

dallasvoice

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Weddings in the time of COVID

by David Taffet, Page 6

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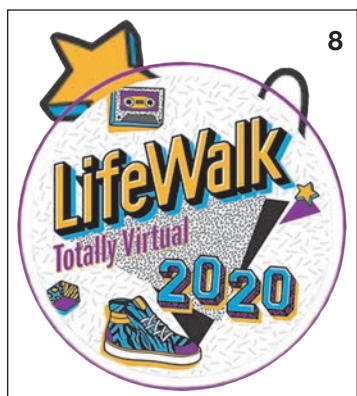
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headlines

■ TEXAS NEWS

- 6 Marriage in the time of COVID
- 6 Weddings outside the box
- 8 LifeWalk goes virtual

■ LIFE+STYLE

- 14 Natalie Maines: The Chicks return

■ ON THE COVER

Terry Walker and Santos Casiano are married by the Rev. Tim Shaefer. Photo courtesy Terry Walker

departments

- | | | | |
|----|------------|----|-------------|
| 5 | InstanTEA | 17 | Best Bets |
| 6 | News | 18 | Jenny Block |
| 10 | Voices | 20 | Scene |
| 14 | Life+Style | 22 | Marketplace |

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It's allergy season

Chewing, licking as well as itchiness are signs of allergies

Bienvenido again to my monthly column! Each time we meet here, I present different topics related to animals; this month's topic is allergies. When we talk about overall allergies many people probably think if dogs or cats have allergies, it is because, "They are eating chicken," or it is just a complete mystery to them because their pets "stay inside the home all the time and never go outside."



WOOF

Dr. Josh Talks Animals

have allergies, dogs and cats tend to have issues with their skin.

Allergies can be divided into three main categories: allergies to parasites

severe and can be seasonal, nonseasonal or even year-round. While humans tend to have more respiratory issues when we



I will touch on those two issues, but, trust me, allergies are much more complicated than that and yet much more simple at the same time.

Now when we say that a pet is itchy, we mean that they are chewing, licking and/or scratching themselves. This is important to know because some people think that a pet is itchy only if there is actual scratching. Granted, licking and chewing can also be associated to stress/anxiety or discomfort, but we will focus on allergies in this column.

Be aware that, like us, pets can itch once in a while, and it may not be significant. However, if your baby is itchy throughout the day, that may be a different story. Allergies range from mild to

(ectoparasites), allergies to the environment and allergies to food. Please keep in mind these are generalizations including the most important and most common types of allergies, but there are many details related to these categories. Let us dive into them right away!

Fleas are the most common parasites that cause itchiness in dogs and cats. Not only are they very common in Texas, but they can also transmit diseases and other parasites like tapeworms. Fleas can also affect humans, but this is not as common.

I strongly recommend flea prevention year-round, even with strictly indoor fur babies. There are over-the-counter products that may work for some pets, but most of them are not effective enough.



You can get prescribed, medical grade flea prevention products through your veterinarian, and these can be used year-round.

Environmental allergies are by far the MOST common allergies seen with pets (including the strictly indoor ones), as they can be allergic to anything. Cats are not commonly known to suffer from environmental allergies, but they can still have them. In order to diagnose atopy, your veterinarian may recommend testing. While this is the ideal approach, most vets rarely test for allergies because we have amazing medical options that can be used instead.

Pets can sometimes respond to some over-the-counter medications, but most need prescribed anti-allergy medications. We have prescription medications that are safer than steroids, and we even have safe and novel injections that help dogs fight atopy.

Please have a thorough conversation with your doctor to see what options may be available for your baby.

Now let us discuss the infamous food allergies. Food allergies are actually fairly rare. While they do exist, food allergies are not the first thing that comes to mind when veterinarians take care of your baby.

That said, even the most expensive of diets can cause food allergies. While grains can cause allergies, grain-free diets are not recommended for different reasons (but we will discuss this in a future column). Chicken is certainly

a common protein in diets, but once again, food allergies are not that common at all. Even pets that have always had the same food can develop food allergies, as allergies can develop after several years.

Please be aware that there are other causes of skin issues, but this is something that your veterinarian will discuss with you. It is also important to know that ear infections are very common with some allergies, so it will be vital to have a routine exam for ear care as well as long term medical management of allergies.

Just as with humans, if your pet's allergies are not treated, they will come back. This means that constant communication with your doctor is vital to prevent major complications seen with advanced allergies. Your veterinarian may also recommend bathing your pet with certain medicated shampoos or specific skin supplements or diets that are engineered to help with environmental allergies or food allergies.

If you are seeing any signs of itchiness or skin/ear issues, consult with your veterinarian right away before they get worse. If you do not have a veterinarian, feel free to call my hospital, and we will gladly help you. Remember that acting sooner rather than later will help both your baby and you. Abrazos!

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

Pet of the week • Gloria



Meet **Gloria**, a 2-1/2-year-old beautiful blue domestic shorthair kitty cat. Gloria came to the SPCA of Texas from another shelter, so we don't have much background information on her. But we do know she has mesmerizing yellow eyes that will have you swooning over her. She is shy when you first meet her, but give her some food and brush her pretty coat and she comes alive. She loves this and will be

purring in no time. Despite her shyness, she's very talkative and needs a human who will let her express herself. She needs a calm environment with a bed that she can hide out in, and she will need some calming mist sprayed on her bed and blankets. She would do well with another cat in the home but prefers no kids under age 12. If you're looking for a beautiful kitty cat to show love to and to help her overcome her shyness, then Gloria is the one for you! She is waiting to meet you at the SPCA of Texas' Jan Rees-Jones Animal Care Center in Dallas.

In an effort to reduce the potential for spreading COVID-19, the SPCA of Texas' shelters, clinics, mobile adoption events and mobile wellness events remain closed to the public until further notice. Adoptions are available by appointment only. Adopters will need to submit an adoption inquiry form in order to begin the tele-adoption process and schedule an appointment to complete the adoption. Browse our available animals at spca.org/findadpet and visit spca.org/dogadopt to inquire about a dog or spca.org/catadopt to inquire about a cat.

DPD's LGBTQ liaison Amber Roman moving to new position



Senior Corporal Amber Roman

After a little more than two years as the Dallas Police Department's LGBTQ liaison officer, Senior Corporal Amber Roman has announced that she is moving to a different job within the

department.

In an email Wednesday evening, Aug. 5, Roman announced that she has taken a new position as a detective in the DPD Assaults unit, effective immediately. She will continue to act as the liaison officer until the department can find her replacement.

"I am thankful for the opportunity to serve you as the LGBTQ+ liaison," Roman said in the email. "Many thanks for your continuous service to our community & for your support of me while in the LGBTQ+ liaison role. I will ensure that my replacement is brought up-to-speed on all of the efforts and initiatives that I've worked on alongside each of you."

— Tammye Nash

MetroBall cancelled for 2020; headliners confirmed to return next June

The Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund's MetroBall 2020, the 15th anniversary of the fundraising party, was initially postponed from the first weekend in June to Sept. 11 because of the COVID-19 epidemic. As the epidemic has continued to linger, GDMAF officials announced Tuesday, Aug. 4, that the party is being cancelled for this year and reset for next June.

MetroBall XV will be held Friday, June 4, at S4, and organizers said all the entertainers

set to perform at the party this year have been confirmed for the event next year, including Tiffany, Jennifer Holliday, Thea Austin and Chris Chism.

Board members said they are discussing options with event sponsors. Anyone who has already purchased a ticket for this year's event can either roll those tickets over to next year or request a refund by contacting contact David Hearn via email at planobar@aol.com. Those who want to donate the cost of the ticket they have already paid for need take no action.

For information follow GDMAF on Facebook or visit the organization's website at GDMAF.org.

— Tammye Nash

FWSO returns to live performances with social distancing in the fall

The Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra has announced that it will soldier through its season beginning this fall with live performances... and certain caveats. The FWSO will proceed with a modified schedule and reduced audience capacity, based upon venue restrictions. These changes will relocate its Pop Series from Bass Performance Hall to Will Rogers Coliseum (the remainder of the shows will continue at Bass). Single tickets go on sale Aug. 6, with tickets for the special Yo-Yo Ma concert live on Sept. 8. Visit fwsymphony.org for the full tickets and schedule.

— Arnold Wayne Jones



NOH8 returns to Dallas

Photographer Adam Bouska and his NOH8 campaign come to Dallas on Sunday, Nov. 9 to take digital pics to add to the fight for equal rights.

The photo shoot takes place in the Great Room of the W Hotel in Victory Park from 2-4 p.m. No reservations are needed, and it's not necessary to arrive early. Anyone in line before 4 p.m. will have their picture taken.

Photos are \$40 for a single or \$25 per person for a couple or group. For that, you receive one edited digital photo available through NOH8Campaign.com. It does not include a physical print.

Arrive wearing a white shirt to match the NOH8 signature style.

— David Taffet

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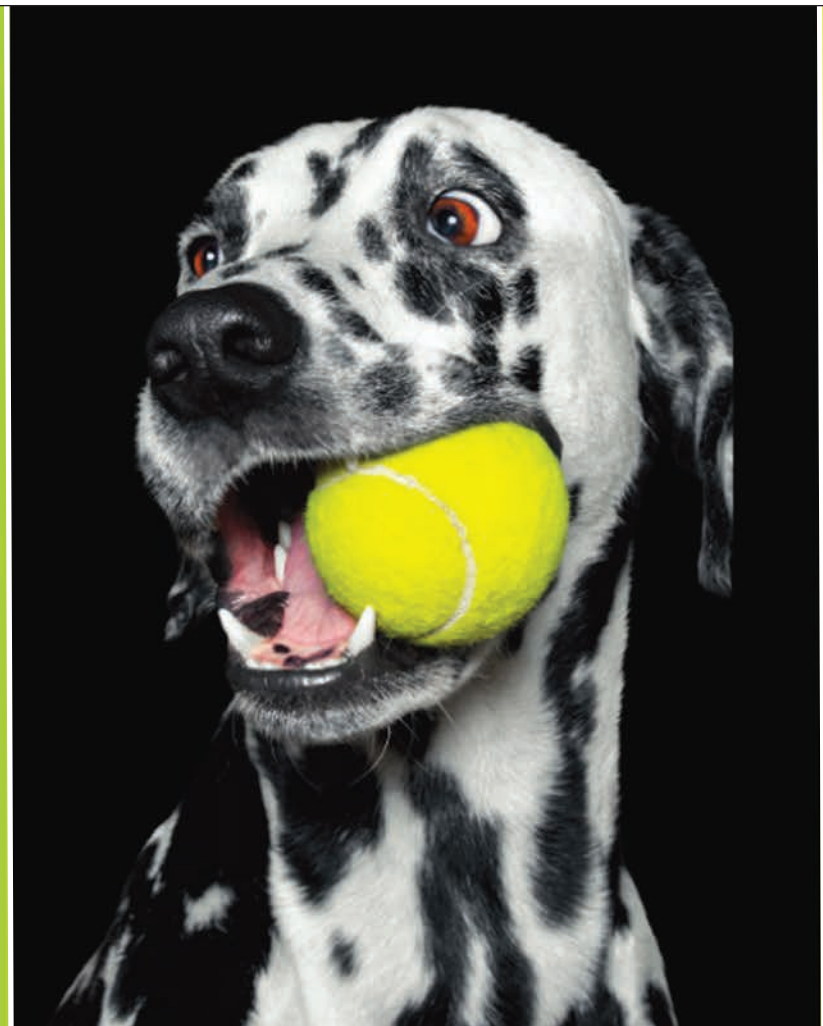
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Marriage in the time of COVID

Some are opting for small weddings; others are waiting until it's over

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Terry Walker married Santos Casiano in a ceremony at Reverchon Park on July 18, despite the pandemic.

Although Walker describes himself as “spiritual” and his husband as Buddhist, the Rev. Tim Shaefer of Royal Land Baptist Church officiated. About 12 people, including their photographer and videographer, attended.

The couple met in 2001 when they were both caseworkers at AIDS Arms. Walker left the agency for a while, returning in 2012 as marketing and development and event coordinator for what is now Prism Health. He and Casiano had lost touch, but they reconnected and began dating.

In May 2019, the two became engaged while on a trip to New York. They set the date for their wedding, and on March 1, they sent out “hold the date” cards. By then, they had paid a deposit on 3015 Trinity Groves for the reception.

By the end of May, the couple sent out an update: The reception would be held “once we can all gather,” maybe in January or February next year.

But the pandemic was certainly on their mind, and being “of a certain age,” as Walker put it, the couple wanted to be married sooner rather than later. They wanted the recognition that came with legal marriage. Walker didn’t want to have to call Santos his “partner” — business partner? — and he didn’t want to call him his boyfriend: “We’re not 18,” Walker said.

Walker wanted to be able to just call Casiano his husband. And he wanted them to be legally married, in case something happened health-wise.

So they asked Shaefer, whose husband works at Prism Health, to perform the wedding. They thought about several outdoor locations where they could safely hold the wedding; Turtle Creek Park was their first choice, but Reverchon Park



Members of Terry Walker and Santos Casiano's wedding party masked up for safety

provided more privacy and shade. They ordered a cake. They ordered matching masks for the entire wedding party.

And they held a wedding.

With their reception in mind, they asked filmmaker Robert Camina (*The Raid of the Rainbow Lounge, Upstairs Inferno*) to record the ceremony. Walker said they'll play the video at their reception.

Weddings outside the box

Think out of the box for a beautiful wedding during the pandemic. The guest list may be short, but that increases the possibilities. Just remember, many facilities may have limited catering during the pandemic.

• A private room in a steakhouse

Some beautiful rooms exist that will fit your small party with plenty of room to socially distance but couldn't accommodate a larger crowd.

• Lakeside

The water tends to photograph well. If the ceremony will be held at sunset, pick a spot along the east side so the sun will set in the background. Beaches always make a beautiful wedding location.

• Rooftop terraces

Hotels like the Joule or the Canvas (formerly the NYLO) have beautiful rooftops with fabulous views that can accommodate small to medium-sized parties. Some residential buildings like the Mosaic have great rooftops as well.

• Private room in a hotel

The Adolphus has some beautifully luxurious rooms that accommodate a small party but couldn't be considered for a large event. For a more contemporary upscale event, try the Hotel Crescent Court or a small hotel like the Hotel St. Germain.

• A park or garden

The Arboretum along White Rock Lake or Turtle Creek Park are beautiful settings for small weddings.

— Dallas Voice

Planning a COVID wedding

The Rev. Neil Thomas, senior pastor at Cathedral of Hope, said the weddings he and his staff have officiated at since the beginning of the pandemic have all been held off-site, and all in front of a small group.

One couple that initially postponed their wedding decided to hold their ceremony after postponing caused stress in their relationship.

Those who've proceeded with their — scaled back — wedding plans have done so with a sense of protecting themselves. After all, there is a plank in the GOP platform that calls for reversing same-sex marriage laws, Thomas said. And we all remember the days when family members could come in after someone had died and take everything a couple had worked to build because their relationship wasn't legal.

And during this time of pandemic, many have in their minds the notion of taking care of each other if either were to get sick with the COVID-19 virus.

Normally, Thomas and his staff officiate at 100 or more weddings a year. This year, that number is way down. Since the beginning of the pandemic, he said, they've done maybe 15 or 20.

But even if those weddings during the pandemic usually have to be scaled way back from original times, that may not necessarily be a bad thing. After all, Thomas said choosing the 10 most important people in your life to celebrate with you at a more intimate wedding may make the event even more meaningful.

“It's all about state of mind,” Thomas said. “For some, it's better to go ahead and do something safely and know you are married.”

They celebrated with some curbside cake service that evening but were too tired to even open the bottle of champagne that night.

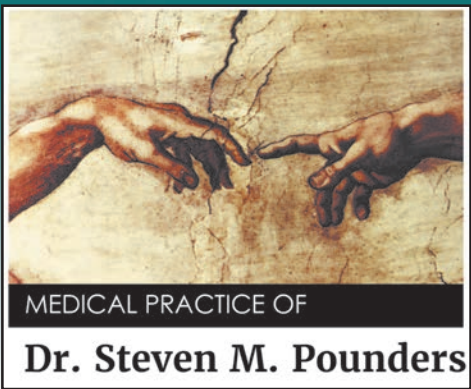
Walker said he's worked with the owner of 3015 before, and that she's a good friend. She hasn't asked for an additional deposit and is applying what he already paid to a winter reception. They're planning something casual like barbecue and are looking forward to their two families meeting.

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LifeWalk goes 'Totally Virtual'

LifeWalk, the annual 5K AIDS fundraiser, is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, but the event is going to be different this time around because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"We are all still fighting the battle with COVID," noted Terry Walker, events coordinator for Prism Health North Texas, the agency that puts on LifeWalk each year to raise money for itself and other AIDS service organizations in North Texas. "And we didn't want to do a live event because of the epidemic. But you can still register for and raise money for LifeWalk."

That's why LifeWalk is celebrating its 30th anniversary with a '90s theme and going "Totally Virtual."

Walker said LifeWalk organizers are following the lead of other organizations that rely on race/walks each year to raise money and encouraging those who register to complete a 5K on their own and then share photos of themselves completing their walks on social media



with the LifeWalk hashtag.

"Rather than taking to the streets together, LifeWalkers can walk, run, rollerblade, bike or do any activity they want for 5 kilometers, 3.1 miles or 3,100 steps — or do 30 pushups for LifeWalk's 30th anniversary — share their hard work on social media with #LifeWalk2020, and then tune into the livestreamed celebration with entertainment and surprises.

In years past, he added, that has been #LifeWalkDallas. But a new hashtag is being planned for this year to commemorate the virtual event.

Walker said organizers are "still kind

of figuring it all out" when it comes to exactly how the virtual LifeWalk event will take place on Oct. 11. "But we are envisioning a kind of modern-day only telethon" with "possibly some national celebrities and some local celebrities appearing to talk about why we need the money that LifeWalk will bring in," he said.

Because of the COVID epidemic which has interfered with many agencies' usual fundraising efforts and put additional strains on already-lean budgets, Walker continued, "There is a real need this year. Right now, it's like we are back in the days of the late 1980s and the 1990s, where we are in an emergency situation when it comes to funding."

With LifeWalk 2020 just over 30 days away, Walker said, in a normal year, fundraising by teams and individuals would already be in full swing. But COVID has put a damper on that, too, since most of those events were held in bars and restaurants, which are closed or severely limited in how many people they can host.

But people are adjusting. Individuals can go online to LifeWalk.org register themselves and then share the link for their personal fundraising page with

family members and friends to start collecting donations. And everyone can participate in the upcoming virtual events being held to replace the usual in-person events.

Those upcoming virtual events include a virtual beer tasting with Peticolas Brewing Company on Aug. 14, the Team Clover Open Online Silent Auction Aug. 20-24, LifeWalk Pet Paparazzi Sept. 20-25 and the '90s Virtual Dance Party featuring DJ Stevie Ray on Sept. 25.

And, of course, the Virtual LifeWalk 2020 Main Event, set for 11 a.m. on Oct. 11.

Get details on all these and more LifeWalk events at LifeWalk.org.

"The first annual LifeWalk was held in 1990 in the early years of the AIDS epidemic," Walker said. "By taking this year 'Totally Virtual,' we hope to call on '90s nostalgia and invite participants to get just as excited in front of their computer screens as they likely were back in the days of dial-up and AOL.

"I know we are going to be treated to some wonderful costumes and outfits on our participants' screens," he said. "We want to celebrate how far we've come while maintaining safety standards."

— Tammye Nash

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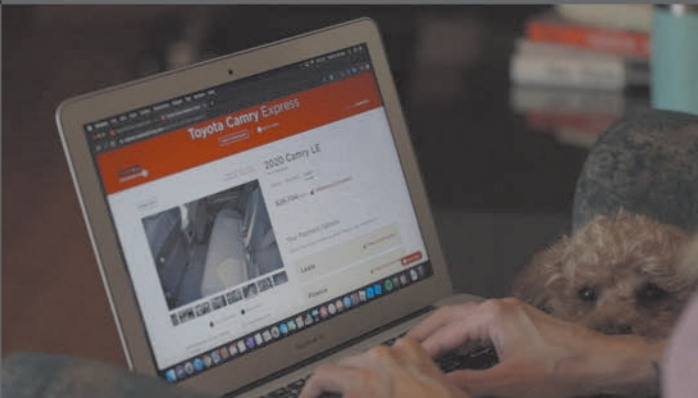
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Small but fabulous

Joche Westmoreland, owner of Joche W. Events, said his business has continued doing all sorts of events, with some trying to maintain their original guest count and others choosing downsized weddings. Others, on the other hand, have chosen to postpone their events until well into next year.

"Some of our small events have always been some of my favorites," he said.

So when a couple has decided to do a wedding with just 10 people, Westmoreland encourages them to go over the top with floral design, add to the décor with backdrops, choose a breathtaking location and serve a magnificent meal.

For locations during the pandemic, Westmoreland said, he has staged weddings at the Fort Worth Botanical Garden, on the rooftop of the Statler Hotel

seat your guests at four tables of five, Westmoreland said. That will make it feel like a larger event.

Of course, Westmoreland continued, he doesn't mind any of his clients postponing until after the pandemic is over. He's finding that couples who wait often plan even larger weddings. They've had more time to save and, after spending so much time staying home, are reward-

ing themselves and their guests with an even larger party.

For smaller weddings to photograph well, Westmoreland suggests "more décor," which he calls vital for luscious photography.

In the final summation, Westmoreland said, his best advice is: Do what's best for you. If getting married during the pandemic feels right, have a beautiful event with the most important people

in your life. If sharing the joy of your wedding is what's most important, wait until it's safe.

And if you want to be married now for reasons that may include the practical, like getting on your spouse's health insurance during these uncertain times of pandemic, have a private ceremony now and hold your larger celebration later. ■



Rev. Neil Thomas

and at Lake Grapevine. Rugs and antique furniture added to the ambiance of the lakeside wedding, and over-the-top arches added to the elegance of the rooftop event.

For the wedding held at the botanical gardens, Westmoreland said he added to the floral theme with a fabulous pair of floral arrangements framing the couple.

If you're scaling down the number of people that can attend, he suggested, upgrade the meal you'll be serving. "Add a couple of courses," he said. And serve your dozen guests the finest meal a caterer offers, he added. That will still be less than the cost of serving your original 250 guests.

For the seated meal at a large outdoor venue, rather than have two tables of 10,



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Birthday wishes

Last week was my birthday, and I turned 70. In “gay years,” that is about the age of Methuselah. But rather than pout about my advancing age, I thought I would make a birthday wish. And with 70 candles on my cake I figure, I get a really good one — or maybe 70 good ones! So here goes.

I want my pre-COVID life back in general. I wish to be able to travel again — on airplanes or trains, with or without wearing a mask and without having to put up with those who refuse to wear one complaining about it.

I wish to be able to go to the theater again — a real live performance, a musical, an opera or even a small avant-garde play. I miss seeing theater and sharing the experience with an audience.

I wish to be able to go out to the movies again — to sit in the dark with my partner, holding hands and laughing or crying together with several hundred other moviegoers.

I wish to be able to hug friends again — to embrace them and not dodge their faces.

I wish to be able to go to church again — to sit in the Leather Pew with my partner and friends and experience a worship service with all the joy, reverence, singing and music and fellowship afterwards, complete with mediocre coffee and donuts.

I wish to be able to hang out at a coffee shop and read while the hustle and bustle of others makes a reassuring background murmur.

I wish to visit with friends over a dinner at a restaurant, not just dashing in to retrieve take-out orders and then back home to eat from paper containers.

I wish to someday not smell hand sanitizer every time my hand is near my face. I wish to not need moisturizer cream to keep my hands from cracking since I wash them a dozen times a day.

I wish to go out to Dallas Eagle — or any other gay bar — and see my friends from a distance closer than six feet; to shake hands and not just bump elbows; to share stories on the patio and maybe even smoke a cigar.



Hardy Haberman
Flagging Left



stories that don't involve people on ventilators and crowded ICU floors.

I wish to return to my office and have real face-to-face meetings over a real conference table where I don't have to make sure I am not “on mute” or frozen in a tiny window because of bandwidth issues.

I wish to turn on the news and not see yet another endless word salad from the man in the White House.

I wish to open Facebook and not see another “karen” video of some over-privileged woman demanding to see the manager for whatever reason it is this week — and that goes for “ken”

I wish to see my friends who work in health-care looking bright and happy instead of worn and exhausted, to talk with them again over

videos as well.

I wish for no more horrific videos of Black Americans being abused by police because police have learned that every situation does not require a SWAT team and paramilitary tactics.

I wish for racists to once again be disempowered, to understand that their hateful views are not considered acceptable in our country anymore.

I wish for LGBTQ kids to no longer fear being bullied in school because our schools have pledged to be safe havens for everyone.

I wish to see a delightful news report on that Tuesday evening in November when the map of states used to track electoral votes looks a bright shade of blue.

I wish a landslide of votes makes it abundantly clear that the “experiment” of having a reality TV personality as president is finally over.

And finally I wish for a big chocolate chip milkshake — ‘cause it’s my birthday dammit!

Hardy Haberman is a longtime local LGBT activist and a board member of the Woodhull Freedom Alliance. His blog is at Dungeon-Diary.blogspot.com.



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Maines-plaining

Natalie Maines, left, isn't known for keeping her mouth shut, as she proves once again in her wide-ranging interview on behalf of former Dallas bar band The Chicks.

Natalie said Ha: The Chicks frontwoman on the queer creators behind the new comeback album, the name change and their kinship with the LGBTQ community

Sitting somewhere with an abstract-art background obscuring her precise location, The Chicks frontwoman Natalie Maines — the group recently dropped the Dixie — erupts into an explosive maybe-I-shouldn't cackle as she talks about how she's about to get in trouble for saying too much. This time, it's regarding a controversial decision made by country trio Lady A, formerly known as Lady Antebellum (which, like The Chicks, underwent a brand redo in response to the Black Lives Matter movement). After the band changed their name, they sued a Black blues singer named Lady A for the trademark to the title. And yes, Maines has something to say about that.

After all, this is Natalie Maines, who directed pointed criticism at then-President George W. Bush in 2003 at a London concert, when the Lubbock native said The Chicks were "ashamed the president of the United States is from Texas."

Country music blackballed them. Conservatives torched their CDs. The promo poster for the 2006 documentary about the fallout, *Shut Up and Sing*, depicted The Chicks sitting on top of the U.S. Capitol building, their half-naked bodies graffitied with words and phrases like "Dixie Bimbos," "Traitors" and "Big Mouth." In the 2020 doc *Miss Americana*, about Taylor Swift's slow progression into a vocal anti-Trump liberal and LGBTQ-rights advocate, Swift said she had been pressured to refrain from being politically and socially free-spoken to avoid a Chicks-like career implosion.

Returning after a 14-year recording hiatus, Maines, fortunately, still refuses to shut up on *Gaslighter*, the trio's most authentic and unflinchingly personal album yet. Joined by sisters Martie Maguire and Emily Robison, *Gaslighter* does exactly what Maines couldn't during our interview (a prenup preempts her from doing so): detail her divorce from her husband of 17 years, actor Adrian Pasdar, with scathing lyrical specificity, the kind of wig-snatching realness the queer community devours. An honest album about survival, it couldn't have come at a better time.

During our Zoom session, Maines discussed the

post-controversy era of their career as the moment she noticed a major show of support from the LGBTQ community, the queer creators who nurtured the new album's vibe and the gays she'd party with on her boat. Yes, *that* boat.

— Chris Azzopardi

Dallas Voice: For *Gaslighter*, you worked with queer pop songwriter Justin Tranter and trans producer Teddy Geiger. How did working with LGBTQ collaborators help to shape the authenticity of the album's narrative?

Natalie Maines: They kind of play different roles, but yeah, the first song that we wrote for the album was with Teddy and Justin, and it was "Sleep at Night." That [track] was a very different sound for us, and that really excited me. That was all Teddy. She went to these electronic drums and just started with that beat, and the way that Justin and Teddy can both phrase things very percussively and put them in the song was a real lesson for me that I try to do now and perfect and get better at. So, yes, as far as where we could go with the sound, they were very much there. And Justin is such a great lyricist. He was definitely there to help us say what we wanted to say *and* tell. Ha!

Your producer, Jack Antonoff, once told me he was a straight guy with "lesbian chemicals." He's very in touch with his feminine side! I think that's why he works

so well with females. I have never asked him this, and he works with males too, but I wonder if he does enjoy working with females better. Or a lot of males just look at him as the female producer, so they don't ask him. Ha!

When we chatted in 2013 you told me Rachel Maddow would be your "lesbian girl crush." Maybe your lesbian chemicals and Jack's lesbian chemicals are what really made this collaboration work. Ha! I don't know. Because we all three got along great with him! He just has a sensitivity. He just doesn't have that macho, masculine-jerk kind of thing. He's got a healthy ego. He doesn't need to build himself up by putting other people down or by holding them back. And he's a great communicator, which women love. A lot of straight men are not! Ha!

You consulted different activist groups for the "March March" video, which features images from a Pride parade alongside footage from current Black Lives Matter protests. For the video, whom did you consult from the LGBTQ community? My friend Michael Skolnik, an activist and an organizer and a liaison for a lot of people [and the founding partner of The Soze Agency, a creative agency focusing on authentic campaigns that uplift compassion and equity], we consulted him for the video. One of the things he said was, "Have more from gay Pride marches." He mentioned the [Black] trans march in Brooklyn [in June]. He was like, "That was a huge march, so you should put that one in." I've known Michael for a long time; he's a great guy; he organized March for Our Lives [in 2018 in D.C.] that we all went to as well.

Also, I'm on these calls as part of a group called Harness [founded by America Ferrera, Wilmer Valderrama and Ryan Piers Williams, the group connects communities through conversation to inspire action and power change]. They've been having a lot more Zoom calls, and I've been on a lot of those. Harness brings all different walks of life together and supports diversity and Black Lives Matter, and White People 4 Black Lives and different trans and LGBTQ causes or groups. It's a great place as just somebody who wants to speak out and hear and know as much as I can, and those calls are a great way to listen and not talk, and learn. Learn directly from the source.

Your relationship with the LGBTQ community goes way back, at least publicly. Have you always been a queer magnet? I mean, I was always open to it. But growing up in Lubbock, Texas, I can think

of people that I knew who were *probably* gay, but they weren't out yet. I don't even know if they knew that about themselves yet, necessarily. Lubbock was a very suppressive place.

But you would've guided them and held their hand through the coming out process. I would've always been their friend, for sure. In Lubbock — I'm sure it's different now, I'm an old lady, ha! — but back in the '90s in high school, I can't even think of somebody who was out-there gay. They might not have been trying to act straight, but you just ... you didn't feel free like that. So I hope that's changed in Lubbock. I have to assume it has.

You know, I've asked some of our gay fans, "What is it that has drawn gay people to us?" Because I think after the controversy there was an extra kinship for just understanding what it feels like to be hated by a mass group of people. Ha! Then, them acting out on it. But then fighting for what you believe is right, and standing up for yourselves, and not letting them shush you. Before that, what my friends have told me was what gay fans liked was the over-the-top sort of Spice Girls fashion. Ha! We were the cliché for every fad! We wore every fad all at once!

You must've seen a lot of Chicks drag queens then, right? Yes. "Chicks with Dicks" — there were a lot of those kinds of revues.

I think your divorce has maybe given some false hope to lesbians. On Twitter,

I'm seeing queer women express that even though they love Gaslighter, they'll always be sad that you're not queer. Ha! You know, sometimes I do think, "Would that have been easier? Darn it!" But I think I'm more of a gay guy on the inside. Is there a title for that?

For a straight woman who presents as a gay man? Or just *feels* it on the inside!

Call Jack. I'm sure he has a good name for it. Yeah, we probably meet right in the middle.... I forgot the question!

It was about lesbians who are sad that you're not queer. Ha! I mean, we used to always joke that when I got the short hair, yeah, people liked to think that. But before that we always joked that lesbians seem to like Martie. Martie's always dressed a little more gender-neutral. She likes pants. And listen, she's got a great body, so [she attracts] *all* demographics. One time she flirted with Ellen on a red carpet.

Gay Twitter is obsessed with your boat, referenced on "Gaslighter" and then, of course, "Tights on My Boat." And

■ THE CHICKS Next Page



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they want to party on that boat. If you could invite three famous LGBTQ folks to hang with you on your boat, who would they be? Ha! I'm thinking of several. I'm gonna go with Andy Cohen, Howard Stern's top gay. Goin' with him. I also have the stress of: I'll probably miss my favorite one because I'm just not thinking! I could go all news. I have to think in smaller categories.

You're an Indigo Girls fan. How about Amy and Emily? Yeah, there'd be some good music there. I could go, like, Anderson Cooper, Rachel Maddow and Don Lemon. There's my three news people.

What about Fortune Feimster? I mean, you *did* have a dance with her. Love, love, love Fortune. See, that's why I said you gotta go smaller categories! So if I had a comedy LGBTQ guest list it'd be: Fortune, Wanda Sykes ... who else? Maybe Rosie or Ellen. Yeah. I could have a good time with either one of them!

Is Fortune a good dancer? Fortune's a good ice cream dancer. We did her first duo ice cream dance [in which they danced with ice cream in their hands]. I had the honor of being the first person to do that. Ha!

The Chicks changed their name to meet the moment. The name change was



subtle; there was no flashy press release. And you didn't even have to sue a Black artist for the rights to the name. How do you think other bands have handled their approach to changing their name? Listen, I think it's unfortunate, yes. Bad move on the lawsuit. I think they should've rethought that. Just not a good look. And I say this with peace and love, but if they had called me for counsel — ha! — this is what I would've told them: I would've said, "Listen, by suing her, you're doing the opposite of what you're trying to do. And it's not going to go well. And it's just *not* the right thing to do. If you really want to meet this moment, if you're changing your name for the right reasons or to really have a certain impact or outcome, then you are doing the opposite of that."

And listen, we felt the pressure of, once you've had success, changing your name feels like a huge thing to overcome. We had had discussions about changing our name since 2003. But it seemed, just for whatever reason, too big a thing to do, and nobody was calling on us to do it. We just felt icky having Dixie in our name. Then, for us, we had to think of other names. We didn't really want to have anything other than The Chicks, but we knew that that could legally be a

really hard thing to get because it's such a common word.

So we had lawyers, and we took our time. But even Lady Antebellum, or Lady A, they had that trademark for, like, six years. But I don't know their situation. To me, if they were told nobody else had that name, they should fire that attorney. Ha! Because, basically, that was an easy thing to find. So I don't know if [the attorney] knew and just thought, You're bigger than them, so you would win the trademark and you'll be fine going forward. But it's really not the right way to do it.

So, I think they should've just picked a brand new name. That's what I would've told them. Because they might've even had more fans, or made people recognize their name even more. I think the worry is, "Nobody's gonna know who we are." Like, maybe they missed the news story where you changed your name. Ha!

But I think that's what they should've done. Brand new name. And they can still do it right now. That is my advice to them. And it feels amazing. I have to say, all of that discussion and overthinking and worry, like, "How do you change your name after so much success?" Oh my god, it was a gift. It was a weight that you didn't even realize you were carrying.



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The Dog Days are upon us, and what better time to be woke, especially after all the social justice issues that have

dominated the summer thus far. Here are some good ways to occupy your free time and maybe learn about the world.



AGLIFF 33: Prism. Austin's gay film festival rebranded itself a few years ago as the All Genders, Lifestyles and Identities Film Festival, and boy is it inclusive. The pandemic has forced it to go virtual for its 33rd incarnation, but that just makes it easier to see all 70-plus features, shorts and documentaries, with badges as low as \$35 for access. And there are plenty of Dallas connections, including *CC Dances the Go-Go*, a film by Erin Buckley (niece of Betty) and SMU alum David Quantic's short humorous doc *Porn Yesterday*, pictured. Available through Aug. 16. Visit AGLIFF.org for the lineup of films and to purchase badges.



Andi Boi. Dallas Children's Theater commissioned local playwright and director Bruce R. Coleman to create this play aimed at teens about a trans kid finding his way at a new high school. It ran for a few weekends just before the lockdown, but the DTC has made it available for streaming for the foreseeable future for \$20 a household. Streaming on DCT.org/andiboi.



Black Is King. Since it dropped on Disney+ a week ago, this longform Beyoncé visual album — which follows her 2019 audio album *The Lion King: The Gift* — has been a bit of a sensation, but it's not all Beehive fan boy hype. This is wonderful music, yes, but also one of the most empowering prideful movies of the year, told with stunning images of Black men and women in all their glory. (And one of Bey's costumes was designed by Dallas' own Venny Etienne, so we can be proud for that reason, too!) Streaming on Disney+.



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Girl on girls

Jenny Block learns a lesson in marital harmony

My wife and I went to the garden center to pick out plants and flowers for the beds in front of our house. We had had potted plants which died. Then we planted azalea bushes, and, yes, they too died. Before all that was a mess of monkey grass, which I pulled out stalk by stalk with my hands.

In other words, these two patches of earth had become a proverbial thorn in our sides. To make matters worse, they are all one can see when standing at the kitchen sink, where I spend a good bit of time.

Whenever I would stand at the sink, I would say to my wife, "We really need to get some flowers and plants out there. Should we call a landscape architect and get some ideas?" Sometimes my wife would say, "Sure!" Other times she would say, "Why don't we just go to the plant store and pick some things out?" The latter made me a bit nervous. I don't know a thing about plants, indoor or outdoor. In fact, I have whatever the opposite of a green thumb is.

I'm spending a lot more time at that sink these days with this whole pandemic thing, so I suppose my mentioning needing plants and flowers reached a tipping point of sorts, because one morning my wife said, "Get your shoes. We're going to the garden center."

And off to the garden center we went. We wandered the outdoor aisles, reading the names of the plants and flowers and weighing the benefits and burdens of the overwhelming variety of choices. We must have filled and emptied our cart a dozen times before finally settling on three types of plants to fill our garden.

When we got home, it was too late to



this week's solution



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plant; the next morning my wife said, "You ready to plant your garden?" I didn't pay much mind to the use of the word "your" when she said it. I was a little surprised she expected *me* to do the planting. I'm not particularly strong, and the ground is not particularly soft. But I said, "Sure," and headed out to get planting.

I did not like it. At all. It was really hot. The ground was really hard. And I can be really stubborn. So even though my wife kept asking if she could help, I kept insisting I could do it on my own. If I had to do it, I was going to do it my way, in my time. I kept on digging and planting and telling myself, it'll be done soon, and then my gardening days will be behind me.

The next morning, my wife did a little replanting. My lines were off, which I could have predicted. Geometry is not my strong suit. But *viola*, we had a garden. Mission accomplished. *Fait accompli*.

Or so I thought.

It's not that I didn't know that gardens need to be tended and watered and weeded and all of that. It's just that I have no interest in doing such things, and I had no clue that I had signed up for that duty just by looking out a

window. But my wife kept asking me, every morning, if I had watered the plants yet.

It always went the same way:

"Have you watered your garden?"

"Nope."

"Did you water your garden yet?"

"I did not."

"Are you planning on watering?"

"No."

And after each no, she would water the garden.

One day, she was extra frustrated by my negative reply.

"Are you ever going to water your garden?"

"My garden?"

"You said you wanted a garden."

"I said I wanted a garden. I did not say I wanted *to* garden."

She was silent for a minute, then she laughed. And there it was, the classic marital misunderstanding.

If she had told me that filling that blank space with those plants and flowers would have meant daily maintenance, I would have either left it alone or filled it with a carefree ground cover. Or rocks. Rocks can be pretty, right?

It was a big moment for us. We both

shook our heads. We both laughed. We both realized we had a real marital "a-ha" moment on our hands.

And ever since then, it's become a bit of a shorthand for us. If we can tell we are getting into the misunderstanding zone, one of us says, "I want a garden, not *to* garden," or "Ah, I see. You want a garden. You don't want *to* garden."

It might seem silly. But it's kind of a trade secret when it comes to successful marriages. You have to say what you mean and have to not just *hear* but actually *listen* to what your partner is saying.

So the next time your partner mentions how much she likes pasta machines or how much he is interested in crocheting, make sure you get the whole picture. Otherwise, you just may find yourself with a very frustrated partner as she looks at the dust-gathering pasta maker she was hoping you would use or you discover the crochet needles at the bottom of the junk drawer that he was hoping you would master.

Sometimes, one little word makes all the difference.

Send your questions or comments to GirlOnGirls@gmail.com.

WE NEED YOUR INPUT ON THE CITY'S BUDGET.
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A series of budget town hall meetings are scheduled throughout the month of August. These meetings are designed for Dallas residents to weigh in on how their tax dollars are spent for Fiscal Year 2020-21 and provide valuable guidance for the City Manager and City Council.

This year, residents will have the opportunity to voice their opinion virtually.

Virtual District Budget Town Hall Meeting Schedule

DAY/DATE/TIME	HOSTED BY	REGISTRATION INFO
Thursday, August 13		
6:00 p.m.	Council Member Tennell Atkins District 8	Pre-register at tthm.us/dallasbudget
6:00 p.m.	Deputy Mayor Pro Tem B. Adam McGough District 10	bit.ly/D10townhall1 Event code: 146 742 5650 Password: 3UUQ9DRDh8 Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
6:30 p.m.	Council Member Cara Mendelsohn District 12	Visit dallascitynews.net for updates
5:30 p.m.	Mayor Pro Tem Adam Medrano, Council Members Chad West, Adam Bazaldua, Paula Blackmon and David Blewett Districts 1, 2, 7, 9 and 14	bit.ly/3gpXfnt Event code: 146 505 0115 Password: PPTMPQF526 Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
Saturday, August 15		
10:00 a.m.	Council Member Tennell Atkins District 8	bit.ly/3K7F8UJ Event code: 146 456 9178 Password: WMnyJ33YSp2 Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
Monday, August 17		
6:30 p.m.	Mayor Pro Tem Adam Medrano and Council Member Omar Narvaez Districts 2 and 6	Pre-register at tthm.us/dallasbudget
Tuesday, August 18		
6:30 p.m.	Council Member Carolyn King Arnold District 4	Visit dallascitynews.net for updates
6:00 p.m.	Council Member Tennell Atkins District 8	bit.ly/3K7g6HG Event code: 146 003 8221 Password: HZ7gJtpiv8 Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
6:00 p.m.	Deputy Mayor Pro Tem B. Adam McGough District 10	Pre-register at tthm.us/dallasbudget
6:30 p.m.	Council Member Cara Mendelsohn District 12	Visit dallascitynews.net for updates
6:00 p.m.	Council Member Jennifer S. Gates District 13	bit.ly/3k4vMKp Event code: 146 014 8074 Password: 8m8SKFypJY Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
5:30 p.m.	Council Members Paula Blackmon and David Blewett Districts 9 and 14	bit.ly/3pKNYx8 Event code: 146 014 8074 Password: 8m8SKFypJY Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388

To view a video of the proposed budget prior to a meeting
or to register for a virtual meeting via the web,
visit DallasCityHall.com or DallasCityNews.net.



DAY/DATE/TIME	HOSTED BY	REGISTRATION INFO
Thursday, August 20		
5:30 p.m.	Council Member Chad West District 1	Visit dallascitynews.net for updates
6:00 p.m.	Council Member Jaime Resendez District 5	bit.ly/30epFwC Event code: 146 703 3361 Password: Mh8bYpMq773 Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
6:30 p.m.	Council Member Cara Mendelsohn District 12	Visit dallascitynews.net for updates
6:00 p.m.	Lee M. Kleitman and Jennifer S. Gates Council Members Districts 11 and 13	Pre-register at tthm.us/dallasbudget
Saturday, August 22		
11:00 a.m.	Council Member Adam Bazaldua District 7	Pre-register at tthm.us/dallasbudget
Monday, August 24		
Noon	Council Member Casey Thomas, II District 3	bit.ly/21t5t2x Event code: 146 972 9783 Password: mM8zGWQux26 Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
6:00 p.m.	Council Member Casey Thomas, II District 3	bit.ly/300d0W Event code: 146 027 4596 Password: Y9f13XH8m2H Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
6:00 p.m.	Council Member Paula Blackmon District 9	bit.ly/313M5g4 Event code: 146 786 1899 Password: H7adC4Nhm8D Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
6:30 p.m.	Council Member Lee M. Kleitman District 11	bit.ly/2DIEvQq Event code: 146 156 1620 Password: Tc38gQxh8f Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
5:30 p.m.	Council Members Chad West and Omar Narvaez Districts 1 and 6	Pre-register at tthm.us/dallasbudget
Tuesday, August 25		
6:00 p.m.	Council Member Casey Thomas, II District 3	Pre-register at tthm.us/dallasbudget
6:30 p.m.	Council Member Carolyn King Arnold District 4	Visit dallascitynews.net for updates
6:00 p.m.	SPANISH TOWN HALL Council Member Jaime Resendez District 5	bit.ly/33qCR23 Event code: 146 778 3413 Password: rXVt133bvD3 Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
6:00 p.m.	Deputy Mayor Pro Tem B. Adam McGough District 10	bit.ly/39trtY Event code: 146 521 5573 Password: Xf4DnmW7N86 Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
6:00 p.m.	Council Member Jennifer S. Gates District 13	bit.ly/2EJ7655 Event code: 146 454 6480 Password: V6Wpe5W5EQ7 Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388
Thursday, August 27		
6:30 p.m.	Council Member Adam Bazaldua District 7	bit.ly/39RSPmW Event code: 146 268 8599 Password: cRtZ718t9 Dial-in phone number: 408-418-9388

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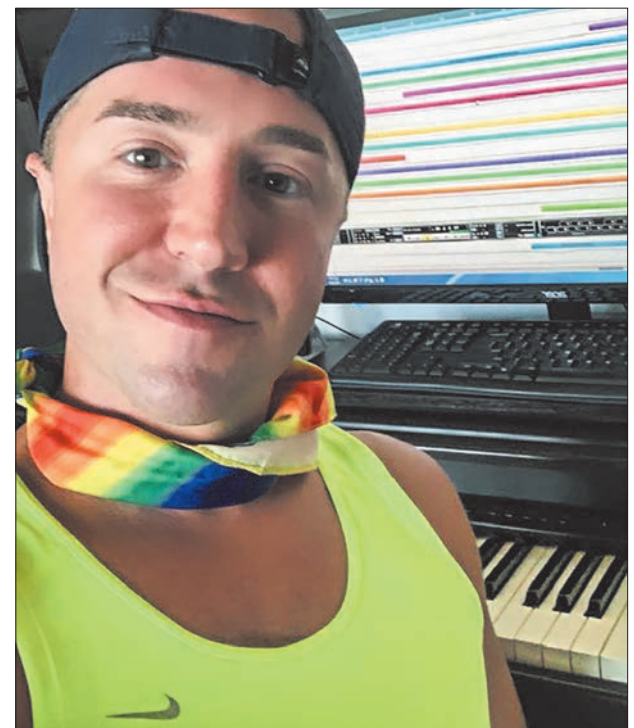
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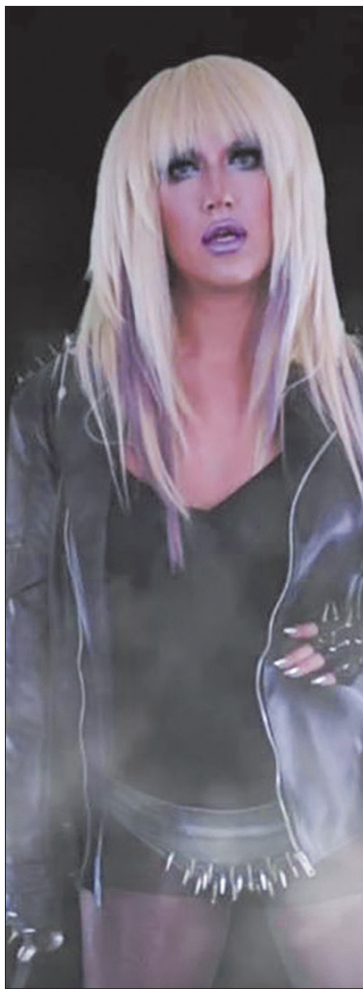
Denver, Steven and Jake



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Matt tickles the ivories



Bleach as Gaga



Denver, Tim and Steven



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Love is all around

	1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	
	13							14						
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58					59						60			
61						62					63			

Solution on Page xx

Across

1 *The Best Little Boy in the World* author
7 Fave resort of gays in Spain
13 Like numerals such as 69
14 Collection of Vidal essays
15 Start of Chris Meloni's comment on how he feels about acting
17 Emulate voyeurs
18 Trial figure
19 Wet spot cause
21 Ed, of "I hate spunk!" fame
23 ___ Paulo, Brazil
24 Pussy with dangerous teeth
25 Subways of Mauresmo's land
27 Like nachos
28 *The Simpsons* storekeeper
30 A woman named Arthur
31 More of the comment
38 Univ. of Maryland athlete
39 They go to market
40 *Boys in the Band* author Crowley
42 *Ragged Dick* writer Horatio
44 More of the comment
45 Strong spasm
46 Like letters that aren't straight
48 San Francisco Gay Men's ___
49 Contemporary of Bela
50 Shine, in some ads
52 Drag queen's stole, often
53 Work on a stage
54 More of the comment
58 *The Pointer Sisters'* "___ Excited"
59 English tenor Peter
60 Oktoberfest order
61 Sea bottom captain
62 End of the comment
63 Computes the bottom line

Down

1 Gay in the library
2 Get one's bearings
3 Tammy, who became a family friend
4 "Can ___ dreaming?"
5 Gets ready to shoot off
6 Sings like Ella
7 Larry Kramer's *Just ___*
8 Sock-me connector
9 Your, to King James
10 Hawn of *Shampoo*
11 Come out
12 *The L Word*, for one
16 Stephen of *Ready to Wear*
17 Cager Parsons
20 Stick your nose in
22 Pride expression
24 Warm to romantic overtures
26 Decide not to swallow
27 Women on top, at times
29 Place for Young men?
30 Title used by Uncle Remus
31 Singer with an accent?
32 Take two letters from this for an orgasm
33 German-built car
34 Bygone Eur. realm
35 Intro, at gaystryst
36 What Tomlin did for *Celluloid Closet*
37 Kvetched
38 Car feature in *Grease*
41 Teachers, at times
43 Diana of *The Avengers*
45 Far East cuisine
47 Illegal block for Esera Tuaola
48 Portable beds
51 Ready to go in
52 Homophobe Attorney General
55 Comment from a babe
56 "Bali ___"
57 Org. for rim jobs?

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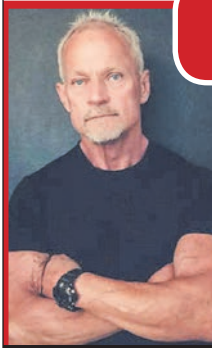
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