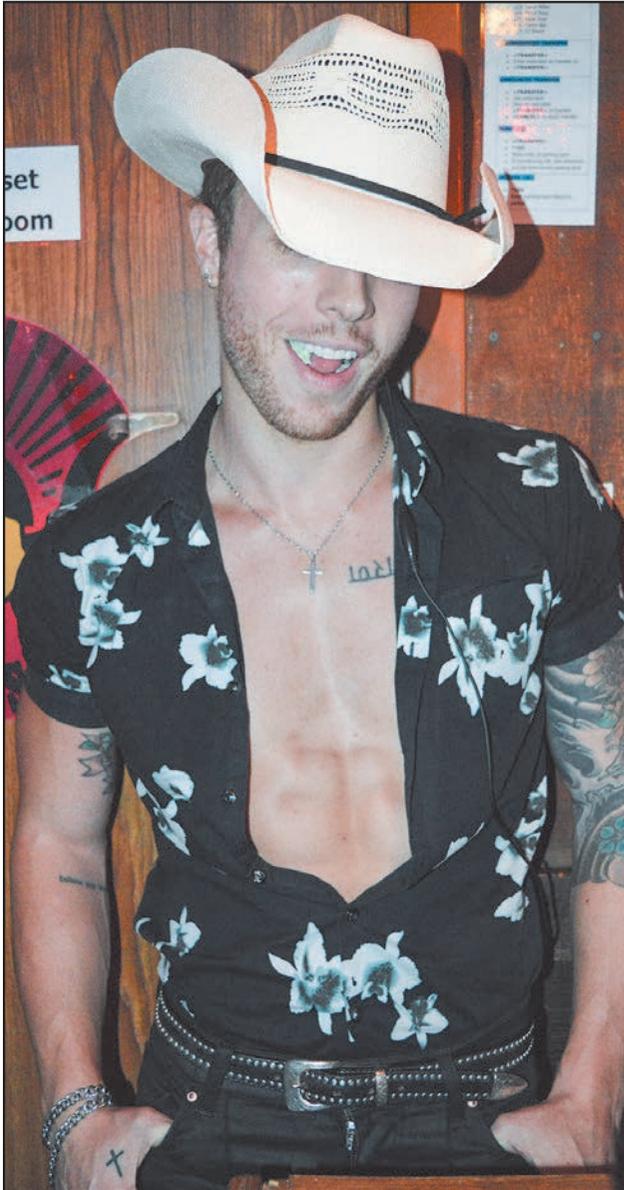
Photos by *Chad Mantooth* and *Nicholas Gonzalez*

Club Stallions



Holidaze in the Gayborhood







Team USA-LGBTQ

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Solution on Page 22

Across

- 1 With 69-Across, Olympic athlete who just came out as bisexual/pansexual
- 6 "How can ___?"
- 10 From the top
- 14 Antonio Bandera's meat
- 15 Get soft
- 16 Early caucus state
- 17 "Great Caesar's ghost!"
- 18 Demonstrated for gay rights, e.g.
- 20 Flintstones' pet
- 21 Mischaracterization of bisexual women, per 1-Across
- 22 Artful Dodger target
- 24 Swan Lake step
- 25 "Can you ___ little faster?"
- 28 Pilgrims to Mecca
- 30 Poet who inspired *Cats*, initially
- 33 Avoid going straight
- 35 Bronti's Jane
- 36 Gyro bread
- 37 With 39-Across, 1-Across as an Olympic athlete
- 39 See 37-Across
- 41 Variety
- 42 Sexy clothing material
- 46 Like Machu Picchu
- 47 Doe in Disney's *Bambi*

- 48 Most abrupt
- 50 ___ *Pinafore*
- 51 USMC barracks boss
- 53 Uses a gifted tongue
- 55 Another mischaracterization of bisexual women, per 1-Across
- 58 Animal groups that cruised with Noah
- 62 Tabled
- 63 Rock Hudson/James Dean flick
- 64 They say it matters
- 65 Where to find hot buns
- 66 Grant of *Weeds*
- 67 Hawkish deity
- 68 Untouchable head
- 69 See 1-Across

Down

- 1 Served like Billie Jean
- 2 Christmas threesome
- 3 Part of a healthy stud muffin?
- 4 Give a large bosom, e.g.
- 5 Hi-___ graphics
- 6 Some have sex on this
- 7 Without wasted words
- 8 He smoothes out his lipstick
- 9 Sundance's Place
- 10 Tyler of *The Talk*
- 11 What to wear on nudist beaches
- 12 Some of Mary's lambs

- 13 Go in only partway, at the beach
- 19 Actor Omar
- 21 "Gigli" actress, briefly
- 23 Nat. counterpart in MLB
- 25 Faux pas
- 26 Cocktail ingredient
- 27 Claim 10 inches, for example
- 29 Month for Kahlo
- 31 Get the cappuccino foamy
- 32 Picks up
- 34 Abner's comic strip partner
- 36 He blew on pipes
- 38 Avian Aussie
- 40 Box with a tail
- 43 Eating away
- 44 Headway
- 45 "Good grief!"
- 48 Partner of Caesar, in comedy
- 49 Sault ___ Marie
- 52 Yields
- 54 Hooch maker in Gomer's *Mayberry*
- 55 Ingrid's *Casablanca* role
- 56 Drag queen's leg need
- 57 The race ___
- 59 Corduroy rib
- 60 What comes after "Come..."
- 61 A Brit soldier may shoot it off
- 63 Not swallow easily



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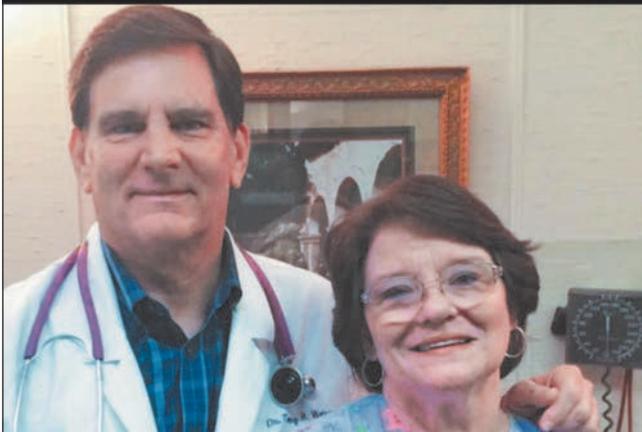
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