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87th Texas Legislature convenes

by David Taffet, Page 6

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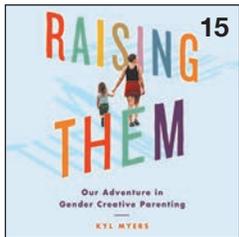
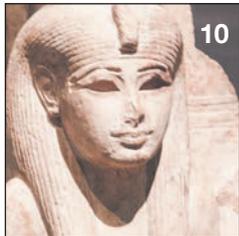
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Michael Champion, aka Sable Alexander, has died



Michael Champion

Entertainer and activist Michael Champion, aka Sable Alexander, passed away early Wednesday, Jan. 13 after a nearly three-month-long battle against COVID-19. We will share details on services when that information is available.

Champion is survived by his husband, entertainer and activist Bill Lindsey, aka Linze Serrell, and by a huge extended family of choice.

— Tammye Nash

on the basis of religion and sex.

The rule impacts HHS-supported social services ranging from foster care, adoption, HIV and STI prevention programs and refugee assistance to programs for seniors and adults and youth experiencing homelessness and many other public health services. It was formally published on Monday, Jan. 12, and is scheduled to take effect Feb. 11.

Sasha Buchert, senior attorney with Lambda Legal, said on Friday, Jan. 8, that the new rule is yet another blow in the Trump administration's "no-holds-barred and comprehensive assault on the health and well-being of LGBTQ people and everyone living with HIV, as well as on women, religious minorities and limited English speakers.

— Tammye Nash

HRC files brief in Tarrant County case

Human Rights Campaign filed an amicus brief in the case *Tarrant County Community College v. Sims*, which addresses the scope of protections against discrimination for LGBTQ workers under Texas state law. The case is in the Texas 5th Circuit Court of Appeals and was heard by a three-judge panel that included newly-elected Justice Dennise Garcia on Jan. 13.

This is the first opportunity for a Texas state appeals court to interpret the Texas Commission on Human Relations Act after last summer's U.S. Supreme Court decision *Bostock v. Clayton County* that determined discrimination

against employees on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by federal law.

The *Bostock* decision ruled on three separate cases that were heard together at the Supreme Court. One of them, *Altitude Express v. Zarda*, involved Dallas resident Donald Zarda.

Sections of Title VII apply to analogous provisions in the TCHRA. Last June, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Bostock* that Title VII's prohibition on sex discrimination includes discrimination based on sexual orientation or

gender identity. The brief requests that the court now recognize that Texas state law provides equivalent protections against discrimination in the workplace.

Currently, Texas is one of 27 states that does not have statewide employment, housing, or education non-discrimination statutes that explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity. State Rep. Jessica Gonzalez is filing legislation in this session of the Legislature that addresses those issues.

— David Taffet

Trump's HHS issues new rule permitting discrimination



Sasha Buchert

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on Thursday, Jan. 7, announced a new rule that will permit social service agencies and providers that receive HHS grant funding to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, as well as

pet of the week / BUMBLE



Meet **Bumble**, a 9-year-old gentle giant who came to the SPCA of Texas through a cruelty case. So as you

might expect, Bumble is a little timid at times. He's hoping to find a home where all 153 pounds of him can be loved and treasured. Bumble is a pretty chill guy and doesn't need much — other than a big dog bed and love — but he will need a quieter place to live where there won't be too much traffic. A single-family home with a fenced-in yard would be perfect, but this lovable mastiff is also happy to live in an apartment or town home, as long as there's a quiet place for him to walk around. Bumble is super friendly, but,

due to his past, the SPCA of Texas would like to have everyone in the family come to the meet-and-greet so Bumble can see if it's a good fit for him — that includes doggie siblings, so bring them along too! He is looking for a home with kids 12 and up; he doesn't want to accidentally knock over any little ones just by turning around. Bumble is a total sweetheart and looking for a quiet home and friendly people to slobber all over. He is neutered and up-to-date on all vaccinations. If you are a big dog lover and you're interested in adopting Bumble, please visit spca.org/adopt to learn more.

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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A weird day for the Texas Lege

Pandemic and security threats create highly restricted first day of the legislative session

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Safety guided the opening session of the Texas Legislature on Tuesday, Jan. 12, with precautions taken against the coronavirus as well as against threats from right-wing groups supporting President Trump. No one is allowed into the House of Representatives without a rapid COVID-19 test, and hundreds of state police are patrolling the Capitol.

The first sign anything was different than from a week prior, when a mob of Trump extremists attacked the U.S. Capitol during a joint session of Congress, was how many state police were walking around the Capitol grounds. Inside the state Capitol building, there were hundreds more.

On Monday, the officers were just getting to know the maze of hallways in the Capitol building, and rather than patrolling as an intimidating force, they were as friendly as any tourist walking through our awe-inspiring Capitol building for the first time. Especially confusing is the underground legislative office extension under the north Capitol grounds. In several cases, I gave officers directions.

On Tuesday, as all but a few legislators arrived for the opening session, Republican and Democratic lawmakers alike repeatedly greeted the troops filling the hallways, thanking them for being there. Both sides were united, agreeing there would be no repeat in Austin of what happened Jan. 6 in D.C.

Protests are a traditional part of the opening of the Texas Legislature. This year, though, I saw only two. On Monday, a small group gathered to press for the impeachment of Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton for his part in inciting the insurrection in Washington.

Paxton, already indicted on federal fraud charges and now under investiga-



The LGBT Legislative Caucus, from left, Reps. Celia Israel, Julie Johnson, Ann Johnson, Mary Gonzalez, Erin Zwiener and Jessica Gonzalez. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

tion for abuse of power, spoke at the Jan. 6 rally in D.C. before Trump. Speakers on the state Legislature's steps also cited Paxton's lawsuit to throw out votes in the presidential election in Pennsylvania. That suit was thrown out of court.

On Tuesday, several dozen protestors from a group called the Texas Freedom Coalition gathered outside the north entrance to the Capitol, calling for an end to coronavirus restrictions. They wanted no mandatory masks, no occupancy restrictions for restaurants and the opening of bars. Tougher restrictions are about to go into effect in parts of the state where 15 percent or more of hospitalizations are for COVID for seven consecutive days or more.

None of these protestors entered the Capitol to lobby their representatives and senators because everyone entering the building is required to wear a mask at all times.

Inside the Capitol, different representatives took different approaches to visitors. To protect their staffs, some kept their doors locked, allowing no one to enter. Some took visitors by appointment only. But since everyone who was

going into the House chamber had taken a coronavirus rapid test and everyone wore masks, others felt safe to welcome visitors into their offices.

Greetings in the hall were mostly tentative. But when I saw Rep. Mary Gonzalez, the founding member of the LGBT Legislative Caucus, she opened her arms and gave me a virtual hug from a distance. We talked a minute, and I told her I had my vaccine and booster. (I'm participating in a clinical trial for the AstraZeneca vaccine that's already been approved in several countries).

"And I had coronavirus," she replied.

So we gave each other the only actual hug I saw during my stay in Austin, and because it was out in a main hallway, we did get some horrified looks.

Dallas City Councilman Omar Narvaez was in Austin as the sole representative of the city. He described the opening session as "watching a Zoom meeting but in person."

Movement around the House floor was forbidden except by an individual who had to go up to the podium to speak. Normally, House members are allowed a guest on the floor for opening

session. This time, only new members were allowed a guest. So Rep. Jasmine Crockett, who is taking the seat formerly held by Mayor Eric Johnson, was the only Dallas County representative with visitors on the floor.

Usually, media has free run of the House floor. This time, all journalists were seated in a specified section in the balcony socially distanced sitting every other chair. Not more than 20 reporters sat in the section, and one pool video camera supplied TV footage to news stations throughout the state.

Only one session was held. Normally a morning session ends with the election of Speaker of the House, followed by the appointment of a committee to announce to the Senate that the House is ready to conduct business. That is usually followed by an afternoon session where the governor speaks.

This year, tradition was out the window. Only one short session was held.

Rep. Dade Phelan, R-Beaumont, was nominated as Speaker of the House. Rep. Nicole Collier, a Black Tarrant County Democrat, who said that Phelan had co-sponsored a bill of hers during her freshman term that would have helped Texans who lost their health insurance, seconded. Several other reps seconded without delivering speeches, including Rep. Erin Zwiener, D-Driftwood, a founding member of the LGBT Legislative Caucus.

All members of the Texas House vote for House speaker rather than just members of the majority party as happens in Washington. Of the 150 members, 143 voted for Phelan, and two voted no. The others were absent, including one who resigned.

As Phelan addressed the House, he showed he has a sense of humor: "To my six brothers and sisters," he said, "I am honestly Mom and Dad's favorite now."

While he said his agenda is protecting the public health and balancing the budget without hurting working families, Phelan joked that it took a pandemic for us to "finally figure out how to sell a margarita to go." Look for that to become permanent during this session.

Phelan also mentioned streamlining

Art illuminating life

Richard Curtin's painting started out as commentary on the Trump administration's lies about COVID-19; Jan. 6 gave it new meaning

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

Early last summer, when COVID-19 was still a "new" thing, artist Richard D. Curtin, formerly of Dallas, was invited by Chunk-ArtsStudio & Gallery host and founder Lori Griffin to participate in "a unique exhibition/installation" to be featured in the Fort Stockton gallery. It was to be a 3D installation called *Covid-19 2020*.

Starting Aug. 18, the public was able to see the 3D installation at any time by going to the venue, at 107 W. 1st St. in Fort Stockton and viewing pieces through the windows at any time. Also starting on Aug. 18, pieces were added weekly until the one-time walk-through opening on Sept. 4. The exhibit included Curtin's work — "This is their new Hoax," a 60-inch-by-65-inch latex and acrylic painting on canvas.

"In July, my response as an artist to Covid-19, initially, was that Donald J. Trump was a liar," Curtin said. "He lied about all of it. He had weaponized the truth since March."

His painting for the exhibit expressed that belief.

Curtin had, from the beginning, taken the pandemic very seriously. "I made a decision very early that my family would obey all guidelines. All social distancing requirements, mask wearing, stay at home orders and, just plain and simple, quarantined living."

When the shut down started, Curtin said, he would meet virtually with a group of artists he had been painting with every Tuesday and Thursday eve-



ning from 6-8 p.m. They agreed to photograph their work every after 15 minutes, after one hour and after two hours when the work was finished. They then shared their photos with each other via a Facebook group page.

Thus was born The Quarentini Painters, a group that started with five and is still painting together. Now, Curtin said, the group has "a couple of dozen people" following it, and the group is growing.

"As a gay artist, I approach many of the topics with that in mind, portraits of my partner, drag queens — my main focus for portraits — our animals and, in general, my life," Curtin explained. "I feel it so important as not only a gay artist, but as a gay Dallasite, a gay Texan that our collective voices be heard, even through art."

"We are being attacked every day by [the Trump] administration," he continued. "And lies hurt us all! In July 2020, the number of lies that Donald J. Trump

had told was huge, and those lies were being called 'alternate facts.' Alternate facts? Lies! Call them lies!"

Curtin said he was "outraged" that Trump was not being called out more adamantly for his lies, that he was not being held accountable for his lies. "Why is this happening?" he wanted to know. "What has happened to truth?"

truth, reality and morality are also being divided.

"I feared for my equality. I feared for my safety," Curtin continued. "I feared that a virus, now weaponized, would kill me, my partner and his 94-year-old Mother that lives with us, just because people believed 'their rights' and 'their freedoms' were more important — because they had Jesus and Donald Trump on their side."

Curtin admitted, "I haven't had this much fear since the AIDS crisis in the '80s, when Ronald Reagan's apathy toward gay men and the AIDS crisis caused more death and created apathy and stalled awareness and treatment."

The COVID-19, 2020 exhibit came down in November. But Trump's "lies and his 'alternate facts' continued assaulting us every day," Curtin said. "The election has come and gone and the lies have gotten greater, more harmful and more egregious. But [the support from Trump] hasn't faltered either, and my sadness about his support has grown deeper."

"My own family is divided," he said. "I have a brother completely devoted to Donald Trump. And the virus has marched on and into my family. My oldest brother, living in Dearborn, Mich., contracted the virus just before Christmas. Fevers and extreme headaches — the virus moved into his lungs, and he moved into the hospital for treatment where he works. He was moved to CCU and talks began to move him to ICU and put him on a ventilator. He was not ventilated though and began to improve on anti-virals and steroids."

As his brother fought for his life thousands of miles away, Curtin said he was struck by "how helpless I was. I could offer nothing — very little support, except to answer the phone and talk to him — a 60-year-old man with no underlying conditions, an avid bike rider, now facing possible death."

"He was scared. I was scared," he said. "My brother and I are a lot alike — built the same and have our mother's weakest organ, our lungs! I am scared — scared of losing him, scared of the virus that would most likely kill me. I have underlying conditions that will make the virus hurt me greatly."

And where is the government? Too busy allowing a demi-god to lie to us and golf! Where are the vaccines? His ineptness has damaged the vaccine roll-out. Donald J. Trump continues to fail ALL of

Trump needed to be called out, and Curtin decided that his painting would do just that. So he created a painting that showed the White House in flames, surrounded by Trump's lies.

Then, at the September opening of the Covid-19, 2020 exhibit, Curtin's work evolved, and he documented that evolution on video.

"My name is Richard Curtin," he began. "I believe in science. I believe in truth. And Donald Trump has blood on his hands!" Then he turned, dipped his hands in red paint and "assaulted my painting with my blood-stained hands, leaving behind my blood-red hand prints on the fire-engulfed White House painting. The new title? 'Donald Trump has blood on his hands.'"

"Just like the installation has evolved and grown, so has my painting," he said. "How many people have to die for this administration to care? How about the GOP? We continue to be divided because

ART, Next Page



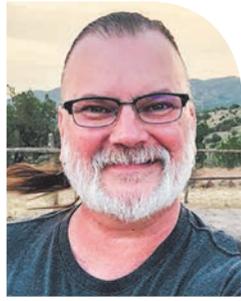
the American people, and he continues to fail as POTUS! Why doesn't everyone see it? Why?"

Even after losing his bid for re-election, Trump continued to lie, spreading baseless conspiracy theories that the election was "stolen" from him. He went so far as to call the Georgia Secretary of State, demanding that the man, a Republican, "find" the 11,000-plus votes necessary for Trump to have won that state.

Trump even encouraged his most extremist supporters to gather in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 6, the day Congress was set to meet in a joint session to count once again the Electoral College votes and certify Joe Biden's win. And on the morning of Jan. 6, Trump — along with his son, Donald Jr., lawyer Rudy Giuliani and U.S. Rep. Madison Cawthorne of North Carolina — spoke at a rally, basically inciting those followers to attack Congress in an effort to stop the certification of the vote. Five people, including Capitol Police Officer Brian Sicknick, were killed that day. A second Capitol Police officer committed suicide days later.

"The attack on our Capital was not a surprise. I knew it was coming," Curtin said. "I am angry! I am sad! Trump continues to take no responsibility, and none is given to him by Republicans! That is an outrage! What happened on Jan. 6, 2021, was treason, unAmerican, and anyone that has an argument defending it needs to be held accountable as well, including Ted Cruz. He must be forced to resign. After all, Al Franken resigned over a photograph.

"When will the hypocrisy end? Hypocrisy — the theme of the last four years."



Richard Curtin

That attack — being called insurrection and an attempted coup — suddenly gave new meaning to the painting Curtin had completed months before: "Now my painting conveys even more truth: The White House is covered with blood. Five people. Donald Trump has more blood on his hands, and he continues to lie. How is this happening? How are we ALL not appalled? How can any of this be supported?"

"It is time [Trump] is held accountable — not only to him, but his supporters. The insurrectionists must be found and held accountable. The White House is on fire, and Donald Trump has blood on his hands! Again!"

But there is hope. Curtin said his brother is home from the hospital, and while he continues to have to be on oxygen and a simple walk to the bathroom leaves him exhausted, he is alive, and he is healing. Vaccines against COVID-19 are being administered. A new president and vice president — the first woman VP — will be inaugurated on Jan. 20. Georgia voters have sent two new senators to Washington, putting the Senate in the hands of Democrats.

"Finally, we will see an administration that looks like our community — diverse," Curtin said. "I hope we will soon see a renewed interest in learning and higher education, but most of all I hope for a day of renewed morality where 'alternate facts' are just called lies, and wheretruth is vital and, once again, will set us free." ■



or updating the legal code. The only portion of the code that the legislators routinely omit from their biennial updates is Section 21.06, the state's sodomy law that was declared unconstitutional almost 20 years ago. This may be the session that the discriminatory wording will be removed from the books.

Finally, Gov. Greg Abbott spoke, and his speech was surprisingly short. He thanked law enforcement and spoke about the freedoms offered by the U.S. and Texas constitutions as well as getting Texans back to work. "Now, more than ever," he said, "the U.S. needs Texas to succeed."

Freshman Rep. Ann Johnson, a lesbian elected in November to serve a district that includes the Montrose neighborhood in Houston and who is the newest member of the LGBT Legislative caucus, called this a "wonderful start in a unique and historic time." She said she loved being part of the caucus, and, now that she's been sworn in, she will sign on to the omnibus non-discrimination bill Rep. Jessica Gonzalez, D-Dallas, was about to file.

Until committee assignments are made in about a week, legislators will meet to decide on House rules and will have plenty of time to file bills.

Zwiener said she filed legislation relating to marijuana decriminalization. Crockett said she was also concerned with removing pot from the list of controlled substances and would work on criminal justice reform.

Rep. Celia Israel, D-Austin, a founding member of the LGBT Legislative

Caucus, filed a bill to stop reparative therapy — commonly called anti-gay conversion therapy — from being used on minors. Last session, the bill had a hearing. Israel hopes to move it to the floor this session.

Mary Gonzalez filed her "Romeo and Juliet bill" that would equalize penalties for sex with a minor, which are currently more severe for a same-sex couple than an opposite-sex couple.

Both Phelan and Abbott were optimistic about having a successful session and



State police protecting the Capitol (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

cited last session's accomplishments especially in funding Texas public schools. Little got done in the 2017 session, which was mired down debating bathroom bills. That ended when Rep. Julie Johnson, D-Dallas, a founding member of the LGBT Legislative Caucus, defeated Rep. Matt Rinaldi, the author and a major proponent of the bathroom bill.

Johnson said she was optimistic about this being a successful session, which got off to a good bipartisan start. ■

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Technology for the win

As horrifying as the attack on our Capitol was, it is a comfort to know technology will hold them accountable

Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021, started out the same as any other day for me: Starbucks, a virtual meeting with my staff to discuss the day and then a few client calls. I was catching snippets of the news throughout the day on NPR because I had been following, with a growing unease, the stories of potential violence planned at the Capitol by radical right-wing supporters of President Donald Trump.

Trump, with his infinite penchant for petty delusion, had organized a “Stop The Steal” rally to coincide with the counting of the Electoral College votes in protest of the certification of Joseph R. Biden as the next president of the United States.

This rally was the culmination of months of lies regarding the outcome of the election, lies peddled to Trump supporters by the president himself, conservative media and GOP politicians like our very own Sen. Ted Cruz. It also came on the heels of a very illegal call that the president made to the Georgia Secretary of State, attempting to browbeat him into “finding” additional votes in a heinous, desperate effort to steal the election from Biden and hand it to Trump.

I was concerned that there may be a small faction of his supporters bent on causing trouble. Yet I was sure that there would be a police response equal to that of the heavy-handed clearing of protesters from Lafayette Square so that Trump could walk over to the St. John’s Episcopal Church for a photo op, holding a Bible in a contrived attempt to feign religiosity so that his evangelical supporters would assume he was one of them.

Fast forward to around 1 p.m. on Jan. 6, when I sat in stunned silence as THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES whipped his crowd of supporters, estimated to be around 10,000, into a frenzy with more lies. And then he directed them to march across to the Capitol with lines like, “Something’s wrong here. Something’s really wrong. Can’t have



Clint Thomson
Guest Contributor

going to, we’re going to walk down Pennsylvania Avenue — I love Pennsylvania Avenue — and we’re going to the Capitol, and we’re going to try and give... The Democrats are hopeless. They’re never voting for anything, not even one vote. But we’re going to try and give our Republicans, the weak ones, because the strong ones don’t need any of our help, we’re going to try and give them the kind of pride and boldness that they need to take back our country.”

We all know what happened next.

Trump supporters, many of them on a mission to find and kidnap or kill lawmakers, stormed the Capitol. They overwhelmed the understaffed police presence and roamed the halls of the Capitol for hours until sunset. These homegrown terrorists broke down Nancy Pelosi’s office door looking for her; they ransacked her office while young staffers cowered under a desk in another locked room inside her office. They stole her laptop.

Once the actual insurrection was put down and things began to calm, I reflected on the events of that day from the point of view of an information technology professional. And the national security implications of the event are stunning to me.

Firstly, many of our enemies, including Russia and China, have clandestine agents stationed in Washington, minutes from the Capitol. If I were one of them, and I was watching the news, I would have immediately headed down to the Capitol to blend in with the insurrectionists and enter the building. Once inside, it is plausible that I could have placed

happened. And we fight. We fight like Hell and if you don’t fight like Hell, you’re not going to have a country anymore.”

That and, “So we’re going to, we’re going to walk down Pennsylvania Avenue — I love Pennsylvania Avenue — and we’re going to the Capitol, and we’re going to try and give... The Democrats are hopeless. They’re never voting for anything, not even one vote. But we’re going to try and give our Republicans, the weak ones, because the strong ones don’t need any of our help, we’re going to try and give them the kind of pride and boldness that they need to take back our country.”

covert surveillance devices throughout the building, downloaded data from any machine using a USB drive or a more sophisticated device and possibly even connected directly into the network.

I would have had hours in the building to do as I liked.

There really is no telling what damage has been done to our national security as a result of this despicable act, all while our own citizens took selfies, put their feet on desks, broke mirrors and generally behaved like unruly children.

These citizens are traitors and terrorists for this behavior.

Thankfully, few if any of these insurrectionists were smart enough to leave their cell phones at home. And this bit of knowledge helped to lessen the sinking feeling in my stomach, because I know the Capitol has its own cellular infrastructure and its own WiFi network.

Because there is a vast underground complex below the Capitol, cellular signals do not penetrate well, so the government augments this with their own equipment and then connect directly to the cell providers with a hard line. All devices in range of the Capitol’s cellular network connect automatically and are logged. Anyone in or near the building at the time would be in the logs, and it is a simple matter for the government to get those records from the providers.

In addition to that, WiFi networks today have location analytics built into them which use WiFi Triangulation and Bluetooth Beacons to track a device’s location — down to centimeters in some instances.

This data — along with secret technology that the government most certainly has that we do not have in the private sector — assures me that not one person who was at the Capitol building that day will escape prosecution.

The long arm of the law may not be as swift as you may want in this instance, but it will get everyone in the end. As they say in Las Vegas, the house always wins.

These crimes cannot go unanswered at the peril of our democracy, and they will not. Hundreds will feel the might of the United States government and, by extension, the citizenry for which it works. ■

Clint Thomson is an informational technology professional and managing member of Celeretec, a Dallas IT company.

Fit for a queen

Artifacts from the tomb of Nefertari on exhibit at Kimbell Museum

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Queen Nefertari's Egypt, now on display at the Kimbell Museum in Fort Worth, explores the role of women in the New Kingdom — and that role is surprising for a society that existed more than 3,000 years ago.

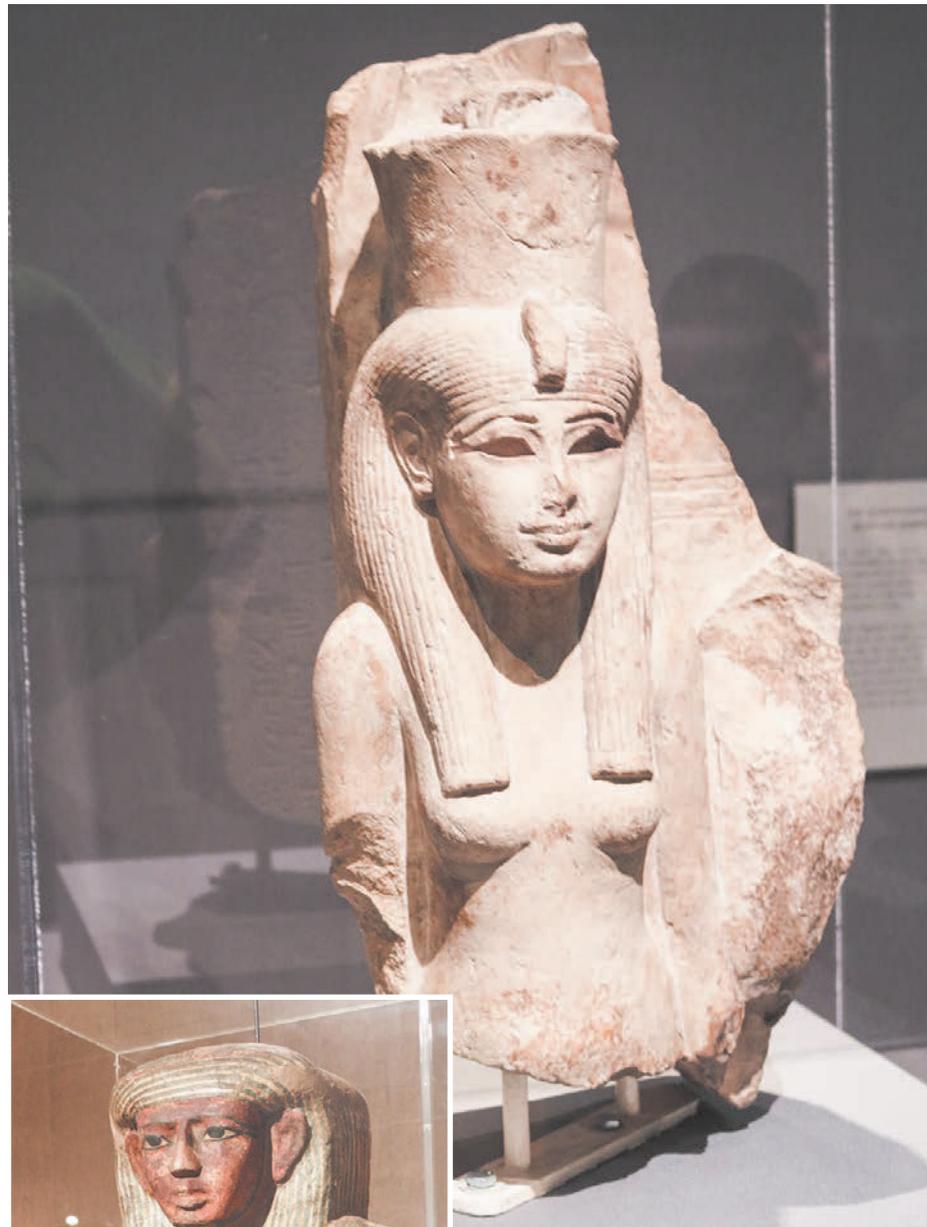
Under Egyptian law then, women were considered equal. Through artifacts that are surprisingly well preserved, we learn that women were allowed to own property, own businesses and bring cases to court. In Texas, a woman couldn't own property without her husband's permission well into the 1970s.

And Egyptian women in the New Kingdom could serve as temple priestesses, something still denied women in many denominations today.

Of course, although women in ancient Egypt could do these things, their role more often was to run the house and raise the kids. While women were considered equal under law, pharaohs married multiple wives to ensure having heirs and a successor as well as a symbol of their wealth. Royal women lived separately in the Royal Women's Palace.

Nefertari, which means "beautiful companion," was the favorite wife of King Ramesses II, who ruled from 1279-1213 BCE. Little was known about Nefertari until the early 1900s when her tomb was discovered. Artifacts displayed in this exhibit including stela, statues, sarcophagi, jewelry and more come from the Museo Egizio in Turin, Italy, whose director in 1904 discovered the tomb.

The reign of Ramesses II was during Egypt's most prosperous period, and Ramesses II was the most prolific builder in Egyptian history. The queen's elaborate tomb was designed to help guide his beloved queen through the netherworld and into the afterlife. But



Goddess Mut, above, Sarcophagus, left and Stela above right

hieroglyphs and artifacts also shed light on daily life during this prosperous period of Egyptian life.

Pharaohs were considered incarnations of the son of Ra, the sun god, and only living on earth temporarily. During their lives, they built temples to the gods and monuments to immortalize themselves as they became gods in the afterlife. Their queens were buried in the Valley of the Queens.

On exhibit is a model of Nefertari's tomb built shortly after the actual tomb was discovered. Extensive paintings throughout the tomb illustrate the queen's journey as she would work her way to be with Osiris, the god of fertili-

ty, agriculture and the afterlife.

The treasures exhibited come from the upper antechamber and the lower burial chamber. The items were placed in the tomb for Nefertari to use in the afterlife. That included jewelry, furniture, 34 wooden shabtis, oils, a pair of mummified knees and a granite sarcophagus.

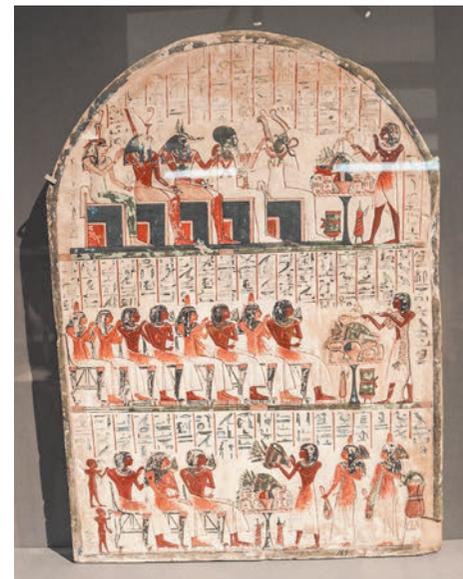
Jewelry was made from a variety of materials, everything from precious stones and gold to shells and earthenware. Women wore jewelry to show status and to protect them from evil.

Shabtis are funerary figurines used throughout Egyptian history that were placed in tombs to act as servants for the dead. Although the collection of 34 shabti found with Nefertari is an impressive collection, there were probably originally hundreds, as found in other tombs.

A collection of musical instruments found in the tomb give an idea of how music was part of the life of the Egyptian people. A harp, lute, cymbals and

LIFE+STYLE

art



drums were among the instruments used in religious music.

One of the most surprising artifacts on display is a pair of sandals made of woven palm leaves was found in the tomb. They're a woman's U.S. size 9 and compatible in size to the pair of preserved knees found.

Although researchers can't be sure, the style of sandal indicates they may have belonged to Nefertari herself. On one drawing in the tomb is a picture of the queen wearing a similar pair.

Nefertari was an educated woman who could read and write the system of hieroglyphics used in ancient Egyptian. That's more of a feat than just learning an alphabet. Hieroglyphs are a complicated system of writing using more than 1,000 symbols. Some of those signs had multiple meanings and could either stand for a sound or for an entire word. An example shown in the exhibit is the owl, which could either be the bird or it could be the letter M.

The final room in the exhibit is a display of sarcophagi. Inside the outer granite coffin is a wooden coffin that encases the mummy on a wooden board. After more than 3,000 years, it was fascinating to see the stone enclosure and the wooden case to be so well preserved and still vibrantly colored.

Queen Nefertari's Egypt is on display at the Kimbell Museum, 3333 Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth on Tuesday-Sunday. Tickets are \$18. The museum isn't doing timed entry but is limiting the number of people who can enter at a time. The exhibit continues through March 14.

Neutral colors

Audio book on 'gender creative parenting' is fascinating but can wear a little thin

***Raising Them: Our Adventure in Gender Creative Parenting* by Kyl Myers (c.2020, Brilliance Audio); \$34.99. 6 discs, 7:18 in length.**

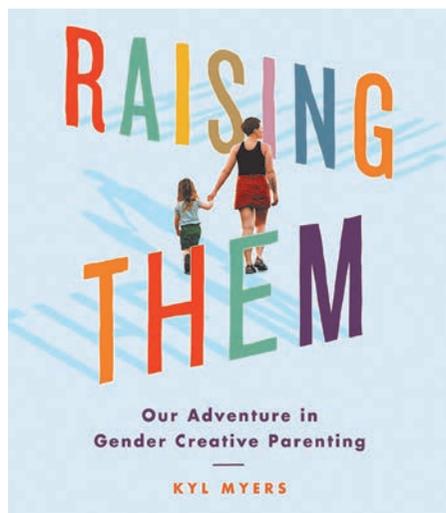
Pink or blue? When you're pregnant, everybody asks that question. What kind of clothing or toys will you require — dolls or trucks, pink or blue? They'll want to know about the gender reveal party and what kind of names you're considering. Do you want a boy or girl or, as in the new audiobook *Raising Them* by Kyl Myers, do you mind not knowing for a few years?

Long before she ever became a mother, even before she met and married her husband, Brent, Kyl Myers had thought about what she calls "gender creative parenting."

Myers identifies as queer, and she was somewhat of an activist. So she was pretty well-versed on a subject that asks why we, as a society, place emphasis on the chromosomes of an infant when physical, often intimate, body parts have nothing to do with simply being a child. Once Myers was pregnant, this became more than just something to think about, and she and her husband decided to raise their child gender-free.

They weren't the first to do so. In years past, other parents around the world went public with successful gender creative parenting. Still, it took plenty of determined pre-planning: Myers would deny knowledge of the baby's gender to anyone who didn't absolutely, genuinely need to know. That meant restricting diaper-duty, and it meant four grandparents who wouldn't know their grandchild's gender until the child was several months old.

Once Zoomer Coyote entered the world, there would be no pink or blue bassinet cards in the hospital nursery. Myers had to learn to find non-gendered infant and toddler clothing for her child, gender-neutral-hued toys for them to play with and items that



didn't scream "Boy!" or "Girl!" Later, Zoomer's daycare was "cool" with the neutrality, but strangers and even other parents were a challenge — and were nonetheless challenged to open their minds.

Raising Them will bring out a lot of emotions that will likely be dependent on which side of parenting you stand. It's intriguing, but exhausting, too chirpy and too, too sunny. It's also too precious by half, and the cute-Zoomer tales wear thin after a (very, very short) while.

And yet, the idea of giving your child time to know themselves is intriguing. Still, author Kyl Myers should be commended for not throwing in the towel with hurricane force. Indeed, her struggles were exactly what you might expect.

Although — particularly if you're expecting a baby — Myers may inspire you. Clearly, gender creative parenting involves work, vigilance and forethought, and while it's not for everyone, it's a compelling enough idea to stick in your mind like glue. You'll be convinced that it's worth a try, even if only sometimes.

And this: If you can't rest without knowing, Myers drops hints to soothe your boy-or-girl curiosity, but that's not the end of this story. No, this is a website-supported, mind-opening, ongoing tale for parents-to-be, or for anyone who wishes they'd been reared in a similar kind of household. That you? Read *Raising Them*, or you'll be blue. ■

— Terri Schlichenmeyer



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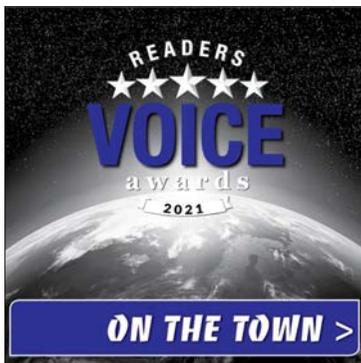
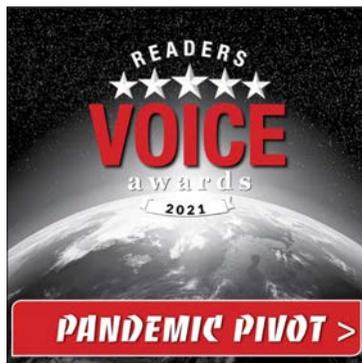
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FRI 01.15

The Rodeo Show, an exhibition featuring the work of Linda Blackburn, Rima Canaan Lee, Donna Howell-Sickles and Jo LeMay Rutledge, women artists who create work informed by Western culture, opens at Artspace One Eleven, 111 Hampton St. in Fort Worth. There will be a reception at the gallery on Jan. 30; the exhibit is on display through March 20. *Artspace One Eleven is open Wednesday-Friday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., and by appointment; to make an appointment email Art@Artspace111.com or call 817-692-3228.*

SAT 01.16

Dragapalooza, a concert film featuring drag entertainers Courtney Act, Derrick Barry, Rhea Litre, Trixie Mattel, Coco Montrese and Sharon Needles, singing live and backed by a band led by Grammy-nominated producer Chris Cox, streams live exclusively on MySongbird.com. *Livestream begins at 8 p.m.; tickets are on sale now at Shop.MySongbird.com and allowing access to the complete live-streamed show and 72-hour replay access. Use code PRIDE for \$5 off.*



WED 01.20

Celebrate the historic inauguration of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris from the comfort and safety of your own home with the LGBTQ Inaugural Ball: The Power of Unity, a virtual event featuring a special musical performance by Grammy, Tony and Emmy Award-winning entertainer and activist Billy Porter as well as other performers and speakers. *For more information and to register visit One.Bidpal.net/Unity/Welcome. Visit website for updates on specific times and guests.*

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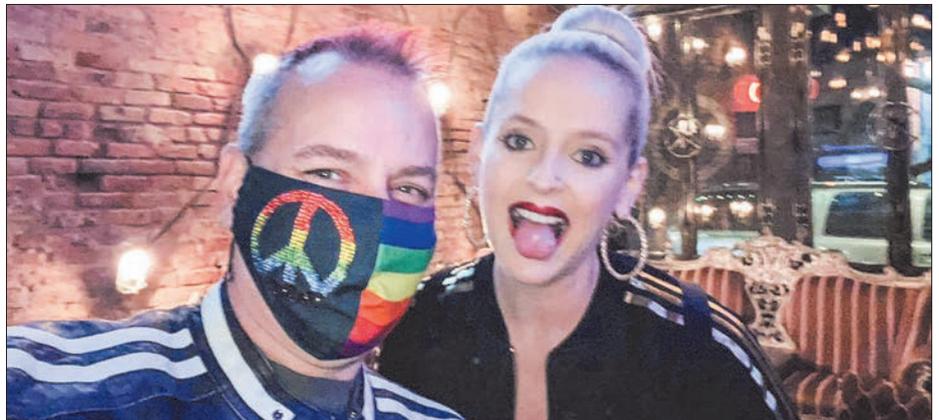
scene



Jeff checks out the snow



Bryan and Mark say "It's-a-boy!"



Peace, man



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Clear as a Bella

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Solution on Page 14

Across

- 1 Moist mounds
- 5 *A Delicate Balance* author
- 10 Cowhand's chow
- 14 James of *The African Queen* fame
- 15 A queen rules it, perhaps
- 16 Sultry Horne
- 17 Rednour, who wrote a femme's guide
- 18 One thousandth
- 19 "___ do anything better than you"
- 20 Bella Abzug portrayer in *Bella Bella*
- 23 Flynn role opposite Davis
- 24 It may bite
- 25 Sault ___ Marie
- 26 Employ a rubber
- 31 "You'll ___ Walk Alone"
- 32 Penetrating character for Bela Lugosi?
- 34 Beatty flick
- 35 Bella Abzug portrayer in *The Glorias*
- 37 Lit ___
- 39 Enjoyed Aspen, perhaps
- 40 Like Bernstein's paper

Down

- 42 What you can give it
- 43 South Beach lotion letters
- 46 Wearer of wax wings
- 48 Bellybutton type
- 50 Bella Abzug portrayer in *Mrs. America*
- 55 Soft cheese
- 56 From the top
- 57 Slightly
- 58 *East of ___*
- 59 Artist Arlene
- 60 Guitar of Shakespeare's day
- 61 "Methinks thou ___ protest too much"
- 62 Hank of hair
- 63 Look at a hottie in a bar

- 10 Sparkled like a Liberace outfit
- 11 Split end, for example
- 12 Never broadcast
- 13 Rainbow pennants at a pride parade, e.g.
- 21 Bring to bear
- 22 California map word
- 27 "Screwed again!"
- 28 Train that comes quickly
- 29 Region of Babylonia
- 30 Skip a syllable
- 32 All, for one
- 33 Gets the bottom line
- 35 Gender stereotypes
- 36 Spill the beans
- 37 Took on "Ev'ry Mountain"
- 38 Sitcom family name
- 41 Sonny and Cher, once
- 43 Michelangelo's David, e.g.
- 44 _Jesus Christ Superstar_ role
- 45 Word after bottom
- 47 *Designing Women* costar Jean
- 49 Mo of Arizona politics
- 51 Mold medium
- 52 Great review on Broadway
- 53 Practices B&D, e.g.
- 54 Lands End, and more

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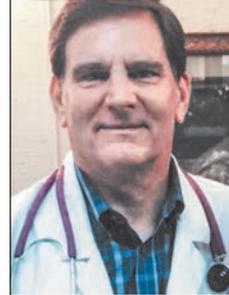
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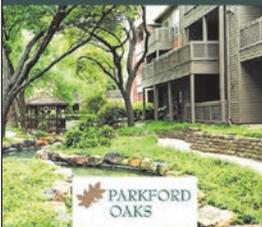
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