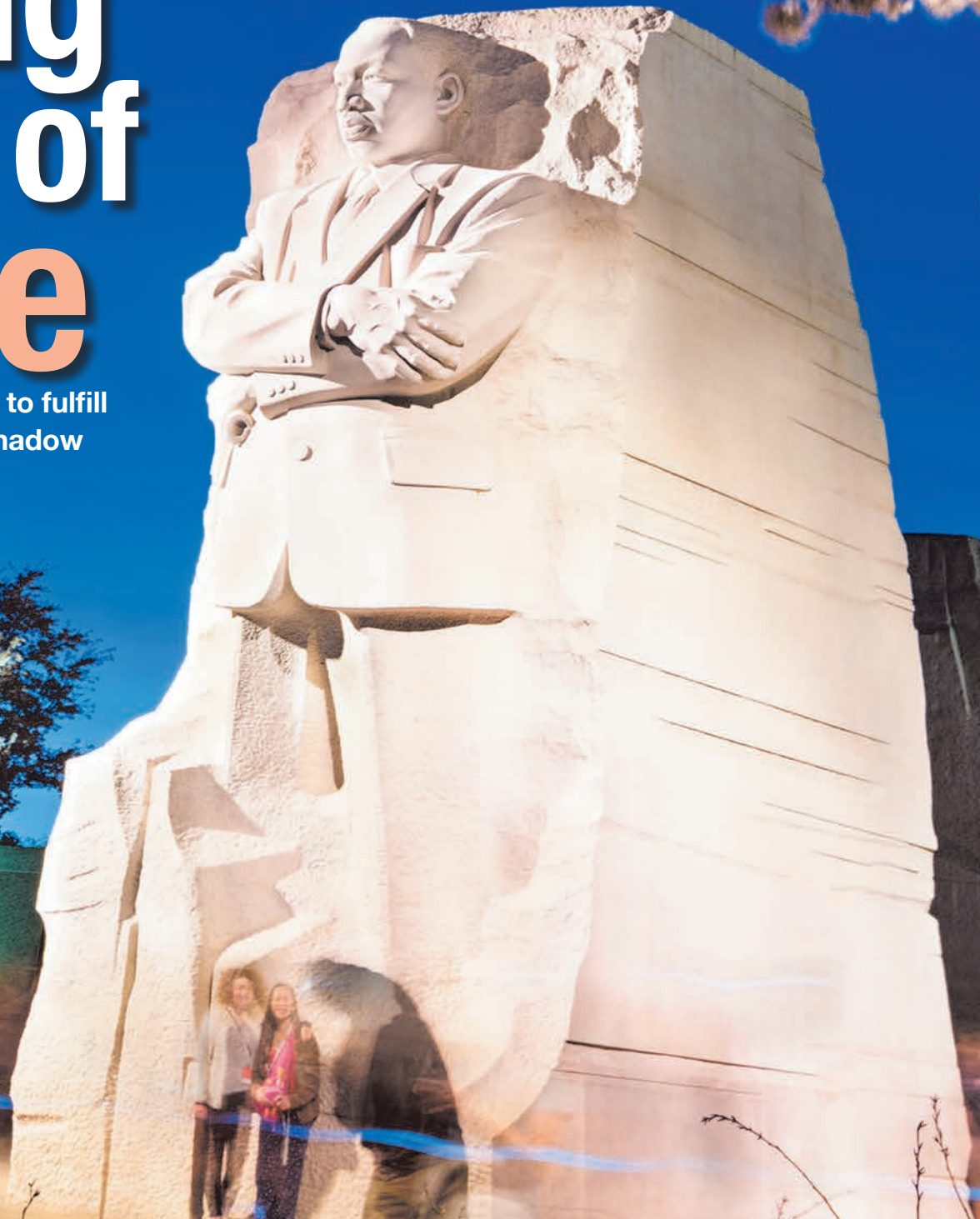


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Bending the arc of justice

Spiritual leaders seek to fulfill
MLK's dream in the shadow
of Black Lives Matter
by Arnold Wayne Jones, Page 14

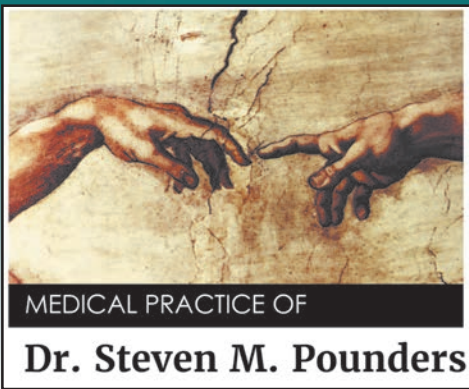


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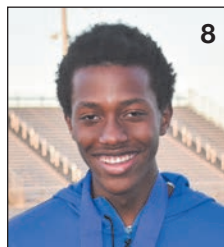
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Highlights from the Dallas Voice Website

Bi-coastal BFFs launching new podcast next week



Brad Pritchett, left and Ryan Brockington

Brad Pritchett is already a well-known man about town here in North Texas: regional vice president with the American Heart Association, co-chair of the Black Tie Dinner and, of course, host with the most with Dallas Voice's DvTV. Now he is adding another notch to his resume: cohost of YEA Networks' new podcast, BFFU: Best Friends Forever University. And even better, Brad is cohosting the podcast with his friend, Ryan Brockington.

YEA Networks on Wednesday, Aug. 19, announced the launch of BFFU with Brad and Ryan, "Dallas natives turned bi-coastal besties." Episode 1 Wednesday Aug. 26, with new episodes available each Wednesday morning on Apple, Spotify, Google Podcasts, iHeartRadio and all the other popular podcast apps. You will also be able to find episodes each week at DallasVoice.com.

— Tammye Nash

Allred, Neave participate in Democratic keynote

Local public officials U.S. Rep Colin Allred and state Rep. Victoria Neave participated along with 15 other elected officials to deliver the keynote address at the Democratic Convention on Tuesday, Aug. 18. Previous convention keynote speakers have gone on to run for higher office.

Much of the speech focused of Joe Biden's proposals if he is elected president. Those proposals include expanding the Affordable Care Act, making drug prices more transparent and affordable, codifying Roe v. Wade and making childcare more readily available and affordable.

Neave replied with three other officials to one comment by saying, "That's a big f'n deal." And she said of Biden, "He'll never

forget who he's fighting for."

In a summation, Allred said, "That's what happens when Joe Biden is in your corner. Working families get a fair shot."

— David Taffet

NTIDC looking for more volunteers for COVID vaccine study

North Texas Infectious Disease Consultants is looking for more volunteers to participate in its efforts as part of a Pfizer Pharmaceutical Company's trial for a COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine trial is part of what is being called "Project Warp Speed," a fast-track effort by the U.S. government to develop an effective vaccine by the end of the year.

Volunteers needed the most are minorities and those working on the front lines, as in

grocery stores and schools. Participants will be paid \$120 per visit for six doctor's office visits. Anyone interested can email vaccine.study@ntidc.org.

— Tammye Nash

Round-Up employees holding carwash for R.E.B.A.

The employees of the Round-Up Saloon are hitting the parking lot behind the bar to hold a carwash on Saturday, Aug. 22, starting at 10 a.m., "workin', twerkin' and scrubbin'" to get your vehicle polished up all bright and pretty — and all for a good cause: All proceeds and donations will go to the Round-Up Employees Benefit Association (R.E.B.A.) to help employees who have been out of works due to the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic for most of the last six-and-a-half months.

And don't worry: All the car washers will be keeping their distance and wearing their masks to help make sure you — and they — stay safe.

— Tammye Nash

Virtual auditions for 'American Idol' come to Texas Saturday

American Idol auditions began via customized Zoom technology last week, and on Aug. 22, residents of Texas (as well as Nebraska and the Dakotas) will get the chance to show what they've got. "Idol Across America" offers the opportunity to do a face-to-face audition in front of Idol producers. And even if you aren't free this Saturday, you can still submit an audition tape. Lock in your slot. All the deets are available at ABC.com/shows/american-idol/auditions.

— Arnold Wayne Jones

Pet of the week • Ava



Meet **Ava**, a 3-year-old, American pit bull terrier mix weighing 50 pounds. She is a snorty, silly little piggy-pup with the wiggliest body you have ever seen. She has so much love in her lowrider

body, and she can't wait to share it with you. Everyone at the SPCA of Texas just adores her sweet self. She loves to be around people and adores all kinds of attention. She does get very excited and jumps occasionally, so families with small children will need to help her learn to stay down. She is friendly with everyone she meets and seems to always be in a happy mood. If you have other dogs at home, bring them to meet her. Ava 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/findapet and visit spca.org/dogadopt to inquire about a dog or spca.org/catadopt to inquire about a cat.

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THE GAY AGENDA

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

AUGUST

• Through Aug. 24:

Team Clover Silent Auction

LifeWalk Team Clover holds an online silent auction. Visit LifeWalk.org/event/lifewalk.

• Aug. 23: **Lambda Weekly**

Omar Narvaez is the guest at 1 p.m. on 89.3 KNON-fm with David Taffet, Lerone Landis and the late Patti Fink. KNON.org.

• Aug. 25: **Get Centered tour**

Virtually tour Resource Center and learn about its programs from 5-6:30 p.m. at 5750 Cedar Springs Road. RSVP to development@myresourcecenter.org.

• Aug. 26: **DISD Availability and Disparity Study**

Dallas Independent School District holds the first of two virtual business community meetings from noon-2 p.m. via Zoom to discuss the Availability and Disparity Study, which is designed to review participation by women- and minority-owned businesses on the district's contracts and to assess policies related to maximizing M/WBE participation. Businesses will have the chance to ask questions about the study, get information on M/WBE certification and learn about upcoming contracting opportunities. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/y5ekba7d>.

• Aug. 25: **LGBT Grief Group**

Grief group for those who have lost a same-sex partner currently meeting virtually at 6:45 p.m. Contact Ray at raymond.sablack@gmail.com for Zoom room access.

• Aug. 27: **Pride Across Texas**

Texas LGBT Chambers statewide networking event with speaker Jane Campbell, co-captain with the National Women's Soccer League champions Houston Dash from 4:30-6 p.m. Register for access code at LGBTChamber.com.

• Aug. 27: **We're Here Texas**

Lambda Legal's virtual soiree for justice with Alyssa Edwards, Shea Coulee and a performance by Kameron Ross at 6:30 p.m. Suggested donation \$50. Contact abelyeu@lambdalegal.org.

• Aug. 28: **March on Washington 57th anniversary**

On the 57th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's March on Washington, Cathedral of Hope presents a program featuring the Rev. Ray Jordan, the Rev. Carmarion Anderson, the Turtle Creek Chorale and others that can be viewed at LivingHopeServices.org/evfjustice.

• Aug. 30: **Lambda Weekly**

Erin Moore is the guest at 1 p.m. on 89.3

KNON-fm with David Taffet, Lerone Landis and the late Patti Fink. KNON.org

SEPTEMBER

• Sept. 1: **Get Centered tour**

Virtually tour Resource Center and learn about its programs from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at 5750 Cedar Springs Road. RSVP to development@myresourcecenter.org.

• Sept. 2: **DISD Availability and Disparity Study**

Dallas Independent School District holds the second of two virtual business community meetings from 5:30-7:30 p.m. via Zoom to discuss the Availability and Disparity Study, which is designed to review participation by women- and minority-owned businesses on the district's contracts and to assess policies related to maximizing M/WBE participation. Businesses will have the chance to ask questions about the study, get information on M/WBE certification and learn about upcoming contracting opportunities. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/y5ekba7d>.

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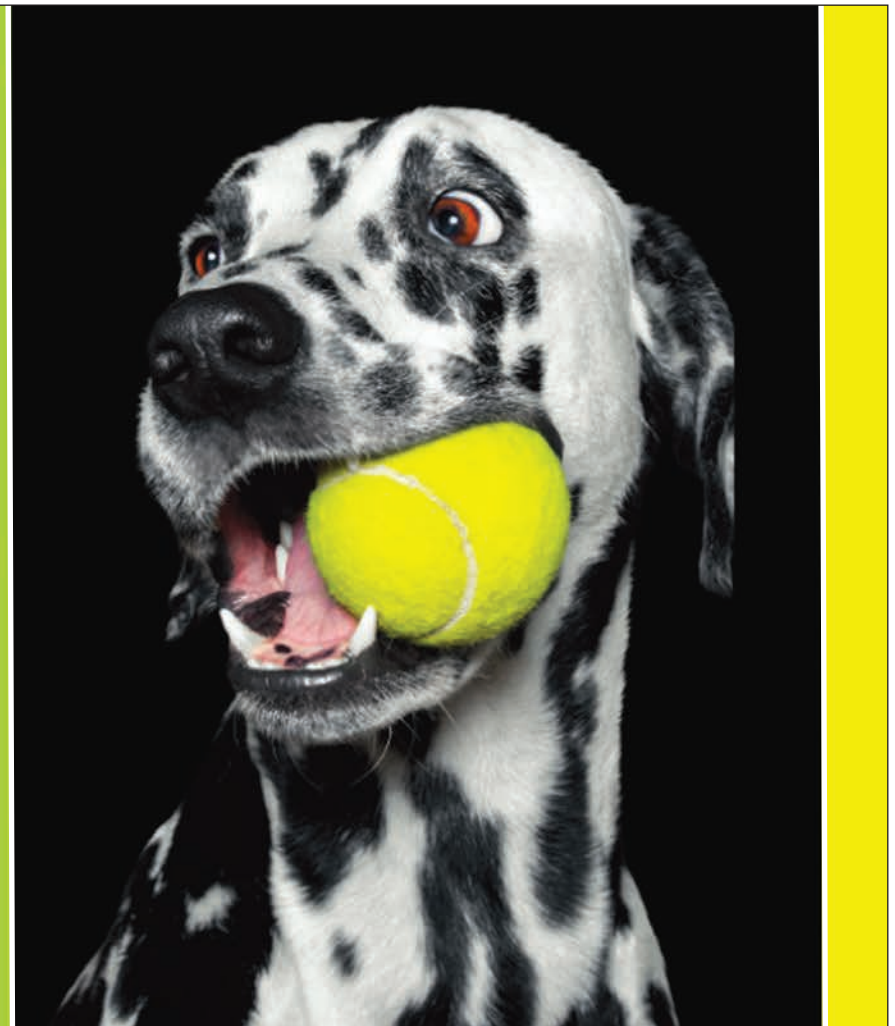
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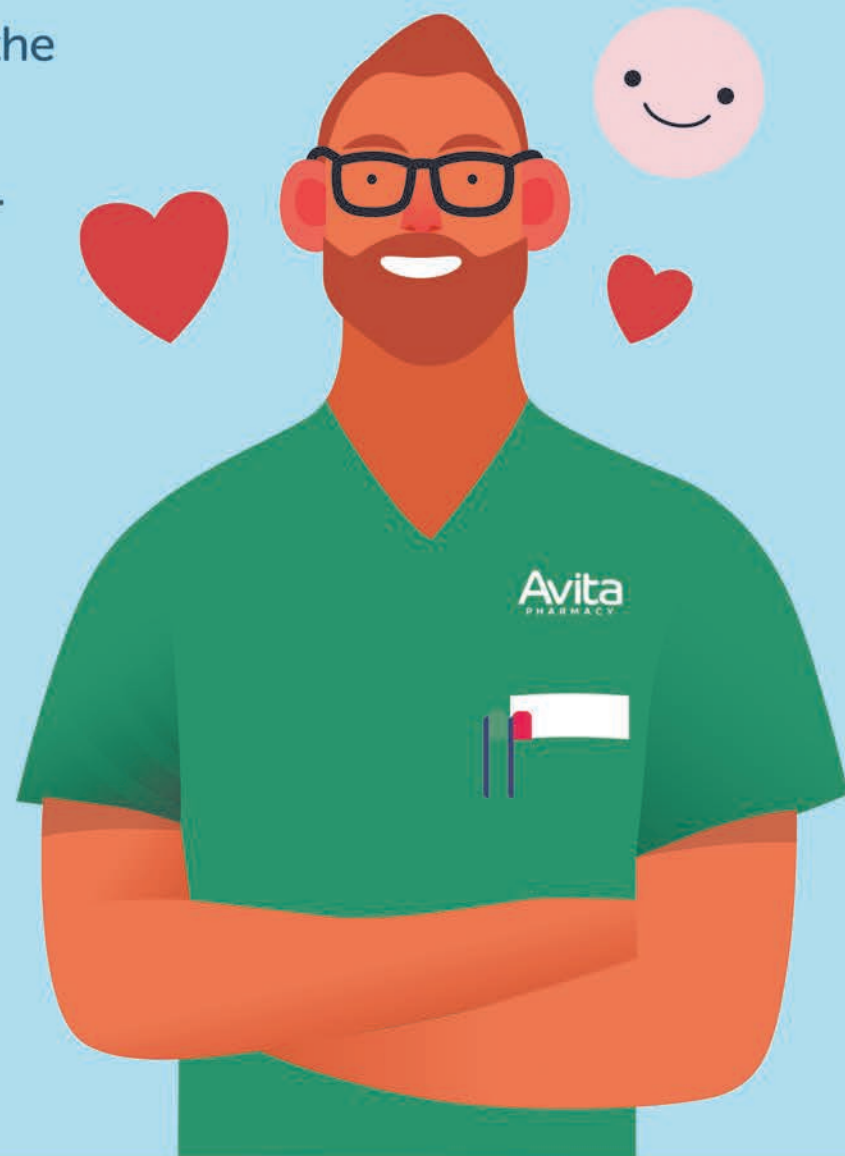


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Jesus said to expel the gay kid

Days before he was to begin his senior year, Covenant Christian Academy threw out a student who came out last October

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Just days before Devin Bryant was to begin his senior year at Covenant Christian Academy in Colleyville, his mother, Consolata, received a phone call from the new headmaster: Her son would not be welcome back for his final year at the academy because he is gay.

Devin had attended the Covenant Christian Academy since pre-K, and his older sister started school there in first grade. So the family has had an almost 20-year affiliation with Covenant Christian Academy.

When told her son couldn't return to the school, Consolata said she had a question for the new headmaster. "Are you a Christian?" she asked him. "Jesus would not do what you are doing."

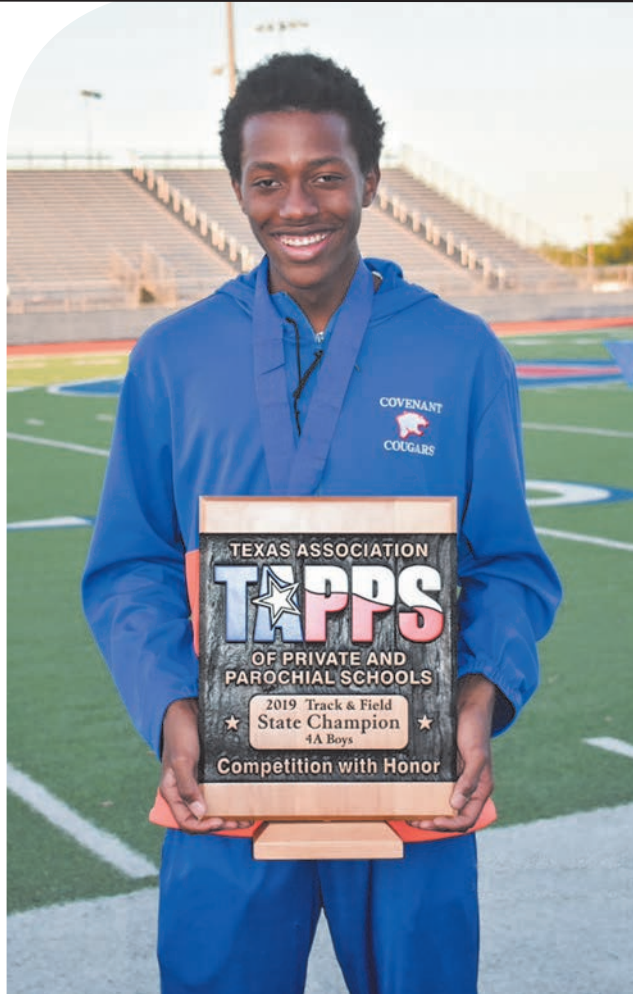
His response? He told her, "I'm doing what Jesus would want me to do."

The headmaster thanked Consolata Bryant for being at the school this long and offered her parent counseling. Apparently, the headmaster believes that standing up for her son and his straight-A record at the school is something that requires counseling.

Consolata described her son as a disciplined student who is very kind. She said teachers have written her letters saying, "Thank you for bringing up such a nice guy."

And Devin's coming out changed nothing for the family. "I have a loving family," the mother said. "We accepted him the way he is."

She acknowledged she signed the student code of conduct, which includes a



Devin Bryant, above, with an award he won for track and, above right, with his mother and sister. (Pictures courtesy of Devin Bryant)

line in small print that forbids homosexuality, drugs and fornication among other things. But, she said, her son came out on his birthday last October, and no one at the school said anything then.

So, Consolata said, she can't help but wonder if maybe the school's new headmaster was trying to make an example of Devin, an object lesson intended to dissuade any other gay students from being honest about their identity.

A school administrator told Dallas Voice, "We don't have a statement," adding that they don't comment on students.

Devin said he came out on his birthday last October with a post on Instagram, and he got a good reaction. "People said they are there for me," he said. "They were proud of me for making the



decision to come out."

His coming out was met with a lot of love and support from family and friends but no reaction from the school. "I think they were ignoring it," he said. "People in the administration knew."

Devin even spoke to some teachers at the school about his coming out, and, he said, no matter what they believed personally, they supported him.

Before COVID, Devin was about to meet with administrators, but the shut down hit last spring, sending everyone home and delaying any meeting. Still, Devin finished the semester with his usual straight-A grades. And over the summer, he even posted the design he had come up with to paint his parking spot in the campus parking lot — a senior tradition.

Devin's design comprised a list of words or phrases: "Super Hot, Fun, Attractive, Fast-driving, Insane, Very Smart, Outgoing, Party Freak, Young, Gay (as in happy don't worry lol), Pretty, Reckless, Humble, Pyromaniac, Fun,

Gay (as in homosexual this time, sorry) Person Parking Only." Devin said he thought his design was funny, that it "derived humor from how brash it was."

Consolata said she went to the school to pay for Devin's parking spot, but school administrators told her Devin's design would not be accepted and that they didn't want the word "gay" mentioned again.

That was on Thursday. Two days later, Consolata walked into Devin's room and told him he had been expelled from school. Neither mother nor son could believe it.

Consolata was shocked because Devin and his sister, Benta, had spent their entire school careers at Covenant Christian Academy. Benta talked about how her brother ran cross country and other track events with the school team and how in junior high he had played basketball for the school. He'd appeared in the school play, and his art won awards for the school.

In other words, he was active and involved — a good student all the way around.

Devin said he wants to make sure everyone knows that, by going public with

Easing anxiety in LGBTQ youth

LGBTQ young people were already overburdened with worry; political unrest and a raging pandemic exacerbate the problem

New research shows that nearly 70 percent of LGBTQ youth have reported symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder, with just over half reporting having experienced symptoms of major depressive disorder. While 86 of the

LGBTQ youth surveyed said that recent politics have negatively impacted their well-being, 80 percent said that LGBTQ celebrities have positively impacted them.

And these days, as we all struggle to adjust to a world rocked by political strife, battles for justice happening daily in our streets and a worldwide pandemic changing almost every aspect of our daily lives, the stress these young people face, especially now as many of them are going back to school, can be even more overwhelming.

Dr. Maurice N. Gattis, an associate professor in the master of social work online program at Virginia Commonwealth University, has a few suggestions for helping ease the stress they face and

calm their anxieties. He spoke recently with Dallas Voice to share some of those suggestions.

— Tammye Nash

Dallas Voice: Does today's political climate have a stronger impact on youth in general? Why is the impact so much stronger when it comes to LGBTQ youth? Dr. Maurice N. Gattis: Today's

political climate has a particular impact on youth because many of the policies being discussed and actions being taken will shape the future of the country, which youth will have to inhabit longer than generations that are older than them. In many respects, youth are leading the way in shaping the current political climate. The calls for equality, racial justice, LGBTQ rights and climate justice all have strong

ANXIETY, Page 12



Dr. Maurice N. Gattis

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Fast Signs is keeping us safe

Oak Lawn store has shifted some its sign production to PPE

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Fast Signs was declared an essential business and allowed to remain open through the pandemic shutdown because it produced signs about social distancing and wearing masks. Managing partner Bobby Boliew said he feels a little bit guilty when he says that his store, on Oak Lawn Avenue, had one of its busiest months ever right after the shutdown began.

Boliew's store produces everything from floor stickers that measure out six-foot distancing in stores, office buildings and high-rise apartments, to COVID-19 etiquette signs, to curbside service banners for restaurants. While his business has kept him and his staff working long hours, he's mindful of how hard some of his customers have had it. So he has been working with them on pricing.

And he's been thinking about how else he can help the community. For instance, if you purchase a rainbow Oak Lawn Proud sign at Fast Signs, the company will donate \$5 to Resource Center.

While the sign business has kept his store busy, Boliew has added several products designed to help his customers and the public protect themselves. For instance, the same machines that cut vinyl for signs will also cut plexiglas up to a half inch thick. So the Fast Signs crew has designed desk stands to divide desks or lunch tables in schools, hanging dividers and face shields.

Recently, Boliew said, he installed hanging dividers to protect hotels clerks at the downtown Sheraton Dallas hotel. The free-standing shields, he added, are good for stores, offices and any



Bobby Boliew displays some of his latest wares at Fast Signs. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)



place people normally transact business directly across from each other. And, he noted, a 30-inch by 24-inch shield with stand is only \$139.

Boliew and his Fast Signs crew also designed a face shield used by police. The head strap doesn't have hooks because police told him they have different size

heads. Instead, the straps are connected with rubber bands or hair bands. He said each police car carries three of the reusable shields, which can easily be cleaned and disinfected.

For stores and office buildings ordering distancing floor stickers, Boliew includes extras. They stick to carpets surprisingly well, but the extras are for when they begin to peel up. One reason the stickers are lasting so long, Boliew said, may be limited traffic in many buildings especially offices.

Boliew said he doesn't like to talk about business going well while others are suffering. But he is providing signs and barriers that will help get us through the pandemic more safely.

Fast Signs is located at 2629 Oak Lawn Ave. 214-526-2329.



JESUS, From Page 8

his story, he's not attacking the school for expelling him; he just wants to hold them accountable. He was, he believes, kicked out to be made an example of.

"If another queer kid comes out [at Covenant Christian Academy], I'm scared for them," he said, knowing not everyone's family would be as supportive as his has been. And the school, he added, definitely wants gay students not to be as vocal about it as he has been.

Devin said this week that his first days at his new school — a public high school — have been odd. He's taking five advanced placement classes this semester and has to make up a few classes his old school doesn't offer — all on line.

"I've grown up in this environment," he said of Covenant Christian Academy, acknowledging he will miss the school. "I have relationships with teachers [there that] I'll always cherish. They're genuinely good people who love and accept me."

Devin also acknowledged that this isn't the first time this has happened to queer kids at the school.

But he hopes that telling his story



will start a dialogue at Covenant and hopefully help protect the next one who comes out. His sister Benta also spoke of LGBTQ students that were kicked out or asked to leave Covenant when she attended the school.

"They want kids to hide the fact they're gay," she said, adding that since this happened, other alumni of the school have emailed her to confirm that they were expelled after coming out or that they came out after they graduated because they were afraid of what would happen

to them if they did so while attending Covenant Christian.

Benta said she is shocked at how well her brother is taking his expulsion, saying that Devin is "strong minded." Still, she said, she isn't attacking the school either.

"They impacted our lives in a positive way," Benta said. "But the school has a history of not handling situations like this well. We're not going to hide like the others did."

She was more exasperated that the

school was stopping her brother — who had never lied, cheated, stolen or done anything dishonest — from receiving an education. "I was the one who was always trying to get him to do stuff," she said. "He'd follow the rules. He's a leader."

Devin, for his part, said he hopes that by speaking out about what happened to him, he can help start a dialog that will open minds and open doors and hopefully keep the same thing from happening to the next queer student.

"They don't talk about it in a way that gives LGBTQ kids any hope in their relationship with Christ," Devin said of the school. "I want to call people to a higher standard than I've seen."

Meanwhile, Devin started his senior year at a public high school and hopes to get a jump on college with high scores on his AP exams. He plans to apply to Rutgers or UCLA for next year, but, he added, "Plans subject to change."

And as for Covenant Christian Academy, "I don't have any hate or hold a grudge. I know I'll end up fine." ■



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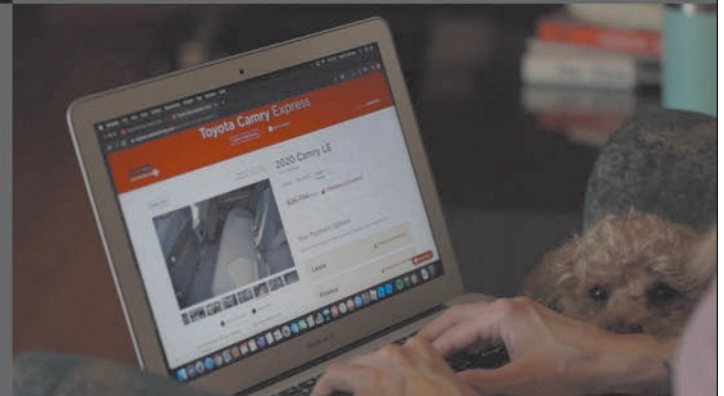


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youth involvement and leadership.

LGBTQ youth are having their futures debated before their very eyes, and some are too young to participate in voting. For example, the recent Supreme Court ruling that backs LGBTQ worker protections is a public display of support to youth who want to be free to express themselves in the workplace were publicly validated by a powerful institution. Public affirmation of an LGBTQ identity has positive impacts on youth.

At the same time, the ban on transgender people serving in the military has negative consequences for transgender youth who aspire to serve in the military. It is also important to note that the fight for racial equality also is a fight for LGBTQ equality because there are LGBTQ youth who are black and are people of color.

Since Donald Trump became president, his administration has been systematically dismantling many of the protections that were in place for LGBTQ people, including guidances put in place by the Department of Education to protect LGBTQ students — especially the transgender students — in schools.

How are those changes reflecting on LGBTQ students? These changes play a significant role in whether or not transgender students can fully engage in school activities, particularly activities that are separated by gender. Systematic exclusion has negative consequences for the health and mental health for transgender students.

Being denied the opportunity to play on a sports team that is in line with the gender that you identify with or being denied access to using the bathroom facilities that align with their gender identity puts transgender and gender non-conforming students at risk of not feeling like they are able to fully and meaningfully engage in school, which can lead to academic difficulty, skipping school or dropping out of school, and that would prevent them from accessing a formal education which is mandated by law.

In the past six months, our country has been in and out of lockdown thanks to the COVID-19 epidemic. What kind of effect is it having on LGBTQ youth to be locked down in home/family situations that are not supportive and were

already a source of stress for many? What can they do to cope with that stress? It is important to note that many LGBTQ youth are living on the streets because their families are not supportive of their sexual orientation or gender identity. So LGBTQ youth are over-represented among youth experiencing homelessness.

Youth experiencing homelessness during the lockdown are incredibly vulnerable because they don't have a place to shelter in place, and their needs were not adequately being met before the lockdown. So they are more at risk for negative outcomes during lockdowns.

There are also some LGBTQ youth who are not out to family that they are living with, so they are not able to connect with people in their networks who affirm their identities outside of the home, which is detrimental to their well being. Continued concealment in the home without being able to interact with their support network is isolating.

Connecting with supportive online communities can be a way to cope with the stress of the isolation. Also, calling a support hotline if they feel like they are

a danger to themselves is also a helpful strategy.

What can non-celebrity LGBTQ adults do to help ease the stress and anxiety and provide positive influence? Adults can listen, provide access to resources, be involved in their lives, advocate for LGBTQ policy protections at all levels, express interest in meeting LGBTQ friends and people they are dating, read and educate themselves about LGBTQ issues, encourage them to do things they enjoy. Just don't put the burden on LGBTQ youth to educate you.

Maurice Gattis is an associate professor at VCU after serving in 2019-20 as iCubed visiting scholar in the Intersections in the Lives of LGBTQIA+ Communities Core. He has engaged in research activities regarding health disparities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender populations, homelessness and adolescent risk behaviors in the United States and Canada. His primary work focuses on the role of contextual factors, such as family, peers, stigma and discrimination, on negative psychosocial outcomes such as mental health, substance use.



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■ commUNITYvoices

We don't know

So let's make the best of now

We are a good half a year into a pandemic that seems to have no end, and I feel compelled to share some thoughts. I am just sharing my thoughts, as everyone has experienced this “new normal” differently. Things have changed for all of us, in ways we couldn't have imagined when we shouted “Happy New Year” amidst the corny Barbara Walters “This is 2020” memes.

The disease itself is bad enough. It might kill you in a horrifying way — alone, unable to breathe on your own or even say goodbye to loved ones. Or you might get the virus and have mild symptoms, even none at all while unknowingly spreading it to others who won't be so lucky.

Or you might survive after a long and insanely expensive hospital stay, only to be released to go home with permanent lung damage and no good answer to the questions, “Am I OK now? Am I immune?”

Because we don't really know.

Our “leaders” have been, at best, ineffective and, at worst, criminal in their handling of this.

Each day, from around 4 p.m. to 5 p.m., Dallas and Tarrant Counties — among others — trot out the latest numbers detailing new COVID-19 cases and the latest numbers of those who died from the virus. But what do the numbers even mean? Are they accurate? What is the course of action? Are they getting better or worse?

We don't really know.

On Saturday, Aug. 15, Tarrant County reported 1,443 new cases. Is that an example of rampant and alarming community spread, or is it just the release of backlogged tests from overworked labs?

We don't know.

The percentage of positive tests is higher than we'd like to see. Is that because, at the beginning of the pandemic, healthy people were getting tested out of fear and an abundance of caution, and now, mostly symptomatic people and those with a known exposure are getting tested?



Leslie McMurray

Accidental Activist

tion of a virus. Look: The virus doesn't care who you are or how much money you make. It just seeks a nice, warm, moist place to set up shop — like your nose or mouth. If only there was some way to help prevent that from happening that was readily accessible and something everyone could use. You know, like something we could use to cover our faces. (Sarcasm intended, in case you didn't catch that.)

For the life of me, I just cannot comprehend how showing compassion or care for a fellow American's health and, ultimately, slowing or putting an end to this pandemic has become a political statement.

We are a nation on edge. We are at war with an invisible foe, and wars need leaders, strong generals to craft winning strategies. Instead we have a so-called leader who boasts of being able to identify an elephant in a picture book.

God help us all.

Probably the single biggest cause of the tension is that so much remains unknown. How do you plan when you may lose your job? Or worse?

Living in a constant state of fear is untenable. Even if you don't get sick, the virus can lay waste to your life. Job losses are at a level not seen since the Great Depression. Evictions have been postponed, but when protections expire, those evictions will have a cascading effect.

I don't have a solution, no more than anyone else does. All I can do is maybe develop a way to cope.

I'm one of the lucky ones: I still have

We don't know.

What do we know? We do know that matters have been made worse by the inexplicable politiciza-

a job, and so does my wife. But there are no guarantees that either one of us will still have those jobs in three months. Still, there's no reason to think we won't, so we are staying positive and living our lives.

But even the definition of “living our lives” has changed. We don't do much outside the house except care for our home. We seldom go out, and when we do we always wear face coverings — whether the mask is required or not, because it's required by me. We use hand sanitizer after shopping — always. We wash our hands a lot more.

I found one of the coping methods one day while brushing my teeth. There is a small bottle of perfume that I love. It's my favorite; it's called “Flow-er Bomb.” But I consider it expensive, so I haven't been wearing it. After all, I work from home, and my dogs could care less what I smell like.

But the other day, I spritzed some on, and I felt so pretty and so much more put together.

This pandemic has ended so many of my simple pleasures, like getting my nails done. Even though salons are taking precautions, I'm just not ready because so many customers won't follow the rules. So, I paint them myself now — and again, I do it to feel better.

None of us know what the future holds — the racial unrest screaming for change, a pandemic that has killed so many of our fellow Americans, an election is happening in just a few weeks, and a new school year has begun — and so much more.

As for me, I'm going to keep paying attention to the little things we take for granted, like enjoying the chance to spend more time with my three border collies. (We play Frisbee every day.)

After all, I may live to be 90, or then again, I may not see another Christmas. But when the time comes for me to check out, it would make me sad to leave this life with a perfectly full bottle of perfume.

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

'What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun? Or fester like a sore — and then run?'

— Langston Hughes

Making a dream reality

Queer leaders join forces to bring the goals of MLK, BLM and gender equality together

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Executive Editor
jones@dallasvoice.com

We tend to celebrate anniversaries in arbitrary increments of five years, so a 57th-year milestone might seem capricious. But for a group of devout leaders in North Texas, it could not be more timely.

On Aug. 28, 1963, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. led his historic March on Washington and from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial spoke four words that resonate even still, more than a half-century later: “I Have a Dream.” (The following year, he won the Nobel Peace Prize, largely as a result of that march.)

King imagined a dream of equality of men, which sadly has *remained* a dream for many American citizens, never more prevalent than during the summer of George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks, protests and an increasingly unhinged presidency. And what happens to a

dream deferred?

These are among the factors that led the Rev. Winner Laws to join other spiritual leaders in Dallas in organizing a virtual celebration of the March on Washington, set to launch online Aug. 28.

Laws, who is the congregational care minister for both the Cathedral of Hope and the small Park Cities congregation The Gathering: A Womanist Church, was spurred to action not only because of Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and others, but by the violence against several North Texas-based trans women of color this year.

“Darnell Williams [who runs the Coat of Colours group at COH] was the genesis,” Laws explains. “He thought we should recognize Martin Luther King and Black Lives Matter and transgender women. I said yes but wanted it to be a broader scope.”

Laws reached out to her colleagues in the spiritual community to gauge interest in what became “the vigil,” she received universal support. And it all came together quickly; the first meeting of the ad hoc committee, named Empowering Voices for Justice, was July

1; within eight weeks, an entire program was devised, including speakers ranging from ministers to teachers and authors, plus musical performances by the Turtle Creek Chorale, Voices of Hope, Denise Lee and more.

Laws specifically recruited participants who could all address the theme of the vigil, which was, in fact, not inspired by the “I Have a Dream” speech but by King’s earlier “Letter from Birmingham Jail” and his admonition that “The arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice.” (The phrase is often attributed to King, and he employed it multiple times, but it predates him by a century.)

“I wanted Carmarion Anderson, who is transgender, to speak using her voice [addressing] what the arc of justice means,” Laws says. “We wanted to address millennials, so minister Leah Jordan is going to shine a light on the millennial viewpoint. And Ray Jordan is our moderator and throughout the program will bring in historical points of view.”

The vigil, Laws feels, is sadly necessary at this time in our history.

“We recognize that the dream has not been realized and certain injustices are still occurring. It is going to take all of us to make it happen. So many people just focus on the ‘I Have a Dream’ speech, but a dream takes work! Some of us got so far, but we still have a long way to go, especially in response to police violence. We wanted to bring together a program that would highlight on a spiritual note, a community note, that we all are acceptable from the viewpoint of God and that we should all live equally, regardless of race or gender. So we still have a lot of work to do.”

The program, which will stream beginning Aug. 28, will feature the following speakers: Ray Jordan, Darnell Williams, Leah Jordan, Alyce McKenzie, Carmarion Anderson, Carolyn Helsel and Will Horn; and will feature musical performances from Turtle Creek Chorale, Voices of Hope, New Texas Symphony Orchestra, Living Faith Community Church Choir, Denise Lee, the Douglas Family and Roscoe Compton.

The vigil can be viewed at LivingHopeServices.org/evfjustice. Donations may be made via CashApp to \$LivingHopeServices.

Woman in the mirror

Kamala Harris' timely memoir offers insight into the historic vice presidential candidate

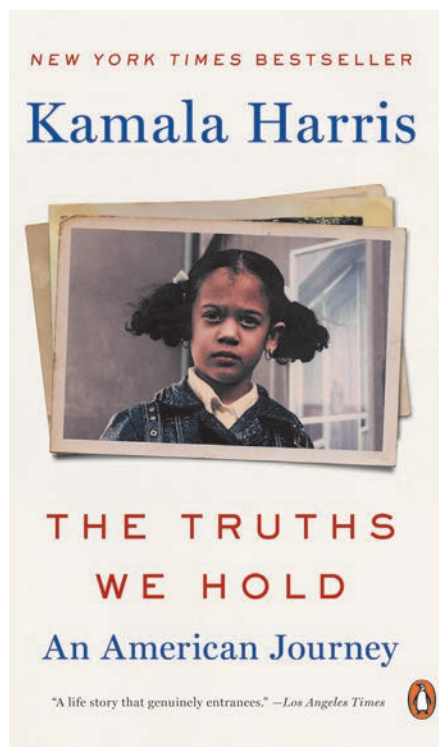
***The Truths We Hold: An American Journey* by Kamala Harris (Penguin Books 2020) \$18 (paperback); 336 pp.**

At first, it seems spontaneous: Parents who enjoy their interests naturally display those passions to small children who are dragged along for the ride. The child observes and absorbs until one day, the parent's interest becomes the child's obsession. And that's how a politician is made.

Supporters can almost see the trajectory in the history: Kamala Harris' parents, both highly-educated immigrants, instilled a sense of independence in their daughter, and both remained supportive of her choices, even as they divorced. Harris' mother, especially, gave Kamala lessons in strength and activism through an upper-middle-class childhood with ballet and piano lessons alongside marches and protests.

Says Harris of her mother, a breast cancer researcher, "she was determined to make sure we [Harris and her sister] would grow into confident, proud Black women." Harris describes her community — the women and men who helped raise and educate her — with obvious affection, saying that "the seed was planted very early on," and she knew that she wanted to be a lawyer and to make a difference in the lives of others. "When activists came marching and banging on the doors," she writes. "I wanted to be on the other side to let them in."

By the time Harris had finished law school, her sights were set on working "for the people." She focused on the prosecution of child molesters, sexual predators and rapists. On her way up the career ladder, she continued to advocate for the poor, for women and children and for the rights of LGBTQ people and immigrants. She worked for the reduction of recidivism, for Americans in need of health care and for consumers and homeowners. Writes Harris, "In the years to come with all the challenges to come, we cannot lose sight of who we are and who we can be."



As biographies by famous people go, *The Truths We Hold* is a refreshing surprise, in that there's very little look-at-me name-dropping. The newly-minted vice presidential candidate mentions people because of work or family ties, not to impress. She also writes of her friendship with Beau Biden, late son of her running mate.

The other interesting thing about this memoir is that readers will not see laid-out plans for the future: Remember, this book was likely written long before the debates, the convention, COVID. Harris had no crystal ball. Instead of plainly-stated plans, what she offers is a collection of ideas and viewpoints and stories. Readers are left to see passions between the lines and can draw their own conclusions.

Aside from this, there's plenty of biography which, again, is not filled with esoteric names-and-dates but with things that are relevant to the story of who Harris is and how she sees this country. That makes *The Truths We Hold* easy to read, if not a bit long in the achievement department, but not uninteresting. If you'd like to know more about the woman who may sit in the vice president's chair next January, read it now.

— Terri Schlichenmeyer



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The mists of Avalon

Toyota's 2020 Avalon TRD is seductively racy

CASEY WILLIAMS | Auto Reviewer
autocasey@aol.com

I have to confess: I sometimes look longingly at large, full-size sedans and think, "Wouldn't that be really cool slammed to the ground, dressed up with a spoiler and tuned to tame two-lane backroads?" Am I crazy? Probably, but at least somebody at Toyota was listening to my crazy wishes. They took the grandma-ready Avalon, sent it through its in-house tuners at TRD and came back with this fly ride. Get onboard the 2020 Toyota Avalon TRD.

Those last three initials stand for "Toyota Racing Development," and our Avalon looks pretty racy with its piano black mesh grille, black spoiler, aero kit, black 19-in. TRD wheels and red brake calipers peeking through. Around back, check the dual exhaust tips, diffuser and black decklid spoiler. The Avalon already has sleek lines and elegant body sculpting, but takes on a much more menacing attitude in TRD trim. To some, the black ground affects



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turboschargers and all-wheel-drive to conjure 400 horsepower and traction to strangle pavement. But that's just me dreamin' because I appreciate efficient fuel economy ratings of 22/31-MPG city/highway.

Saying the Avalon was developed for racing may be a track too far, but engineers did commit themselves to amping up the big sedan's performance. They started by lowering the car 0.6 in., stiffening the suspension and enlarging the standard XSE's 12-in. front brake rotors to 12.9-in. They went further by

CON TRD
er V6. 301
31 mpg city/
tested price:
\$45,394.

The Avalon TRD is far from a sports car, but it seduces drivers with a chassis that balances handling and comfort, enough power to slip it down the road and interior accommodations on par with legit luxury cars. Rear legroom and luggage space embarrass some crossovers. Toyota could have created an even more extreme version of the Avalon TRD, and I won't cry if they add

A detailed view of the front interior of a Toyota Camry. The steering wheel is black with a textured grip and features the Toyota emblem in the center. Behind the wheel, the instrument cluster includes a tachometer and a speedometer. To the right, a large infotainment screen displays various vehicle functions. Below the screen is a center console with a gear shifter and handbrake. The driver's side door panel shows controls for windows and mirrors. The overall design is modern and sleek.

power and AWD, but this is a pretty cool car that should do its job of drawing younger drivers into Toyota's sedan fold.

So, let's consider price. The Avalon starts at \$35,875 while our TRD came

to \$45,394 — a pretty good value for all the car offers. Competitors include the Volkswagen Passat, Chrysler 300, Dodge Charger, Kia Cadenza and Honda Accord Sport. ■

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Ask Howard

How to do the wrong thing right

Let's just call it what it is: The Lost Summer. Rona, I am so tired of you, bitch. Me and the world. My readers, particularly, during August's ennui need a breather from your never-ending, Machiavellian malevolence. Just a mask-free respite, poolside, would be nice — a paper parasol in one hand, a tangy cherry Sno-Cone in the other, an accordion opera fan of faded marabou feathers to point at beefcakes' buttocks: "Grrrrrl, there's my next husband!" Better take heed, COVID — when even drama queens require a reprieve from your daily, ever-rising death tolls of second waves and third waves, with the living going hungrier, citizens getting angrier and victims becoming victimized, you *know* their candy floss wigs have finally hit the fan like flamingos sucked through a jet engine!

I'm hardly alone in noticing there's a frazzled apathy in the air, a sort of malaise of the soul. Not defeatism so much as nihilism. Not quite baleful depression yet, but more serious than mere ennui — an inability to do anything that's seemingly going to make a difference for the better has settled over us like miasma. Through the grapevine, one hears of gold-star gay parties (code for tina-fueled orgies) in private homes (masks must be left at the door) echoing those meretriciously secretive "seroconversion" parties during the late '80s and '90s; after all, with no cure in sight, along with a guaranteed agonizing death, why not just join "the club" and get it over with while young, still, at least?

I see Rona conjuring similar black arts' magic, albeit, much more slowly and sinisterly. She intends to turn the whole planet into a lunatic asylum — we all know now that nothing's going back to "normal" again. But what's to replace our world of six months ago, has yet to be seen. So, bois, it's anybody's game at this point in time. "Awaken, Kundalini!" I say, and let's just get all New-Agey Aquarius right to it.

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Dear Howard: Is there really such a thing as love at first sight? Last spring, just before lockdown and the campus closed, I met a fellow college freshman my same age. The second our eyes locked, I saw into his soul and matter-of-fact nodded to myself, "Oh, so this is the man I'm marrying?" Thing is, though, like everybody else trying to cover tuition these days whose family can't help out, I'm havin' to sugarbaby on the side (but then so does he and half our entire student body; there's no stigma attached to it anymore). None of us feel like we're sex workers or escorting per se, and I know it's not supposed to happen — falling head over heels in love — considering both of us first have obligations to men old enough to be our fathers, but... can it happen? — **E.O.E.**

Dear Everyman On Earth: Son, like you said, you're just doing what you must in this batshit new world to keep from drowning; moreover, your sugar daddy's no idiot. He knows you're his but temporarily, that you'll move on following graduation to better and bigger things, with opportunities at making enough money to survive on your own, if not even flourish, debt free! Are you asking me if the laws of physics can account for two sugar babies falling in love at first glance? Can intuition count on it? What is this nonsense, you ask of me, about intuitiveness versus personal endangerment of the soul? Bottom line: Yes, eternal love at first sight really does exist. You can count on it. Bet the farm, your bottom dollar and Mama's life, too. But whatever you do, dropping out of college is not an option. Hey, it's just a dick, slick. I only wish that being a sugar baby was a viable alternative to waiting tables for tuition when I was your age, back in the prehistoric days of no cell phones, computers or the internet.

Dear Howard: During my outdoor morning meditations, mosquitoes have begun landing just above my eyebrows, on my third eye, and, naturally, sucking out my own blood — almost like psychic vampires lured to my expanding energies! My head begins itching, which then leads to my giggling like the proverbial silly schoolgirl. Could a chakra opening, or auric field expansion adjusting to my higher level of enlightenment, result in a physical sensation such as itching, sweating or even cooling of the skin? Anybody else ever experience physical sensations during just their routine morning meditations? Do itches ignite superstition? Or do they make for just a "funny story" to tell one's transcendental meditations instructor? — **Virgin Jay**

Dear Va-Jay-Jay: And to think Rona passed over you entirely? Are the hallucinogens you're imbibing actually pharmaceutically-dispensed, or does your transcendental meditations "instructor" glean them from an alley? Our new Aquarian Age is certainly dawning with "enlightenment" nonetheless, eh? Why, a veritable wormhole must have opened up for you to radiantly see through to the nucleic core of your soul's inner chakra: I'm getting tingles! Who knew that but a single insect alighting upon the sweet skin of a mortal homo sapiens could send vibrations rippling across our galactic star fields, triggering a black hole implosion, sucking in the very parameters of the universe's furthest edges? Indeed, one's future — as foretold by just itches — are, quite literally, myriad: Purportedly, an itchy nose foretells of kissing a fool; itchy palms foretell of money coming your way; itchy feet foretell of a journey; an itchy neck foretells of illness; and an itchy scalp foretells of luck... or, most likely, lice. Howard's advice? Take it all with a grain of stardust, Jay. Still feelin' itchy now?

Dear Howard: I hadn't been on a plane since February, but my first grandchild, of my only child, was celebrating his first birthday last week, and I'd still not even met him yet. So, I said screw COVID-19. Screw this self-isolation bullshit, and hopped a plane for the heart of all snake pits, New York City, where I didn't have the heart to tell my son, Jack; but, the second I saw my grandchild, Eric, I knew something wasn't right with him. The kid doesn't look young. He looks old as I do, wrinkly and withered. Am I wrong, or isn't there some kind of weird affliction that causes young children to age at warp speed? I think my grandson has it. How do I delicately bring this up to Jack? —

M. Martin

Dear M&M: Hypochondrial tendencies do we suffer from ourselves, Martin? I highly doubt your grandchild is afflicted with progeria. Extremely rare, Hutchison-Gifford Progeria Syndrome is so scantily occurring, it's labeled as "uncountable" the likelihood of any child contracting it. True, it causes rapid aging in children, starting in the first two years of their life, to die of "old age" by puberty — a genetic mutation due (in hospital lingo) to an inexplicable "eradication of 50 amino acids near the C-terminus," whatever that is. Normally, levels of the genetic protein, progerin, increase in the body human by 3 percent a year; hence, why we only look 3 percent older from one year to the next. Most likely, M&M, your son simply sired a spectacularly hideous child. Bless his homely little heart.

Keep your masks on, boys, in public: Don't let Rona win.

— Howard Lewis Russell

Got a question about love, sex, etiquette or anything else Howard can offer his fractured take on? Email him at AskHoward@dallasvoice.com.

this week's solution

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Thrift Studio finally returns. Dwell with Dignity, the nonprofit that helps the disadvantaged live with sufficient furnishings, had to postpone its major annual fundraiser, Thrift Studio, earlier this spring because of you-know-why. But the event, in which designers of all kinds offer their sofas, art, rugs and more at deeply discounted prices, is finally going forward. It will kick off with a general admission preview party on Aug. 28, and continues its pop-up Mondays through Saturdays until Sept. 26. It's a great way to get faboo decor and do your part to assist the community. *The International on Turtle Creek, 150 Turtle Creek Blvd., ste. 207, in the Design District. Mondays–Saturdays, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. (except Labor Day). ThriftStudio.com.*



Dallas museums are all open (or about to be)! The pandemic has been torture for those of us who enjoy museums, but finally Dallas' museums have opened or are scheduled to. As of now, you can visit the Dallas Museum of Art, the Nasher Sculpture Center (pictured), the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum and the Museum of Geometric and MADI Art, with the African American Museum opening Sept. 8, the Crow Museum of Asian Art on Sept. 18, the Sixth Floor Museum opening mid-September and the Perot Museum of Nature and Science aiming for sometime in the fall. Start planning your return to civility.



OutFest brings L.A. gay film festival to Dallas (and the world). Film festivals continue to live online, which often means people outside the geography where a fest is usually based get a chance to experience their programming. That's the case with the L.A.-based OutFest, the queer film festival established in 1982. This year, a single festival-wide pass is available for about \$60, which grants you virtual access to more than 150 LGBTQ-themes features, documentaries and shorts. (\$20 "bundle" passes are also available.) *OutFest runs through Aug. 30. Sign up for passes and browse films at OutfestLA2020.com.*



Boyfriends out for a Sunday drive



Future is so bright, we gotta wear shades



Backpackin' it



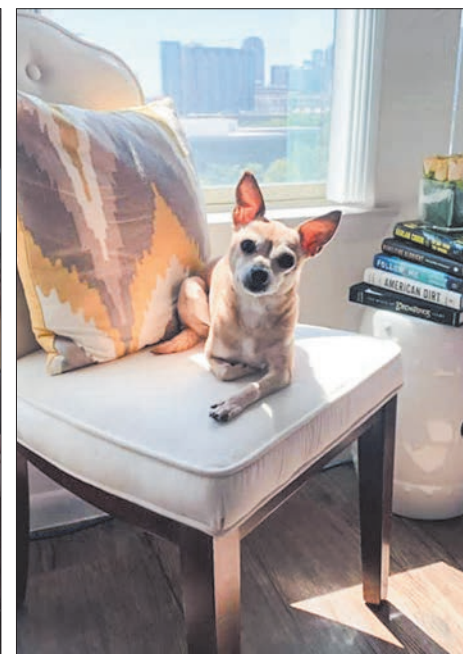
Matt celebrates his birthday at Bellini's



Cassie feeding Ruby the tortoise



About to lose a hand at Fossil Rim Wildlife Center



Chloe sunning herself



Masked up at Cedar Springs Tap House



Ogden and Larry take a trip to Bishop Arts



Tyson is excited for the election



Drew and Michael at the pool



Philip and Tino



Joe at Virgin Hotel

q-puzzle

No longer a youg man

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65					66						67			

Solution on Page 18

- Across
- 1 Bitters of Marc Antony’s girlfriend

5 Lions and Tigers and Bears

10 Slugger Ruth

14 Converse at Zoosk, e.g.

15 One of the little hooters

16 Red rind contents

17 Greek queen of heaven

18 Playground retort

19 Uses the tongue

20 Album of Tyler Glenn inspired by therapy

23 Warehouse platform

24 Sully, as a reputation

26 Socrates, for one

27 Ullmann of *Persona*

30 In the works

31 Ending for a fruity drink

32 Tools used on the can

35 Winter product prefix, in ads

36 Band of Tyler Glenn, who just came out

38 Sports car, briefly

41 Property claims

42 Beginning of *Hairspray*

46 Adriatic seaport

47 Shoreline recess

48 Feelings of hitting rock bottom

49 Like letters that aren’t straight

51 *Grease* director Kleiser

53 Deighton of spy thrillers

54 Classical guitar great

58 Bill written by Alice Paul

59 Tyler Glenn album inspired by his leaving the church

62 Rheinland rejection

63 How Homo sapiens walks

64 Give ___ of approval

65 Gas brand in Canada

66 Mapplethorpe models, often

67 Precious stones

13 Marilyn Monroe’s two big ones

21 Tearoom possibility

22 Will and Grace shared one

23 Org. that uses ball-washers

25 WWII area

27 Pinko’s hero

28 Gay-friendly tech company

29 Captain Nemo’s creator

33 Raid instigators at Stonewall Inn

34 Circumscribe

36 Polished part for a fem

37 Cut

38 Chisholm Trail town

39 Condom materials

40 Irish Bacon

43 Cough med that can coldcock you

44 Where they say “Ooh! Long!”

45 Lesbos and more

50 Suffix with homoerotic

52 Sex toy battery size

55 Richard Simmons, to fitness

56 Like a straight line, for short

57 What homophobe Pence is president of?

60 The Plastic ___ Band

61 Children’s game that’s touching
- Down
- 1 Essen exclamation

2 Matthew of Wyoming

3 One who has come out

4 Vibrator, to a sex toy shop

5 Say “Bottoms up!”

6 Olympic runner Ray

7 Trump portrayer Baldwin

8 Drag queen’s material, maybe

9 Brought up the rear?

10 Ask to be excused

11 Slow pieces, to Samuel Barber

12 Kenneth Anger’s *Hollywood* ___

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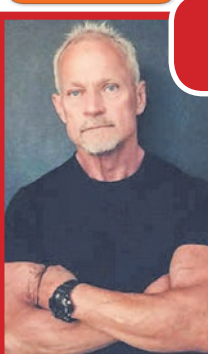
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