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IMPORTANT FACTS FOR BIKTARVY®

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

(bik-TAR-vee)

MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY may cause serious side effects, including:

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

ABOUT BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY is a complete, 1-pill, once-a-day prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults and children who weigh at least 55 pounds. It can either be used in people who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before, or people who are replacing their current HIV-1 medicines and whose healthcare provider determines they meet certain requirements.

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

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

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

BEFORE TAKING BIKTARVY

Tell your healthcare provider if you:

- ▶ Have or have had any kidney or liver problems, including hepatitis infection.
- ▶ Have any other health problems.
- ▶ Are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if BIKTARVY can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ Are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take:

- ▶ Keep a list that includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, antacids, laxatives, vitamins, and herbal supplements, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.
- ▶ BIKTARVY and other medicines may affect each other. Ask your healthcare provider and pharmacist about medicines that interact with BIKTARVY, and ask if it is safe to take BIKTARVY with all your other medicines.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY may cause serious side effects, including:

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

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

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

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

HOW TO TAKE BIKTARVY

Take BIKTARVY 1 time each day with or without food.

GET MORE INFORMATION

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



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See Dimitri's story at [BIKTARVY.com](https://www.biktarvy.com).

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Please see Important Facts about BIKTARVY, including important warnings, on the previous page and visit [BIKTARVY.com](https://www.biktarvy.com).



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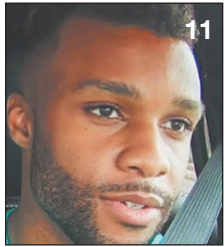
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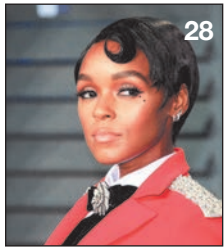
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11



14



28

headlines

■ TEXAS NEWS

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|----|------------|
| 10 | It's about all of us | 6 | InstanTea |
| 11 | Local 'Prideland' stories | 10 | News |
| 12 | Pride around Texas | 16 | Voices |
| 14 | The ringing in my ears | 22 | Life+Style |

■ LIFE+STYLE

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|----|-------------|
| 22 | Local and legendary | 33 | Best Bets |
| 26 | Lady Gaga's Chromatica | 34 | Cassie Nova |
| 28 | Janelle Monae speaks | 35 | Scene |
| | | 38 | MarketPlace |

■ ON THE COVER

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departments

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Chauvin charges increased; charges pending against 3 others in Floyd death

Minnesota's U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar announced on Wednesday, June 3, via Twitter that Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison is upping charges against former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, from 3rd degree murder to 2nd degree murder, in connection with the May 25 death of George Floyd.

She also announced that the three other officers involved in Floyd's death will face criminal charges. Former officers Thomas Lane, J Alexander Kueng and Tou Thao all face charges of aiding and abetting second-degree murder and aiding and abetting second-degree manslaughter.

Video shows that as Chauvin knelt on Floyd's neck, one of the other officers knelt on Floyd's legs and one knelt on his back. The fourth officer stood nearby watching, moving to block the bystander videoing the assault and threatening to spray mace on another bystander.

— Tammye Nash

Fort Worth establishes Office of Police Oversight Monitor

With the U.S. already well into the second week of protests and riots in the wake of the death of George Floyd at the hands of now-former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, the city of Fort Worth announced Tuesday, June 2, that the city's newly-established Office of the Police Oversight Monitor "stands ready to assist residents."

According to a press release about the new office, "Whether residents have concerns regarding alleged misconduct by Fort Worth Police Department personnel or want to share accolades about officers, the city's Office of the Police Oversight Monitor is open and ready to hear from them."

Kim Neal was named the city of Fort Worth's police monitor earlier this year and is responsible for leading the effort to finalize the model to be used for independent review of the Fort Worth Police Department. The office's establishment stemmed from a recommendation made by Fort Worth's Task Force on Race and Culture.

— Tammye Nash



Protest held at Freedman's Cemetery

State Rep. Lorraine Birabil organized a protest and held a press conference at Freedman's Cemetery on Wednesday, June 3, to show off the diversity of Dallas' African-American community.

She told her own story of her encounter with police brutality at the hands of the Dallas Police Department: She called the police when there was a trespasser on her property. Police responded and took a report from the trespasser — who was white — first. When her father objected, he was attacked, and she was arrested.

Birabil wants the community at large to see who makes up her community in Dallas. Among those holding signs with the names of African-Americans who were killed by police were doctors and first responders, attorneys, business owners and other professionals.

— David Taffet

Nasher museum director issues powerful statement

The Nasher Sculpture Center was one of the downtown institutions vandalized during

the upheaval in the past few days, but you wouldn't know it reading the statement issued by Jeremy Strick, the museum's director. In an impassioned and cogent release about social justice, he makes it clear that brutality, fascism and the subjugation of an entire segment of society are far worse than property damage.

Strick's letter begins: "No decent person can view the video of the killing of George Floyd without feeling pain, revulsion and anger. And yet, what inspires greatest outrage is the knowledge that, but for the fact of its being recorded on video, this murder would have been committed with impunity, like the countless murders and acts of violence committed against African-Americans and other peoples of color from the earliest years of our nation's

history to the present day. Over the past week-end, places around the nation were damaged, and while we regret the damage, we acknowledge that this incident pales to insignificance when placed in the context of an overwhelming and ongoing history of institutionalized racial violence, inequality, injustice. "

Read the full text online at DallasVoice.com.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Watching deputies drive in circles? Priceless.

At least 50 cars decorated with signs and messages drove by Lew Sterrett Justice Center, honking and holding up traffic, on Wednesday, June 3. They turned on Commerce Street, made a quick U-turn, then turned back down Riverfront Boulevard before U-turning again for a repeat.

And sheriff's department deputies didn't seem to know what to do. At least five cop cars circled at least five times before realizing that blocking the U-turn on Commerce Street would force drivers to head to West Dallas to U-turn. The protest lasted about 45 minutes. Had deputies done nothing — just let protesters drive, honk and U-turn — the demonstration would have lasted half as long.

— David Taffet



PRIDE

JUNE 2020

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Woof! Protecting your fur babies in the heat of summer

Hola, hola! Once again, welcome back to my monthly column where I share some thoughts with my readers about different animal-related topics. It is June already! Time to get ready for the summer, but this year sure feels like everything is different, doesn't it? Even though we may not have a typical summer, I am sure our Texas heat and weather will not be forgiving.

This brings me to our June topic: tips for pet wellness during the summer.

When we think of a Texas summer, the first thing that comes to mind is the heat that melts our soul. If we feel that way, imagine how our fur babies feel under that fur and walking around barefoot!

Ideally, avoid walking your dog (or cat, if leash trained) during the hotter times of the day. It is best to go on walks early in the morning or later at night. If you are unsure of how hot the ground may be, you can touch it with your hand or bare foot for a little while and see if it is bearable or not. You can also have your baby wear boots when walking outside, although many dogs will walk funny when you have them try them on for the first time.

It might be common sense, but this one is very important: DO NOT EVER leave your pet inside your car, not even for a minute, even if you crack the windows down! This one is a big no-no, as it gets really hot very quickly inside the car. If you know someone that thinks this is fine, challenge that person to stay in the car during the heat of Texas and see how that goes for them! (Just kidding, if that person has no common sense, this experiment may not go well.)

It is also very important to always have water available at all times for your babies, especially during the summer.

An excellent way to enjoy the Texas summer heat is to hang out at a lake or a pool. If this is something that your fur baby

also enjoys, make sure to consider the use of sunscreen for light colored and short-haired fur babies. There are sunscreen products for pets, but if you elect to use a different one, you can look into sun-



WOOF

Dr. Josh Talks Animals

screen options for human babies. Just avoid products that clearly state ingestion warnings, as pets may lick them off their skin.

The areas where they would need the most protection are going to be the bridge of the nose, lips, paws, ears and belly (areas with no hair or little hair). Also, remember to apply regularly, as you would with yourself.

Another important thing about summer is the Fourth of July fireworks. Many pets can be terrified of fireworks, so it is important to manage and prevent those phobias. Consulting with an animal behaviorist is always recommended, but there are some products out there that you may try, even in combination.

The most popular and effective options are ThunderShirt, Zylkene nutritional supplement and Adaptil (for dogs) or Feliway (for cats) products. These are the more holistic approaches to potentially prevent fear of fireworks. However, if none of these options work, ask your veterinarian for a prescription that can help your baby.

In our LGBTQ community, we tend to be very social and love hanging out with our loved ones, including our fur babies. Because there are so many diseases and parasites out there, it is important to make sure your babies have their yearly or biannual checkups with their vet. I am not a fan at all of vaccinating every dog and cat against everything, as lifestyles determine exposure to certain diseases and parasites. But it is also important to make



sure your babies are on flea, tick, and heartworm prevention year round, especially during the warmer months of the year.

Times are scary and knowing about all of the dangers out there does not help at all. But on a more positive note, we have ways to prevent and/or address them. It is just a matter of educating ourselves through valid and reputable sources and having hunger to

learn and do the best we can.

With all of this being said, let the summer start and let us enjoy it with our fur babies! Abrazos, as always.

Dr. Josh owns Isla Veterinary Boutique Hospital at 14380 Marsh Ln. Ste. 110 Addison (next to Tom Thumb). Contact him via phone at 972-738-1111 or visit his website at IslaVet.com.

Pet of the week • Freckles



Meet **Freckles**, an 11-year-old, female shepherd mix weighing 53 pounds. She has a short, smooth coat that is mostly white with touches of charcoal on her eyes and little grey freckles on her face. With perky triangle ears, brown eyes and a curled tail, she's quite the cute little lady. She can be shy around new people but has gained a lot of confidence since coming to the SPCA of Texas. She's working on learning to walk on a leash, trusting people and making friends with other dogs. She would love a calm, quiet home where she can take it easy and continue building her trust with people. She's sweet, gentle and affectionate once she gets to know you, and will be a loyal and loving girl to anyone who gives her time to settle in. Freckles is waiting to meet you at the SPCA of Texas' Jan Rees-Jones Animal Care Center in Dallas. Please visit spca.org/dogadopt to make an appointment to meet her.

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'It's about all of us'

Activists call for white LGBTQ people to join the fight for black equality

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

“We understand what it means to rise up and push back against a culture that tells us we are less than, that our lives don't matter. Today, we join together again to say #BlackLivesMatter and commit ourselves to the action those words require.”

So begins “An Open Letter from LGBTQ Organizations Condemning Racist Violence.” It has been co-signed, so far, by about 600 LGBTQ and allied organizations across the U.S., including Resource Center, Cathedral of Hope, Equality Texas, Texas Pride Impact Fund and Transgender Education Network of Texas.

This statement is a promise that these organizations and the LGBTQ rights movement they represent does — and will continue to — stand in solidarity with black Americans as they fight not just to gain equal rights and fair treatment in law in this country, but to gain equal rights and fair treatment in reality.

This letter was part of the tidal wave of reaction after video went viral of now-former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin kneeling with all his weight on the neck of George Floyd, killing him, on May 25. Chauvin, along with three other officers involved, were fired within 24 hours of Floyd's death. But it took several days for Chauvin to be arrested and charged only with 3rd degree murder and 2nd degree manslaughter. And it wasn't until June 3 that those charges were upgraded to 2nd degree murder and the other three officers were charged with criminal offenses.

Floyd is not the first unarmed black man killed by police. But his murder was videoed — Chauvin kneeling with



C. d. Kirven

all his weight on Floyd's neck for eight minutes and 46 seconds, as Floyd cried out in pain, saying over and over that he couldn't breathe, pleading with officers for his life, calling for his late mother. The world could watch as his cries grew weaker, as his struggling stilled while bystanders screamed out for the officers to get off him and render aid, and the officers ignored all their pleas.

The world has reacted in horror and outrage. Protests — some that have turned into violent rioting and have been followed by looting and destruction — have happened daily in the two weeks since George Floyd was killed. Statements, like the letter from the LGBTQ and allied organizations, have piled up and, here in North Texas and around the country, LGBTQ people of all races have joined the protests.

But the letter is just words on paper, words on a screen, unless it is backed up by action. And the protests will be just flashpoints of anger if we do not continue to fight for black Americans, especially those in our own LGBTQ community.

“I hate to say it like this, but injustice anywhere is injustice everywhere,” long-time activist C.d. Kirven said this week. “It is hurtful to me to see comments from gay people [criticizing the protests by] saying, ‘What would Martin Luther King [known as an advocate for peaceful protest] do?’ It's like they are trying to disregard the pain that black people are suffering. They are using Martin Luther King's memory, his image and his words, as a tool to disregard and ignore the strife that African-Americans are experiencing in this country.”

Kirven, who has spent more than 20 years as an activist for black and LGBTQ rights, said that over the past two weeks of protests, her role has changed somewhat from active participant to more of a

monitor.

“My role has flipped somewhat this time,” she said. “Yes, I have marched, and I have spoken. But I have been more of an observer, trying to document what is happening.” And what she has seen has been a large number of young whites — “18-, 19- and 20-year-olds” — who are out in the streets protesting. “They are say-

ing, ‘I need to be here. We need to help protect the lives of black people, and we do not agree with the brutalizing of any race.’”

But what she is not seeing is many of the older LGBTQ activists, the ones with whom she has stood shoulder-to-shoulder at protests demanding equality for LGBTQ people.

“I feel hurt,” Kirven admitted. “I have never been one to pick and choose which issues I would fight for. LGBTQ rights, women's rights — I have been there, helping lead the fight. When there is a fight [for equality], I stand up and put my gloves on and fight. Because that's what freedom fighters do.”

She continued, “I have had so many in the LGBTQ community ask me, when there have been protests, ‘Why isn't the black community [especially black LGBTQ people] here standing with us? They know what it's like to be treated this way?’ And I tell them, ‘Because you aren't there for them. If you won't stand up for them, there is no reason for them to stand up for you.’”

Gary Bellomy, a white gay man who has spent decades on the front lines in the battle for LGBTQ equality and fair treatment for those with HIV/AIDS, said he has, in the last year, begun to realize how he — and the LGBTQ's white, mostly gay male leadership has failed people of color — not just the mainstream black community, but especially black LGBTQ people.

For years, Bellomy said, “Gay white men have denied their own sexism and racism. They saw lesbians as over-zealous feminists. And they completely dismissed allegations that they were racists,” he said. “Either they enjoyed sex with black men themselves, or they had friends whose lovers were black. In their own minds, that clearly proved they were free from bias.”

And white gay men completely discounted transgender women, except when using them as “shields,” counter-examples to prove their own masculinity, he continued. When being seen as feminine was a bad thing, Bellomy said, gay men could always prove how butch and manly they were by pointing to trans women as a comparison.

And trans men? “They weren't even a blip on the gay male radar.”

Gay men are “teachable,” Bellomy said, but it has been a slow process. “Gay men think they have the best intentions for their community, and usually they do. But for too long, those intentions were just about what affected them personally and directly. It took men realizing that the voices of women and minorities enriched the scope of the community. It took them being pushed to begin to realize that valuable lesson.”

Many still have not learned that lesson, he said. Bellomy acknowledged that the high-profile rash of violence against black trans women here in Texas last year gave him the push he needed to continue making the changes he needed to make.

“Last year was a seminal moment in my life as a gay man,” he said. “It was the amazing strides the transgender community made and the aching brutality they experienced that forced me to take a deeper look at what this community could gain and what we could lose” if we don't all begin to stand up for trans men and women, especially the trans women of color who face the greatest discrimination and the greatest violence.”

For Kirven and other black LGBTQ people, though, it's not about enriching life; it's about staying alive.

“We saw that video. We saw that cop kill George Floyd, stepping on him like he was a roach,” Kirven said. “And all I am getting from so many whites is almost a disdain for the plight of black Americans, a disassociation from the fact that we are being killed. Our lives don't seem to matter — not to the government, and not to the people around us.

“All we are saying is, stop killing us!” she continued. “We are saying our lives *do* matter. We don't want to be stepped on and squashed like roaches. And I am begging my own [LGBTQ] community to realize it's not just about marriage equality; it's not just about workplace discrimination. It's not *all about you!* It's about us.

“And I hope that this community that I love is going to step up and come to the defense of everyone.” ■

Rep. Jessica Gonzalez to be featured on 'Prideland'

Another segment of the PBS documentary features Creating Change held in Dallas earlier this year

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Two segments of the PBS documentary *Prideland* were filmed in Dallas in January — one at the National LGBTQ Task Force's Creating Change conference and one profiling state Rep. Jessica Gonzalez from Oak Cliff.

The one-hour documentary, airing at 8 p.m. on June 12 on KERA Channel 13, celebrates Pride Month. Dyllon Burnside from the FX show *Pose* hosts. The series highlights personal stories from various LGBTQ communities across the South.

Gonzalez said she talked to Burnside about being Hispanic, lesbian and a woman beating a longtime incumbent to become a state representative. She and the crew were introduced by Human Rights Campaign's Rebecca Marques at Creating Change.

From the Sheraton where the conference was held, Gonzalez took Burnside and crew for a tour of her district.

"I showed him some cool murals in Bishop Arts," she said. She showed him gentrification going on in North Oak Cliff. They sat down and talked at Mercado369 on Jefferson Boulevard.

"The goal was telling my story," she said.

Part of that story, she said, was growing up in her family's Mexican snack business, and she's disappointed that didn't make it into the documentary. "It instilled my work ethic and values," she said, and working together brought her family closer together.

Gonzalez tells the story of being outed to her mom, who then told her to be herself. She credits her mother's reaction with empowering her.

When she decided to run for the Texas House of Representatives, Gonzalez had



Jessica and Dyllon

never come out to her father, at least not in words. When she brought up the subject, he embraced her as well.

She also talked to Burnside about walking into the Texas House for the first time: "What am I in store for?" she remembered thinking. How would she be accepted in the Republican-held Legislature?

House members sit at desks that are pushed together in pairs. Gonzalez's seatmate for her first session in the Legislature was Mary Gonzalez, the pansexual legislator from El Paso. Mary was the lone LGBT legislator for two sessions, until she was joined in the House by Austin's Celia Israel. Jessica joined them along with two other LGBTQ women — Julie Johnson from Dallas and Erin Zwiener from Driftwood.

These five women created the first LGBT Caucus in the Texas Legislature. Gonzalez said having the other four women there made the session easier.

But Gonzalez soon made friends among some of the LGBT community's biggest opponents. On a night the House was debating the budget, she said, there's a picture of her with Reps. Tony Tinderholt, R-Arlington, and Valoree Swanson, R-Spring, two of the Legislature's far-right members. "We're cracking up about something," she said.

And then there was the time she was in the members' lounge and Rep. Jonathan Stickland, R-Austin, tried to set her up on a date with his sister. Gonzalez said she wanted to understand how he could care about his sister enough to try to get her a date but then vote against her interests and safety.

"I'm not effective if I don't talk to Republicans," she said.

Through her first session in the Legislature, Gonzalez learned how important it was that she and other members of the LGBT Caucus were there. The five women humanized LGBTQ people, she said, and the fight became about issues rather than types of people, something different than it had been in the past.

Gonzalez said her story will be told on *Prideland* through video taken while she and Burnside toured her district and through photos of her family, photos from her campaign and a few photos of her at work in the Legislature, contributed by Dallas Voice. Those photos include the first picture taken of the LGBT Caucus as a group.

She said she also talked to Burnside about what she'd like to accomplish in her next session. Gonzalez will return to Austin in January, because she's running for re-election unopposed.

Last week, Gonzalez introduced a comprehensive nondiscrimination bill that she'll file as soon as she's officially re-elected. If passed, it would provide statewide protection for LGBTQ Texans in employment, housing and accommodations.

Most bills aren't proposed until after the Legislature convenes. Gonzalez put her bill out there this early, she said, to begin a dialogue about it.

"You can't shove a bill like this through," she said.

She's already gained bipartisan support. Rep. Rafael Anchia, the Democrat who represents most of Oak Lawn, jumped at the chance to co-sponsor the legislation. So did the dean of the Texas Legislature, Houston Democrat Rep. Senfronia Thompson, whom Gonzalez affectionately refers to as Ms. T.

But two Republicans have also stepped up as co-sponsors — Rep. Sarah Davis of Houston and Rep. Todd Hunter of Corpus Christi.

Davis represents Houston's Westheimer gayborhood, and Hunter helped former Speaker of the House Joe Straus quietly kill quite a few anti-LGBT bills through a number of sessions.

In all, Gonzalez has already lined up six co-sponsors.

Straus has already tweeted that he's glad Gonzalez's bill is bi-partisan.

After introducing her legislation, Gonzalez and Equality Texas put out an economic report supporting passage of the bill, written by respected Texas economist Ray Perryman.

According to the report, if Gonzalez's bill passes in 2021, having statewide nondiscrimination will result in adding \$20

billion in gross product, adding 180,000 new jobs, \$2.8 billion in state taxes and \$2 billion in local taxes in just four years.

Having nondiscrimination legislation in place would add \$105 billion in gross product, 700,000 new jobs and \$74 billion in state taxes and \$56 billion in local taxes by 2045, Perryman's report says.

How hard would it be for legislators to convince their constituents to support a vote for the bill? According to Texas Competes, 70 percent of Texans already support nondiscrimination laws, and that includes people from both parties and among all major religious groups.

The bill was supposed to be rolled out by Gonzalez and Equality Texas at Austin's SXSW, but that was the first major event in the U.S. canceled due to COVID-19.

Gonzalez said she's participated in a number of discussions about what the next session will look like. There's talk of limiting the number of people on the floor at a time. She doesn't know how limiting that personal contact will affect the outcome of the bill.

But she's optimistic: "I'm going to continue reaching out to my Republican colleagues," she said. "Everyone knows someone who's gay."

After the one watered-down religious freedom bill that came to the floor of the House in the last session, she said, "Some Republicans wouldn't look me in the eye. They didn't feel good about their vote."

While nondiscrimination will be her top priority in the 2021 session, Gonzalez said she is considering what other bills to file. Among those she plans to refile from last session is a human trafficking bill that was self-funding. Another is a criminal reform bill that Dallas County District Attorney John Creuzot testified for.

She's concerned with trans kids' safety as well as their right to participate in school sports and is considering what legislation might pass.

As far-reaching as her nondiscrimination bill is, Gonzalez said she believes this is a good time for it to pass. "I don't see a state leader saying, 'I want to discriminate and don't want to pass something that will promote growth,'" she said.

As for *Prideland*, Gonzalez said she is proud to have been asked to be part of it. She added that she hopes younger LGBTQ people will watch it, and she can inspire them to understand what a positive part of their life being LGBTQ can be.

Prideland airs on KERA Channel 13 at 8 p.m. on June 12.

Pride around Texas

It's Pride Month once again, but this year, instead of festivals and parades, we are learning to celebrate in the age of COVID-19. Some celebrations have been postponed; some are going virtual. And some, sadly enough, have been cancelled altogether for this year.

Here's a list of the latest news on Pride events around Texas, so that you can plan to celebrate safely.

—David Taffet

North Texas

• Dallas Pride

In 2019, Dallas Miller Lite Music Festival and the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade were moved from the traditional September date to the first week in June, and from the Cedar Springs/Oak Lawn gayborhood to Fair Park.

This year, because of the COVID-19 epidemic, both the festival and parade were initially delayed until July 25-26 at Fair Park, the last weekend available before the State Fair of Texas begins setting up in Fair Park. But as the COVID-19 infections continued to mount and the epidemic claimed an increasing number of lives, organizers decided to take the party to cyberspace with a virtual Dallas Pride. Virtual Dallas Pride will take place on July 26, and details are still being hammered out.

[DallasPride.org](https://www.dallaspride.org)

• Dallas Southern Pride

Dallas Southern Pride, one of the largest annual Black Pride celebrations in the country, is usually held from the end of September into the first of October, and includes the Ball/House and Pageant Communities Conference, the Miss Dallas Southern Pride Pageant, Dallas' signature Black Gay Pride circuit party, workshops, a picnic and more. The organization also sponsors as Juneteenth Celebration each June.

This year, however, both the Juneteenth and Black Pride events have been cancelled due to concerns over COVID-19.

[DallasSouthernPride.com](https://www.dallas-southernpride.com)

• Denton Pride Fest 2020

The Denton Pride Fest has also been moved this year to the fall. The annual

celebration combines exhibitors, entertainers and activities and attracts visitors, local residents and families, corporate sponsors, community leaders and local business owners.

This year the festival takes place Sept. 12, from 11 a.m.-10 p.m. at the North Texas Fair Grounds, 2217 N. Carroll Blvd. in Denton.

[DentonPride.com](https://www.dentonpride.com)

• North Texas Pride

Usually held in mid-June North Texas Pride this year has been rescheduled to take place at Saigling House in Haggard Park, 902 E. 16th Street in Plano, from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. on Sept. 13. Vendor and volunteer information is available online.

This is the 10th annual Pride festival held in Collin County featuring sponsor and vendor booths, food and beverages, giveaways, donations to a partnering non-profit and adult and kid activities, bands, DJ, dancing and a ton of entertainment for all ages.

The festival is the once-a-year fundraiser supporting the vision of a permanent location to be used by various organizations for events, meetings, education and a central resource center for communities north of I-635.

[NorthTexasPride.com](https://www.northtexaspride.com)

• Tarrant County Pride

The Tarrant County Pride festivities have taken place every fall, at the first of October, for more than 35 years, beginning with a picnic, then growing to include a parade and eventually a festival. So far, organizers have announced no changes, delays or cancellations.

[TCGPWA.org](https://www.tcgppwa.org)

• Texas LatinX Pride Fest

Texas LatinX Pride traditionally celebrates Pride and Hispanic Heritage Month each October with a music festival in Reverchon Park. Due to the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, Texas LatinX Pride Fest has been postponed until 2021.

[Facebook.com/TexasLatinoPride](https://www.facebook.com/TexasLatinoPride)

The other Big 3

• Austin Pride

The 30th Austin Pride is scheduled for Aug. 15. Last year, 400,000 people

attended, making it the second largest Pride in Texas.

The festival takes place from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. at Fiesta Gardens, 2101 Jesse Segovia St., east of downtown along the Colorado River. The parade begins at 8 p.m. leaving from the state Capitol and proceeding down Congress Ave. and through the Warehouse District.

Both the festival and parade are scheduled to proceed live.

[AustinPride.org](https://www.austinpride.org)

• Houston Pride

Usually held on the last weekend in June, the Saturday night closest to Stonewall, this year's Houston Pride has been canceled.

[HoustonPride.org](https://www.houstonpride.org)

• San Antonio Pride

San Antonio Pride, scheduled for June 27, has gone virtual. Email your two-minute video to parade@pride-sanantonio.org by June 6 to be included. Check the website for details

[PrideSanAntonio.org](https://www.pridesanantonio.org)

Elsewhere in Texas

• Amarillo

Canceled for 2020

[PanhandlePrideInc.org](https://www.panhandleprideinc.org)

• Andrews

West Texas Pride is scheduled for June 13, from 4-8 p.m., in Andrews, Texas, about 35 miles north of Odessa. "Spend the day celebrating with fun family-friendly activities for all ages," according to its Facebook events page.

[Facebook.com/events/726959971068380](https://www.facebook.com/events/726959971068380)

• Corpus Christi

Pride Corpus Christi was originally planned for the week of May 31-June 7 but was been postponed until October. Dates to be determined.

[PrideCorpusChristi.com](https://www.pridecorpuschristi.com)

• El Paso

Sun City Pride scheduled for June has been canceled.

[SunCityPride.org](https://www.suncitypride.org)

• Galveston

Pride Galveston, originally planned for June 5-7, has been rescheduled for Sept. 18-20.

Friday: Mr. and Miss Pride Galveston Pageant from 9 p.m.-midnight at Robert's LaFitte, 25th St. and Ave. Q. Satur-

day: Beach bash from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Appfel East Beach, 1923 Boddecker Dr.

White Party from 6 p.m.-1a.m. at 23rd Street Station. No cover. Sunday: Pool Party at Robert LaFitte's.

[PrideGalveston.com](https://www.pridegalveston.com)

• Laredo

Laredo Pride has no information on this year's Pride celebration on its website.

[LaredoPride.com](https://www.laredoprider.com)

• Lubbock

Canceled.

[Facebook.com/LubbockPRIDE](https://www.facebook.com/LubbockPRIDE)

• McAllen

Pride in the Park will be held virtually highlighting local businesses. Education workshops, drag shows movie nights and more will be held online throughout the month of June.

[Facebook.com/PRIDEINTHEPARKRGV](https://www.facebook.com/PRIDEINTHEPARKRGV)

• New Braunfels

The second Pride New Braunfels takes place at Landa Park Dance slab from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday, June 13. The family-friendly event has activities for kiddos, live music and food trucks.

[Facebook.com/events/766480480520501/](https://www.facebook.com/events/766480480520501/)

• San Marcos

SMTX Pride parade and festival is Sept. 12.

[SMTX.org](https://www.smtx.org)

• South Padre Island

Spring Splash originally set scheduled for April has been rescheduled for Aug. 20-23.

Splash is a four-day celebration on the beach of South Padre Island, located on the coastal tip of Texas. The event is filled with special artists and guest performances, concerts, pool parties and the only Pride Beach Parade in Texas.

[SplashSouthPadre.com](https://www.splashsouthpadre.com)

• Tyler

Second annual Pride in the Park takes place on Oct. 4 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. in Lindsey Park, 12257 TX-364 Spur W, Tyler.

[TylerAreaGays.com](https://www.tylerareagays.com)

• Waco

Waco Pride Network presents Out on the Brazos from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. on Oct. 10 in Brazos Park East, 3516 N. M.L.K. Jr. Blvd, Waco.

More details to follow.

[Facebook.com/events/722557004928759](https://www.facebook.com/events/722557004928759)

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The ringing

One journalist's perspective on
STEVEN MONACELLI |



Don't get hit by a car now!" the officer called out as my press assistant and I crossed Houston

Street by Dealy Plaza, on our way to the Dallas County Courthouse. Later that night, after the peaceful crowd outside the courthouse decided to march toward Oak Cliff, those words would again ring ominously in my ears as the crowd was led up the on-ramp to Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge without a police escort.

There, under a Texas flag and an American flag, about 400 peaceful protesters were trapped by the police, assaulted with crowd control devices and placed under mass arrest.

After reporting on the protests held in Dallas on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 29-31, in response to the killing of unarmed black man George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25, Monday night's protest turned out to be easily the most terrifying, chaotic and dangerous few hours yet to have unfolded in Dallas.

Unlike previous nights of unrest here, police this time left the peaceful marchers no exit. Marchers were pressed increasingly close together, to the point that the crowd was unable to comply when officers demanded everyone lie down on the ground.

But unlike the protests on Friday and Saturday, which included minor property damage amidst the chaos, the protest that ended in chaos on the iconic bridge Monday night had been entirely peaceful — at least, until the police surrounded us on all sides, deploying an alarming number of crowd control devices. During the chaos, other journalists and I were struck with a wide range of those crowd control devices. While I was filming on the front line, police shot me directly with wooden pellets, a tear gas canister, and — while I was being led

away by my assistant — paintballs.

Despite conflicting reports that the smoke cannisters police fired at protesters Monday evening were *not* tear gas — the most notable such claim coming from Dallas Police Chief Renee Hall herself — it was my impression and the impression of those around me that police did, in fact, use tear gas against us, the chemical agent that was banned for use in warfare by the 1993 Convention on Chemical Weapons, of which the United States is a signatory.

Before the events on the bridge, I was assured by several officials, including County Judge Clay Jenkins, that other journalists and I would be left alone. Those words, too, rang loudly in my ears later that evening, when my press assistant and I were first "detained" and then officially arrested for about two hours, something that kept us from being able to further document what happened that night on the bridge.

For two hours, representatives from various law enforcement departments — primarily Dallas Police and Texas State Troopers — ignored our requests that they look at our phones to see proof of our press credentials. They instead demanded that we show them laminated press badges to prove that we really were there as working journalists.

Officers said things like, "Oh, so everyone here with a phone is a journalist?" and "Anyone can dress up like you do."

We looked around the crowd. At this point, we were the only people in the immediate area wearing clothing and other equipment marking us as journalists.

But journalists being detained and arrested is not the point here, merely a piece of a larger, more important story. And that larger, more important story is that *every* protest I have covered in Dallas over the last week has been overwhelmingly peaceful.

Protesters in the line of law enforcement fire have fared far worse than anyone on my crew; we saw multiple severe bruises, cracked foreheads and even someone losing an eye. Still, having law



in my ears

4 nights of protest for justice

Contributing Writer

Photography by Anthony Jay Falcon
and Steven Monacelli

enforcement interfere with my doing my job prevents me from documenting the facts on the ground as they unfold. In spite of this, my crew and I remain undaunted. Our role is to document the actions of organizers, protesters and law enforcement officers as they intersect and interact. And what we've documented over the past week is unlike anything I've ever seen before.

Tearful eyes, broken hearts

The protests in Dallas kicked off on Friday, May 29, outside of Dallas Police Department Headquarters. I arrived there shortly after the crowd had begun marching toward downtown, been stopped by a line of police and then repelled back toward DPD HQ by the city's first deployment of tear gas in more than 40 years. For the rest of the evening, the protest around DPD HQ remained extremely peaceful, despite an overwhelming police presence that physically surrounded the entire building. Notably present at the protest were heavily-armed, self-identified right-wing agitators known as the Boogaloo, carrying a sign that said "Black Lives Matter. ACAB (All Cops Are Bastards)."

On Saturday, my coverage of the protests started at 1 p.m. at Dallas City Hall. I stuck with the protests til about 10 p.m., and I was there on the front line when Dallas police — after the conclusion of the second round of peaceful marching — arrived en masse in riot gear, leaving their police cruisers unattended and eventually splitting the crowd in two by using riot shields, batons, flash bangs and, yes, eventually tear gas, too. While I was trying to film a DPD squad shooting tear gas toward the protest gathered in front of City Hall, a police officer aimed his weapon at me from an armored vehicle, demanding that I move back. At that point, I was overwhelmed by the tear gas and had to retreat.

The protesters, after being forcefully separated into two groups, would simply reform and march until being split

apart again and again moving through downtown Dallas.

On Sunday, I spent most of my time covering an entirely peaceful vigil, In Defense of Black Lives, sponsored by a coalition of organizations all led by black women. Events I covered on Tuesday and Wednesday were similarly uneventful, as protesters have become increasingly organized.

The relative calm is a positive turn. But it is no consolation to those who had already been caught in the line of fire and injured.

Many voices, one message

There is no single organization behind all of the protests that took place in Dallas over the past week. There are many voices speaking up against police brutality after the shocking, senseless death of George Floyd. It is this variety of voices that has led to the variety of approaches to protest we've seen, from gatherings, to marches, to vigils, to car caravans.

Some organizations, like the NextGenActionNetwork, have tried to organize mass gatherings and marches, while others, like In Defense of Black Lives, have participated in coalitions that put on the smaller vigils and car caravans. It is unclear to me which of these organizations has direct lines of communication with city officials, except for Minister Dominique Alexander of NextGenActionNetwork, who openly lamented the unproductivity of a meeting with city officials on Saturday.

"The city of Dallas will have to institute a 24 hour curfew [until our demands are heard]," Alexander declared. "We've got bail money."

Steven Monacelli is the founding publisher and editor of Protean Magazine, a nonprofit leftist literary magazine. He is a DFW native currently freelance reporting on the protests in Dallas. You can follow him live on Twitter and Instagram at @stevanzetti



Steven Monacelli was left with severe bruising on his leg after being struck by a police smoke canister Monday night



administration

Leo Cusimano Publisher ■ 114

editorial

Tammye Nash Managing Editor ■ 113

Arnold Wayne Jones Executive Editor Life+Style ■ 129

David Taffet Senior Staff Writer ■ 125

Philip Burton Proofreader

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Stephen Mobley Social Media Director ■ 123

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Regina Lyn DVtv Host

circulation

Linda Depriter Circulation Director ■ 120

founders

Robert Moore ■ Don Ritz

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Police Brutality: Public Health Enemy No. 1

Discussing and describing the events that have transpired in the world over the last week is/has been challenging, to say the least. So, before I continue writing and you continue reading, I would like us to take a moment to center ourselves.

Breathe in deep. Pause. Breathe out slowly. Pause. Repeat as necessary.

Let us offer gratitude for our ability to breathe.

Unfortunately, the words “I can’t breathe” have been heard around the world as a result of an extremely tragic situation. George Floyd uttered these words as he met his demise beneath the knees of the Minneapolis Police Department.

My brother George is yet another victim added to a long list of melanin-dominant individuals (aka black people) who have succumbed to police brutality. A police officer, who I will not refer to by name, kept his knee on my brother’s neck for eight minutes and 46 seconds.

Eight minutes and 46 seconds!

As you may know, George’s death was captured on video and shared countless times and has sparked protest around the world. The time since the incident occurred has felt much like the “twilight zone.”

This situation has entered the public consciousness like “We interrupt this broadcast for a special news bulletin.” As if we weren’t already dealing with a lot. Much of the U.S.A., including Dallas, Texas, had been slowly reopening after life had been cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Apparently, police brutality cures coronavirus. I’m totally kidding. I certainly welcome laughter to lighten our load during all of this. But in all seriousness, police brutality is public health threat!

Although we can say that George’s death has been the catalyst for many of the protests that we’ve seen over the last week, I believe the root cause is much deeper. Many of us have seen and/or experienced some form of police brutality for much of our lives, and it continues



Jalenzski Brown
Contributing Writer

today. Now, this is not me condemning the police. But we must call a spade a spade. Yes, there has been violence, so-called riots, property damage and financial loss among other things during the protests. I am not currently interested in discussing whether these things are good or bad. What I will say is that we must approach this entire situation like the public health emergency it is.

People are hurting. People are tired. PERIOD! It seems as if many are experiencing some form of psychosis.

“Psychosis is a condition that affects the way your brain processes information. It causes you to lose touch with reality. You might see, hear, or believe things that aren’t real. Psychosis is a symptom, not an illness. A mental or physical illness, substance abuse or extreme stress or trauma can cause it.” (WebMD)

I recall a psychotherapist I once met telling me about a room she set up in her practice. She called it the “War Room.” She described it as a place where her patients could, if they needed, destroy things as a way to release bottled-up emotions, stress and repressed trauma.

I think what we are seeing today is people releasing. Whether good or bad, they are releasing.

The human mind, body and soul can only take so much before it gives out. We can’t continue to turn a blind eye to the pain and suffering people are experiencing. It’s time we get real and step outside of our little bubbles and address the terrors of systemic and institutionalized racism.

And arresting the officers involved in George Floyd’s death is not nearly

enough.

Unfortunately, racism is built into the fabric of many systems and institutions, not just the police. That’s really a topic for another conversation, but let’s talk about it now.

Even if we have to cancel life again, let’s do it. COVID-19 has already shown us that we can literally transform this country overnight. I know many people are eager for things to get back to “normal.” However, I don’t think we’re going back to whatever that normal was. Quite frankly, it’s time we craft a new normal.

I don’t claim to have all the answers for this situation right now. But I do propose that we approach this very serious problem in a solution-oriented manner. Let’s be mindful of our own privilege and how we police the behavior of others.

Get centered and grounded. Seek ways to move past feelings and emotions in dealing with the many crises in front of us. Hold space for your feelings and emotions, but be sure to be logical as well.

I use yoga and meditation, seeing a qualified therapist, exercising, drinking plenty of water, eating plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables as means to better my human experience. I cleanse and detox my mind, body and soul regularly of anything that doesn’t serve to help me grow or reach higher levels of consciousness.

Do whatever you can to fortify your body, elevate your mind and strengthen your immune system. Allow your Spirit to be free.

Also, consider examining your local environment — friends, family, work, elected officials, businesses you frequent, etc. — for signs of racism and its impact on public health. Propose solutions; be the solution.

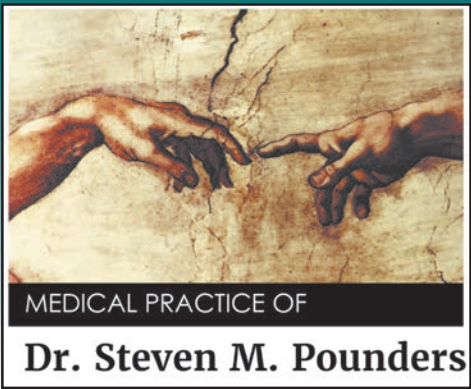
I offer these words with one small, but important, caveat: Let’s not focus too much on racism. Instead, let’s shift our attention toward the reality we wish to see. After all, whatever you give your attention to, you empower. ■

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The voices of a community ...

Sirens pierced the night sky as unrest erupted once again across our beloved city and across this country. I can feel the tension in the air as the stress wells up inside. I am incredibly sad at the senseless death of Mr. George Floyd. We profoundly grieve the loss of his life.

His cries for help — his voice — were not heard. Our country is heartbroken as the protesters struggle to make their voices heard.

We are dealing with two parallel crises convulsing this nation, a pandemic and police brutality, and something has to be done. We need to listen to the voices, and we need to find real and lasting solutions.

The cries for help are getting stronger and more united.

We also need true leadership; we need systemic change. As Rapper Killer Mike has said: "Now is the time to plot, plan, strategize, organize and mobilize. We have to be better."

As the publisher of Dallas Voice, it is my job to make sure your voices are heard. This paper was founded to be a beacon of truth and a weapon for justice in the battle for LGBTQ civil rights. Today, Dallas Voice stands in solidarity with our



Leo Cusimano
From the Publisher's desk

justice for all, to make your voices heard.

I am sorry I don't have the answers. I just know that your voices need to be heard, and everyone needs to be involved.

Fill out the 2020 U.S. Census, and register to vote. Do it today, and let your voice be heard at the ballot box.

We value communication and honesty, as millions of people take to the streets and raise their voices in response to the ongoing problem of unequal justice, let us hear from you.

Stay safe, and let your voice be heard.

Leo Cusimano is owner and publisher of Dallas Voice and Out North Texas.

brothers and sisters fighting racism, hatred and violence targeting all people of color. We will continue to use our Voice to ensure



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Local and
'Legendary'

Cali Dequan, bottom, was a late addition to House of Balmain's lineup for 'Legendary.' (Photo courtesy Barbara Nitke/HBO Max)

2 houses, both alike in dignity, pit North Texas friends against each other. But they are having a ball

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

If you don't know much about ballroom culture, you may have some idea about it from the FX series *Pose*, or the iconic 1990 documentary *Paris Is Burning*, in which "houses" (many named after fashion brands) cultivate talent in the art of voguing — a mix of dance, glamour, attitude and performance in a competition for bragging rights. It's traditionally *very* gay, largely black, often gender-bending and defiantly flamboyant.

Which makes it all the more surprising that when AT&T decided to launch its new streaming service HBO Max (all of the content from the traditional HBO platforms, plus new shows), the original series selected to be the standard-bearer for the network was *Legendary*, a reality

competition series about the world of ballroom. On the series, eight houses go head-to-head each week, with the lowest-performing two houses facing off in a battle for dominance.

Three episodes in, two houses, Ebony and Balmain, have continued to slay, with a member from each — Ebony's XaPariis and Balmain's Cali Dequan — bringing Texas realness to the runway.

It's a rare opportunity to take ballroom — with its underground aesthetic even among the gay community — to the masses. And one neither saw coming in their lives.

Certainly not Cali, who for part of last year was homeless. Cali — who likes to say "I was made in Michigan, but Texas made *me* who I am" — got his start in Dallas in ballroom and went out on his own when he moved to Los Angeles early last year. It wasn't an easy transition financially or professionally, but he continued to do balls as a "Double-O-Seven" (a freelancer) until he attracted the interest of Jamari, house father of Balmain. They became friends,

and Cali was invited to join that house.

At that time, *Legendary* had already been in development for years — first at Netflix, then at HBO. Cali knew many of his fellow ballers were already cast on the show before he even joined the house. Then the news came this past January: One of the cast members from Balmain didn't pass a background check.

"It was mind-blowing because [the TV show] has been in development for two years, and I was basically a replacement. I legit signed up two weeks before it was time to start filming."

XaPariis' inclusion was almost as unexpected. He knew about the show when it was set for Netflix, but back then most of the houses set for inclusion were L.A.-based, including his "gay dad" as a cast member. When it moved to HBO, "they went in a different direction [with the casting], and then my dad wasn't able to get clearance from the Navy." XaPariis and another House of Ebony member, Shorty, were added to the lineup. They all spent two months

sequestered in a compound in Connecticut earlier this year, wrapping up filming just as the pandemic hit.

It's all far from where they thought they would be. XaPariis got his start in Houston, originally as part of the drag pageant circuit. "I don't even know what made me walk [my first ball]," he says, "but I ended up being in the last battle. And that's when I knew it was what I wanted to do."

The pageant circuit, plus his own addiction to watching reality TV, did prepare him for being on *Legendary*. "There are as many similarities between ballroom and drag as there are differences. Ball culture is so broad — you can create your own lanes," XaPariis explains, "but in drag pageants, it's so much easier for you to come up with a game plan. Anybody can be anything, and it's all about how you do. So much more competition, and it's so much bigger."

XaPariis moved to Dallas about three years ago, where he attended United Black Ellument's Vogue Academy. It was there that another young upstart

caught his eye.

"The first day I went to UBE I was looking around the room, and when I saw Cali, I just attached myself. I said 'Do you want to be my gay child?'" (a kind of queer padewan who learns the ropes from a more senior performer). That relationship continued after both were cast on *Legendary*.

"I was still his mom [once we got on the show]," XaPariis says. "We would have conversations after tapings so I could make sure he was doing OK."

For his part, Cali feels less OK now than he did during the competition. He's torn between his excitement over the launch of the new series and his personal stress over the state of America in a post-George Floyd world.

"It has been hard for me to even post promos about the show on social media, because I feel the weight of the world on my shoulders," Cali says about the protesting and civil unrest in the name of racial justice. "It's heavy on the heart, because I understand what's going on but can't fathom it. I'm a very spiritual person; I believe everything happens for a reason. *Legendary* celebrates people of color — ballroom is underground, but

is being brought mainstream. As a gay black man, the struggles we face are different than a lot of struggles people who are not black or who are not gay face. But as a person, I am trying to stay as present as I can. HBO has brought our culture to a platform that can be seen across the world."

XaPariis echoes that optimism. "A lot of people in ballroom are about diversity. What's going on now [in the streets] will push for equality. When the dust settles, I feel we will be in a better place," he says.

They feel this way despite some criticism — most originating from the traditional ballroom culture — that the series may be exploitive and not accurately reflect ballroom. Both contestants downplay this opinion.

"The perception from the ballroom culture is that [the series] is not doing its job, but this is a competition show — it won't be able to capture every aspect right off the bat," he says. "We are educating people on the [culture] — [this first season is] a manual about what ballroom is to put everyone up to the same speed."

And as gay men who both present



XaPariis, center, adds drag pageant realism to the world of ballroom. (Photo courtesy Zach Dilgard/HBO Max)

more along the femme side of the spectrum, showing strong, black gay men who have survived despite — or perhaps because of — their situations is empowering.

"The longer we are there, the more they will introduce everyone's individual story," Cali says. "I'm anticipating the rest of the show. I feel like my story will

be like a testimony of what I have been through in life, and someone else will learn from my struggles. I don't see my struggles as negatives, but as I continue to grow and live life, I am here to lead by example."

And that's how change comes.

Legendary airs Wednesdays on HBO Max.

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Just dance

With 'Chromatica,' Lady Gaga returns to her driving dance beats, but at a cost

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
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When Lady Gaga burst into the public consciousness more than a decade ago, her signature blend of vibrant vocals and pulsating dance beats made her an instadiva in the gay community: Perfect for sweating it up on the club floor or providing a driving background at a backyard pool party. She was sexy without being trashy, pop-friendly and young, but not douchey (Kesha, anyone?). Millennials, especially those who appreciate a retro vibe, had their own Madonna.

But Gaga was also eclectic and unexpected. "Just Dance" and "LoveGame" were made for moving to, but "Poker Face" and "Paparazzi" had off-beat rhythms; by the time "Bad Romance" hit the charts, she was not just a Lady — she was a queen.

But she mixed it up, infusing "You and I" with a country flavor; she veered into protest songs ("Til It Happens to You"), and released an entire album of

standards dueted with Tony Bennett, proving her bona fides as a master of the ballad as well ("Joanne," "Million Reasons")... a rep cemented when she won an Oscar for the inescapable "Shallow" from *A Star is Born*. In fact, you could make a case that she hasn't released a dancy hit single since "Applause."

That all changes with *Chromatica*. On this 16-track album (13 tracks if you don't count the three brief, eponymous instrumentals peppered throughout), Lady Gaga seems to have evolved once again from critical and artistic legitimacy into pop goddess of the dance floor. This isn't a complaint — not exactly. The hooks on many of the songs are catchy and sure to be bright spots in the dour black hole that has been 2020. But collectively, it does seem a bit one-note. It makes us realize that we love the Gaga who sings about broken hearts and sexual assault as much as the one who gets our blood pumping.

Chromatica also reinforces a familiar trope (criticism?) of Gaga — that she steals a lot from prior divas, especially Madonna. The album's first single, "Stupid Love," conjures not only Gaga's own "Born This Way," but Madge's "Express Yourself," to which "Born This Way" was quickly compared. It's even



more pronounced on “Babylon,” which almost seems like a “Vogue” rip-off. The similarities feel boldly intentional. Gaga even mimics The Material Girl’s tendency to affect a faux British accent on random lyrics. But hey, if you’re gonna steal, steal quality.



Chromatica also employs more aggressive production tricks: AutoTune (something Gaga has never needed vocally, used here merely for its robotic effect), echo, layering, electronica. It feels slightly over-produced... which of course is a hallmark of dance music.

The second single, “Rain on Me” (a duet with Ariana Grande) has been, for me and my friends in the two weeks since it dropped, an infectious play-tune, the kind of song that can interrupt a conversation, or which grabs our attention as soon as the video comes on. It makes terrific use of Grande’s own sizable talents; Gaga is only 34, but here she comes off as the elder statesman sharing the stage with someone who might well be her successor down the road (Grande is 26). Ariana isn’t the only collaborator; she pairs with K-pop sensations BLACKPINK on “Sour Can-

dy,” and even Elton John on “Sine from Above,” another fun hit.

Gaga still delves into one of her favorite topics — her own relationship with her own fans and celebrity — but she does so while couching the ambivalence in dance beats. On the ironically

named “Fun Tonight” (whose title is always paired as *I’m not having fun tonight*), she references some of her own prior singles with a tinge of regret: *Love the paparazzi, love the fame / even though you know it causes me pain / I feel like I’m in a prison hell / stick my hands through the steel bars and yell*. In the hands of a less capable and appealing artist, such lyrics could sound self-pitying; here they are more resignedly confessional. She explores hurt of a different type — romantic — on the serviceable “Plastic Doll.”)

It would be wrong to characterize *Chromatica* as a disappointment, despite an element of sameness to many of the tracks and a dearth of ballads, which she’s so good at. Then again, Madonna was always hairpinning on her fans, challenging them to come along for the ride. We’re with you, Gaga.

NOTICE OF DART PUBLIC HEARING

Public Hearing on D2 Subway Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), in cooperation with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), has completed the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the D2 Subway Project, a proposed second light rail transit (LRT) line through downtown Dallas that would extend 2.4 miles from Victory Station to the Green Line along Good Latimer Expressway.

The SDEIS is available for review at DART.org/D2. The 45-day public comment period for the SDEIS is May 15 - June 29, 2020. Copies of the SDEIS are also available for public viewing at the Dallas Public Library, 1515 Young St. (Library hours may be affected by COVID-19 restrictions, so please contact DART Community Engagement, 214-749-2543, to make arrangements for viewing hard copy.)

Two alternatives—a Build and a No-Build—are being considered in the SDEIS, with the potential impacts and mitigation identified in a broad range of environmental categories. Potential impacts of the Build Alternative involve: the Magnolia Gasoline Station, 902 Ross Avenue; the St. James A.M.E. Temple, 624 North Good Latimer Expressway; Pegasus Plaza, 1500 Main Street; and Belo Garden, 1014 Main Street.

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of our customers and employees, DART will conduct virtual Public Hearings to receive comments on D2 Subway Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Public Hearings: Thursday, June 11, 2020 – 12:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Virtual hearing information will be available at DART.org/D2 or contact DART Community Engagement at 214-749-2543

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Show me the **Monáe**

Queer icon Janelle Monáe talks 'too on the nose' pandemic, LGBTQ representation and Pride plans

I really hadn't planned on telling queer powerhouse singer-actress-activist Janelle Monáe that I made food for my boyfriend the night before we got together on Zoom.

That afternoon, Monáe was feeling it all. This global pandemic, the quarantining. She said she can't create right now because she doesn't have the mental bandwidth. Her mind was understandably heavy and momentarily adrift. While talking about Amazon's second season of its thriller *Homecoming*, Monáe accidentally called her character — a war vet who we first meet on a boat, alone and drifting, unsure of how she got there — an "ex-veterinarian." "I said veterinarian," she started, realizing her slip-up. "It's that quarantine mind!"

Then I diverted her attention to her neo-soul album *Dirty Computer*, a

life-affirming celebration of queerness released in 2018. I began by telling her about my night before we Zoomed, when my spiraling mind happened to find a rare moment of pure, unencumbered joy within that album as I prepared for our virtual chat. Songs from *Dirty Computer* had my boyfriend and I bopping in the kitchen. Emerging on her face was a smile so wide I could almost see my reflection in it. It was like I'd cracked a code. A pandemic-era topic universal enough that it got even Janelle Monáe curious that she, during a promo tour for a TV show, couldn't help but ask me a question everybody is asking everybody, because all we do is cook now: "What were y'all eatin'?"

Monáe's in isolation too of course,

■ MONAE Page 30



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■ MONAE From Page 28

trying to navigate not merely *how* to be an artist but *if* that's even possible for her right now. From lockdown, she at least looks put together. Greeting me like the bots she sings about, she says, "Hi, I'm Janelle, and I don't know who I am today." She appears to be reclining on a couch, a white top hat perched on her head; her virtual backdrop is appropriately one for *Homecoming*. In August, Monáe leads the cast of the slavery-themed horror film *Antebellum*, which was initially scheduled to be released in April.

And though it was just in February, it seems like another life when Monáe opened the Oscars and celebrated diversity and being, as she proclaimed on national TV during her performance, a "black queer artist." Previously, in 2018, she came out as pansexual, after years of telling the press she was dating androids.

So it's no wonder she was looking forward to headlining NYC Pride Island on June 27. In a statement, she called it a "dream." But summer gatherings, including NYC Pride Island, have been canceled.

Monáe is still doing what she can; recently, she took part in a special performance for Verizon's Pay It Forward Live, when she and Verizon made donations to small businesses owned by those in the LGBTQ community and other minorities affected by COVID-19.

"Stay up, Chris," she gently consoles as we wrap, offering the same kind of bright-eyed hopefulness contained in "Americans," one of the songs that, for a few dazzling minutes, took me out of life as we now currently know it. She continues: "And send my love to your boyfriend." Even in a pandemic, even when she's not creating, Monáe has so much to give.

— Chris Azzopardi

Dallas Voice: How are you coping with everything that's happening right now? Janelle Monáe: I don't know. I probably won't know until, like, next month. Time is not real to me. I feel like I'm in a warped, alternate universe, especially watching everybody walking around with masks and avoiding each other, and dealing with an administration who hides information and is putting capitalism above the health and well-being of our people. I have no grasp of reality right now.

It's like living in *The Twilight Zone*. Yeah. I write too much science fiction to be dealing with this shit right now. It's too on



the nose.

How does *Homecoming* fit into the kind of stories you want to be telling? We're on a journey with her as she discovers her identity, and I think when you go back into her past there are some decisions that she makes that I just would not make as a human. But, when I was creating her backstory and understanding her motivation, I realized that this person could have been dealing with a lot of childhood trauma, and it gave reason to why she is the way she is.

I think that this show has a lot to say about capitalism over citizenship and community and the well-being of our citizens. I think it has a lot to say about how we treat ex-vets and mental health. And it's a character study on minorities and those who are marginalized and how they go on their rise to being powerful and also having their freedom through living in their truth, so that was super important to me.

And the show's queer representation, how is the fact that your character just happens to be in a relationship with a woman meaningful to you? Like you

said: Representation. It always matters. You think about the number of shows that are greenlit and films that are greenlit, and we're still in that minority. It's still not equal in terms of storytelling. There are so many cis, het-normative stories, and that's not a reflection of the real world. I don't want to give away too much, but there is a strong presence of [queerness] in *Homecoming*. I hope the folks feel seen.

How would this kind of representation have changed your life as a young woman growing up in Kansas City? I would probably feel less alone. I'd be more intrigued. When you grow up in small towns, and you have large families, and when being Baptist and going to church is the center of your family and your household — in addition to going through that and trying to love yourself and finding out who you are and what you want to be and deciding how you want to live your life — I think that having that representation would have made things easier for a lot of us.

When was the first time you identified with someone from the LGBTQ community, and what did that mean to you? That's a really good question. There were, of course, a lot of artists who have come before me that have walked in their truth, like [openly queer singer-songwriter-activist] Meshell Ndegeocello. Even if they didn't say, "Hey, I'm gay," there was just a certain freeness that I got when I looked at David Bowie, a freeness I got that blurred the lines of gender. And I've always felt a part of everything, and as I find out more about myself and who I am, I look at myself and all of us as experiences. I just don't believe in those binaries. But I love identifying as a woman, and I'm not mad when I'm not called a woman. I feel so a part of everything, and I *am* a part of everything.

Earlier this year, you tweeted #IAmNon-Binary. Does that mean you're using they and them pronouns now? I use free-ass-motherfucker pronouns. That's the pronoun that I use. Absolutely.

Over the years you've gradually taken on more of an activist role, both as a vocal advocate but also in the way you've chosen projects. Your art is clearly a conduit for your messaging of unity and empowerment. How do you see yourself evolving as an activist and artist? I never considered myself an activist. I think there are really people out on the front lines who are doing that groundwork in our communities. I have a mic; I have a studio; I'm doing film. I'm doing all those things. And I've never considered myself that.

People have kind of placed that label on me, but I don't feel pressure. I think I feel more pressure just as a citizen to lend my support and my voice. I think even if

I never wrote another song in my life, if I saw something happening to someone who couldn't protect themselves or take care of themselves, and they were in a marginalized group, then I'm gonna say something about it. That's just been me since I've been little. I've never allowed people to bully my little sister or people who were helpless and couldn't defend themselves. I'm just not gonna stand for that. I guess I look at myself as anti-bully, and I will whoop your ass in different ways if you try to oppress or harm other people that I love and I care about. And I care about my community.

How do you feel about where we're at

now with LGBTQ representation? And what do you hope is next in that regard? I think it's getting better. I think we have a long way to go. I think it's a more nuanced conversation because we're dealing with sexuality, and we're dealing with gender. A lot of it is a journey, it's not just a destination. And there's new terminology that's coming, and we have to be open and nonjudgmental within our community.

I've definitely received a lot of judgment, and I can't say that I haven't judged myself, but at this point I think that life is a mystery. We are uncovering truths about us, just like this show does, and the more

information we have, we should never feel ashamed to lean into that gray area. Don't become a prisoner or a slave of your past. Move forward accordingly once you discover who you are and what it is that you want to be.

But I want to say that I think that we still have a lot more work to do in terms of allies. Folks who are more privileged, who are the majority *and* the minority, I think that they can share the mic.

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Pride Month is officially here, and in addition to the launch of the new ballroom competition series *Legendary* (see story

on Page 22), there are many other streamable shows to get you in the mindset for loving being gay.



Queer Eye. The reboot of the makeover show — which in its second incarnation has proven to be a moving profile of self-worth — is back for its fifth season in time to give Pride Month some fitting ambassadors of goodwill and compassion... with fashion and design thrown in for good measure. And you can catch up on all the older episodes you may have missed or just get in a good cry again. *Available on Netflix.*



We're Here. The limited series of dragucation from *RuPaul* alumnae Shangela, Eureka and Bob the Drag Queen has just completed its run, but all episodes can be streamed on HBO's platforms. Revel in small-town gays finding their inner goddesses with the help of seasoned professionals. *Available on HBO.*



Secret Love. Terry and Pat were a couple for decades, sharing a house and a life ... although to the outside world they were "roommates" ... "best friends." When age catches up with both and they need to move, it becomes apparent they will have to confront their lavender secret among family. It's a love story with a December setting. *Available on Netflix.*

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Cassie Nova

Villains and the perils of internet shopping

Hello good people. Do you ever think to yourself, "There must be something wrong with me?" I think that to myself at least once a day.

The way my brain works is embarrassing. I think of the most horrible, random shit at the worst possible times. For example, the other day I was watching the documentary, *Ice on Fire*. It is about global warming and, basically, how screwed we all are if we don't make major changes soon.

I zoned out for the next 30 or so minutes and had a very detailed discussion — in my head — on Thanos from the last two Avengers movies and whether or not I am actually a supervillain. I came to the conclusion that I might be evil, because I am kind of on Team Thanos.

So to remind you all, Thanos — Oh shit! Spoilers ahead, just in case there is some butthole that hasn't gotten around to seeing it yet.

So, Thanos snaps his fingers while wearing the infinity gauntlet and — Poof! Half of the population of the universe is gone. Then five years later in the Avengers universe, and one movie later in ours, the heroes bring everyone back.

Before I proceed, I must state that I am in no way an expert on any of this. I saw the movie once, so I am just going by my very flawed memories. So don't crucify me if I get any of this wrong, but this is how it is in my head.

So, half the population is gone. I know; very sad. Yes, it would be awful for all of us, but our planet would probably love it. Think about it: We wouldn't use up as many resources; less carbon dioxide being put into the environment. Fifty percent fewer people could be the break our planet needs to start to heal itself.

Five years go by, and of course we adapt. We make fewer products, because the demand isn't as great, and we find a new nor-



mal. Then — Poof again! And that missing half of the population is suddenly back.

Thank you heroes. We are all so happy to have everyone back again. But now the planet is overpopulated again. And we have to struggle to start to feed that many people again. And by the way, we are now five years older than those that came back, so fuck them.

Within weeks, grocery shelves are picked clean, and the world has to start producing things at hyper speed to catch up with demand. The ozone layer, which had been healing itself, now gets worse. The strain on everything is too much, and it leads to war, famine and pestilence.

But they got superheroes, so maybe they can fix that shit. Who knows?

My point is my brain is weird. Maybe I want to be a supervillain? Never mind; it sounds exhausting.

Now let's talk about Amazon. That fucking Prime makes it all too easy to order the most random bullshit. What is the most ridiculous thing you have ordered on a whim? Last week, I ordered a Flip N' Fold. Hopefully you all know what that is. I thought, "I hate folding clothes. Maybe a Flip N' Fold will help me make my drawers and closets more organized."

I looked on Amazon, and they sell a Flip N' Fold knock off for \$12, free shipping. I clicked "Buy Now," and I was so excited to

do laundry for the first time ever.

It's exactly what it is supposed to be, but I will never use it again. First of all it made my back hurt having to lean over it. It turned folding a t-shirt into more work. I barely like to do work at all, but more work? No thank you.

So, does anyone want a knock-off Flip N' Fold? Only \$13.

Then I ordered an otoscope for \$35. It's a HD camera that you connect to your phone and you stick in your ear to see your wax build up — or to check for spider eggs in my case. Actually, I mostly wanted to see how well I clean out my ears, or if I have enough wax in there to make a candle. It came with attachments like little scoops that you can use to clean out your ears. But once you put them on the camera, it distorts the image. So basically all you can do with it is look.

No, of course I didn't need it! But after a couple of cocktails it was a necessity. Plus, you never know when something might crawl into your ear and decide to stay and make your ear hole its summer home. Now I can check and see.

I also bought a gnome flipping the bird with both hands, because we are classy like that.

And I saw a late night infomercial for a flexible mirror that has a suction cup that will stick to your regular mirror. Yes, a mirror for your mirror. But this one magnifies your face

by 10. It is horrifying, but I had to have it.

I just realized: I am single handedly destroying our planet by ordering so much. I am a villain.

I have never bought anything from Wish. I have a husband if I wanna get fucked. Seriously, Wish is ridiculous. I have had Wish ads pop up on my phone trying to sell me everything from crack pipes and dildos to sheer body suits for men. What kind of person do they think I am? Wish, you don't know me.

My husband, on the other hand, *has* bought stuff off of Wish. He bought a Pennywise shirt in a 3X, and when it arrived six months later, it was a cheap t-shirt with an iron on and wouldn't have fit a medium-sized child.

But did that stop him? NO! He also ordered a large bluetooth speaker for probably 10 bucks. It showed up in a box with no writing and no instructions. He messed with it for a few hours before he threw it across the backyard. I WISH I had recorded that.

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

this week's solution

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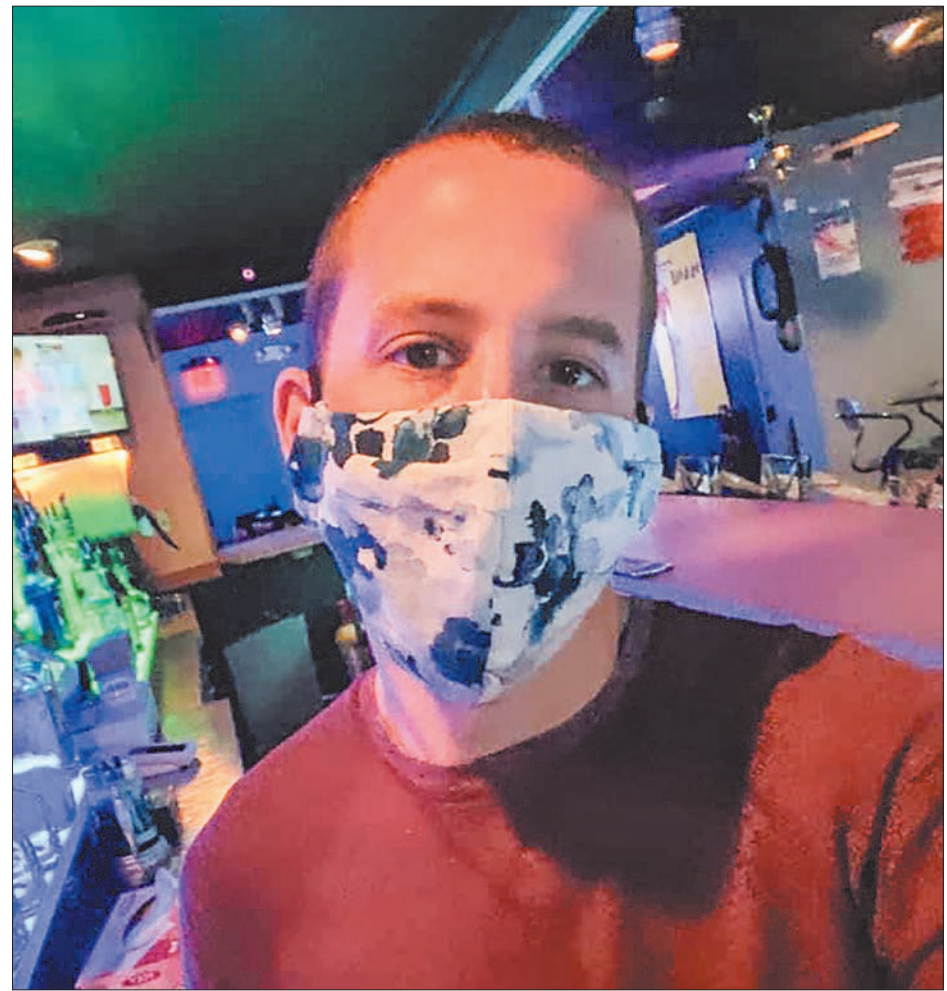
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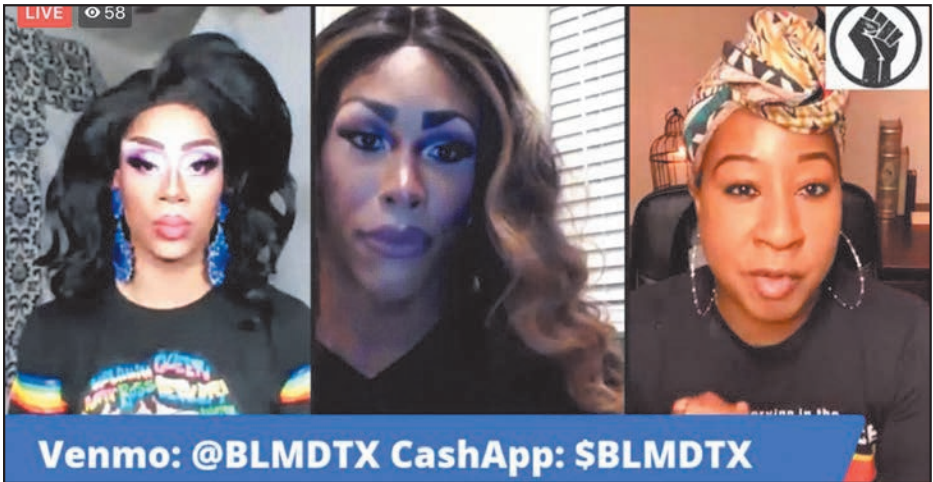
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Kylee



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Larry on Love

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Solution on Page 34

Across

- 1 Mercury and Saturn but not Uranus
5 Branches of a family tree
10 Fey villain in *The Lion King*
14 Big-time defeat
15 Shakespearean title start
16 Q to a Scrabble player
17 Pay your share, with "up"
18 Bishop's hat, in Bristol
19 Of a rear entrance
20 With 35- and 49-Across, a comment about love by Larry Kramer (1935-2020)
23 Talking bird
24 Committed to penetration?
27 All thumbs
29 Like some programs in gay studies
31 Make noise in bed
32 Go to the bottom
33 Physical opening?
34 Chemical suffix
35 See 20-Across
38 Contemporary of Bela
39 Gay Bob, for example
41 Scores for Patty Sheehan
42 Hold dear
44 Neck of the woods

- 46 Clean up Sarah Schulman's Bohemia
47 Like a Mapplethorpe photo
48 Adriatic seaport
49 See 20-Across
55 Bizet opera title character
57 Cut of meat
58 Estimator's phrase
59 Fashion designer Jacobs
60 Top
61 Backdrop for *Aida*
62 *Blowjob* filmer Warhol
63 Satisfied fully
64 Perfect serves from Mauresmo

Down

- 1 One place to stick it
2 Top drawer
3 Sex Dr.
4 Show boat, for example
5 Sing the blues
6 "___ boy or girl?"
7 Greek tale
8 Inside diameter
9 Former New York Liberty player
10 *American Idol* contestant's goal
11 Fairy tale with ugly stepsisters
12 Home st. of Harper Lee

- 13 Theology subj.
21 Laid-back sort
22 *Xtra's* prov.
25 Have oral sex at a restaurant?
26 Woodworker's tool
27 Protected from the elements
28 *Blithe Spirit* playwright
29 Anaos Nin account
30 Obligation, in court
31 Come slowly
32 "Beat it!"
36 Ted Allen and others
37 "If ___ Would Leave You"
40 Closet tendency
43 "Grey's Anatomy" character named for a state
45 Tyler of *Lord of the Rings*
46 Went lickety-split
48 Keep moist in the kitchen
50 Marlene's role in *Blue Angel*
51 The way you walk
52 McCormack in a reboot
53 Man, as a cruising goal
54 Ballet supporters
55 "Yankee Doodle Dandy" start
56 Word that connects Dick to Dyke

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