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| FREE | Friday, February 5, 2021



Confirmed

Senate gives Buttigieg bipartisan nod to Cabinet

by Chris Johnson, Page 6



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Texas GOP fires ex-gay Whitt

The Texas Republican Party has fired ex-gay Dallas resident Kevin Whitt, who was hired Nov. 20, 2020, as a field organizer, according to the Texas Tribune. Yes, the election was over, so we're not sure what he was hired to organize.

Whitt is the one who, in 2019, organized the protest against Drag Queen Story Hour at the Grauwylar branch library in Dallas. You remember that protest; it's the one where they showed up at the wrong library on the wrong day. Obviously not the most talented field organizer.

Whitt was fired after posting a video of himself recorded in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 6 speaking to, well, no one, claiming to be an ex-transgender, ex-drag queen, ex-prostitute who had been the victim of sexual abuse as a child. He claims he wasn't the victim of a reparative therapy scam; he just got invited to church and got saved.

What was he doing in D.C.? Why, taking part in the insurrection at the Capitol, of course. Although he was on the steps, he isn't accused of being among those who broke into the building.

While in D.C., he visited the pizzeria that's known for the Pizzagate conspiracy that alleged Democrats were running a child sex-trafficking ring out of the restaurant. In the pizzeria, he was shouting at employees that they were pedophiles and refused to leave when asked.

— David Taffet



Kevin Whitt

Deadline for city elections is Feb. 12

The deadline to file as a candidate in the May 1 municipal elections is Feb. 12.

In Dallas, three council members will hit term limits and can't run in this year's election: Mayor Pro Tem Adam Medrano, District 2; Lee Kleinman, District 11, and Jennifer Gates, District 13.

Medrano chairs the LGBT Task Force.

Two other gay incumbents — Chad West and Omar Narvaez — will run for re-election. At least two other LGBTQ candidates — Jonas Park and Leland Burk — are expected to qualify for the ballot.

— David Taffet

Vols needed for vaccination registration pop-ups

Dallas County Commissioner Elba Garcia, in conjunction with other elected officials and community leaders, continues to host pop-up registration sites for the COVID-19 vaccination. "It is important that business owners and community members understand that making the COVID-19 vaccine accessible to all of our residents in Dallas County is a top priority," said a press release from Garcia's office.

Pop-up registration sites have become "a great success" in helping communities register for the vaccine, and volunteers are welcome to help process registrations, the press release noted. Fluent bilingual volunteers with computer skills are especially needed.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer at a COVID-19 registration site can call Garcia's office at 214-653-6670.

— Tammye Nash

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Caring for a pet's pearly whites

Bienvenidos to my monthly column! I am super excited this time around, because this column marks my one year anniversary of contributing to Dallas Voice as a writer! It has been such an honor to be a part of this amazing publication, and

I look forward to continuing to be a part of it and, hopefully, continuing to change lives.

As some of you may know, February is National Pet Dental Health Month. Dental disease is one of the most common diseases in dogs and cats. In fact, it is so common that it is rare to see an adult dog or cat that does not have any signs of dental disease.

Dental disease includes much more than just tartar and gingivitis. With dental disease, you can also have evidence of bad breath, bone loss, tooth root exposure, abscesses, oral pain and teeth mobility among other issues.

The most important thing we can do as pet parents is to aid in preventing dental disease, and the gold standard prevention will continue to be brushing our babies' teeth. I do realize this is easier said than done, but I promise that if you approach it little by little, it can be done!



WOOF

Dr. Josh Talks Animals

First of all, I recommend visiting the Veterinary Oral Health Council's website (VOHC.org). This is the veterinary version of the American Dental Association, and this website offers a

list of products approved for oral care for dogs and cats. Choose a toothpaste and toothbrush from the VOHC list and start by offering just a small portion of toothpaste as a treat every day. Once your baby likes the taste of it, start touching a few of their teeth with the toothpaste on your finger once daily for about a week or so. Slowly continue to touch more and more teeth until you can touch almost all teeth without a fight. Once you've reached this point, then incorporate the toothbrush. Make sure to remember that you do not have to open their mouths at all,

as the insides of their teeth don't need to be brushed; only the outside of their teeth needs to be brushed. But do brush all the way to the back of their mouths. Make sure to take it slow and associate this with a good experience, as we want this to be a lifelong addition to the care and well being of our dogs and cats.

Now let us be realistic (LOL): Even when you use this approach, many dogs and cats will never let you do anything to their teeth. The good thing about toothpastes for dogs and cats is that they have enzymes that help break down the plaque, so even if you cannot brush their teeth, the toothpaste will still help break down some of the plaque. You can also give them dental treats to help with their oral health, and the VOHC website has a good list of the best products you can use.

Once they have tartar accumulated on their teeth, only an actual dental cleaning can get rid of that. These cleanings are usually performed once yearly and under anesthesia, as the pet needs to be still in order for a proper cleaning to be performed. Some dogs and cats, however, may need dental cleanings more or less frequently. These decisions can be made and addressed when your veterinarian performs an oral exam, and, as a veterinarian, I make

sure I have a detailed conversation with my clients, setting expectations and talking about options.

Our more mature babies can be fragile and we need to be cautious about these procedures, but it all starts with just a simple dental exam and a thorough conversation.

If you have a veterinary hospital for your baby, ask for a dental exam, and, if they recommend a dental cleaning, feel free to ask if they have any offer for the month of February. If you do not have a veterinarian or want to visit me in Addison, I will perform a thorough exam on your baby and share the details with you. I will also take my time to make sure all of your questions are addressed.

During the month of February, my hospital is offering a \$50 discount on the dental cleaning fee. We hope you will be able to visit us and have us help you in taking care of your baby's oral health.

I am so thankful to be able to share these columns with you, and I am truly looking forward to my continued collaboration with Dallas Voice. Until the next time, abrazos and stay safe!

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

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Senate confirms Buttigieg

Bipartisan vote marks historic first for LGBTQ community

CHRIS JOHNSON | Washington Blade
Courtesy of National LGBT Media Association

Pete Buttigieg was approved by the U.S. Senate on Tuesday, Feb. 2, as Secretary of Transportation, marking the first time an openly gay person has been confirmed to a Cabinet-level position — a long overdue achievement for the LGBTQ community.

The former South Bend mayor, nominated by President Biden after making history in the 2020 Democratic primary as an openly gay candidate, was confirmed on a bipartisan vote of 86-13.

The Democratic caucus was united in support for Buttigieg. Among the Republicans joining them were Texas Sen. John Cornyn as well as Joni Ernst of Iowa, Roger Wicker of Mississippi, John Kennedy of Louisiana and Rob Portman of Ohio.

Texas' senator, Ted Cruz, was among the 13 Republicans who voted against Buttigieg's confirmation. The others were Tom Cotton of Arkansas, Roger Marshall of Kansas, Rick Scott of Florida, Tommy Tuberville Alabama, Richard Shelby of Alabama, Josh Hawley of Missouri, Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee, Marco Rubio of Florida, Tim Scott of South Carolina, James Lankford of Oklahoma, Bill Hagerty of Tennessee and Bill Cassidy of Louisiana.

Many of the 13 — including Cruz — are considered likely 2024 Republican presidential contenders. Cruz, Hawley, Tuberville and Marshall were among those who objected to certifying the electoral college ballots, supporting Trump's lies that the 2020 election was "stolen" from him.

Headed to D.C.

With Tuesday's vote, Buttigieg and

his spouse, Chasten Buttigieg, will leave their lives in the Midwest to become Washington insiders in a script that could be a play on American filmography, "Mr. Buttigieg Goes to Washington."

Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., said on the Senate floor prior to the confirmation vote that Buttigieg is an "outstanding nominee" who has "demonstrated an impressive familiarity with our nation's entire transportation challenges," including the proposed gateway tunnel from New Jersey to New York City.

"I know that Mr. Buttigieg is committed to working with members from both sides to improve rail and transit, highways and more in rural communities, urban centers and everywhere in between," Schumer said. "I'm excited to call him 'Secretary Pete' by the end of the day."

The bipartisan vote reflects the confirmation hearing for Buttigieg, when he enjoyed a relatively breezy reception by lawmakers from both parties on the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation, with the exception of hostile questions from Cruz.

Buttigieg, during his testimony before the committee, said renewing America's infrastructure would be key to his approach as transportation secretary. Buttigieg also said any renewal of the transportation system would be sensitive to racial equity, which is consistent with President Biden's campaign pledge to tackle systemic racism.

Annise Parker, CEO of the LGBTQ Victory Institute, said in a statement that Buttigieg "shattered a centuries-old political barrier" by winning Senate confirmation to a Cabinet-level role as an openly gay person and doing so with bipartisan support.

"While his confirmation is historic, Pete is focused on the difficult task ahead," Parker said. "America is in desperate need of a revitalized transportation effort and his two terms as mayor provide the experience and perspective needed to propose bold solutions.



"America is fortunate to have Pete as their secretary of transportation."

Buttigieg won the historic designation amid a dispute over whether or not he should be considered the first openly gay person to serve in a Cabinet role considering Richard Grenell did serve as acting director of national intelligence, a Cabinet-level role, under Trump. Grenell, however, never sought nor won Senate confirmation for the position, although he was confirmed for his concurrent position as U.S. ambassador to Germany.

James Hormel, who became the first openly gay ambassador in U.S. history in 1999 after former President Clinton designated him in a recess appointment as U.S. ambassador to Luxembourg, said Buttigieg can rightfully claim the title of first openly gay Cabinet official because of the "acting" nature of Grenell's role, although the Trump White House had insisted the distinction belongs to Grenell.

Undisputedly, however, Buttigieg is the first openly gay person to win Senate confirmation specifically for a Cabinet-level position.

To be sure, other openly gay people have won Senate confirmation, just not for Cabinet-level roles. The first was Roberta Achtenberg, who was confirmed in 1993 as assistant secretary for the Department of Housing & Urban Development. The long list includes presidential appointees, ambassadors and judicial nominations, many of them for senior positions just shy of Cabinet-level roles.

Among them is Fred Hochberg, who served during the Obama years as head of the Export-Import Bank; Eric Fanning, confirmed as Secretary of the Army after a long battle in the Senate in 2016; and Patrick Bumatay, appointed by Trump to the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and now the highest-ranking out federal judge.

In many ways, Buttigieg's confirma-

tion as first openly gay person to a Cabinet-level position is a long overdue vote buttoning up the progress and historic confirmations the LGBTQ community has achieved in recent years.

Another Biden nominee, Rachel Levine, may soon achieve another first for the LGBTQ community if and when she is confirmed as assistant secretary of health and becomes the first openly transgender person to win Senate confirmation.

Praise for Buttigieg

Sen. Gary Peters, D-Mich., was among the senators who took to the Senate floor in support of Buttigieg, giving a shout-out to Chasten Buttigieg in the process: "As a Midwesterner, and as a husband to a Michigander who was born and raised in Traverse City, Secretary-designate Buttigieg fully recognizes the need to protect the Great Lakes," Peters said. "I agree with Mayor Pete's belief that he says, 'Good transportation policy can play no less a role than making possible the American Dream.'"

Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., also praised Buttigieg on the Senate floor and said she "enthusiastically" supports Buttigieg because he's up to facing the nation's transportation challenges.

"I look forward to the type of focus that he can give to the Department of Transportation," Cantwell added. "This area of our government, right now, needs to address the COVID crisis, it needs to help us plan for a better transportation system of the future and it needs to understand that this transportation infrastructure and investment in these changes in these sectors of cars and planes and passenger systems are all changing industries, and so our competitiveness will be at stake as well."

CFA holds caregiver conference

Alzheimer's Association joins Coalition for Aging LGBT for session on symptoms of and caring for those with dementia

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

I thought the main sign of Alzheimer's Disease was simply loss of memory and inability to recognize those around them. But my father had Alzheimer's, and he knew who I was until the morning he died.

I noticed something was wrong one day as we were driving from his home in Delray Beach, Fla., toward I-95 to go to Miami Beach, about 60 miles south. As we got on the interstate, my father got more nervous, and when we left Palm Beach County and entered Broward, he was almost in a panic. But once we were in Dade County, he started calming down.

As we crossed the causeway into Miami Beach, he was able to give me accurate directions to the building his mother lived in during the 1960s, a building he hadn't seen since.

On another outing, he directed me to a Hungarian restaurant in Fort Lauderdale that he hadn't been to in 50 years. The directions were accurate down to how many traffic lights before making a turn into the parking lot and where the entrance was. Once inside, he spoke to the waiters and ordered for us in fluent Hungarian, the language his family spoke at home in New Jersey until about the time he was about six.

Earlier that day, we had been to the Hard Rock Casino on the Seminole Reservation. He kept winning at the slot machines, but he kept walking off from the machines before taking his winnings. My pockets were becoming filled with coins as I chased behind him.

Panic; bad short-term memory but good long-term memory; mood swings; discomfort with unfamiliar surroundings — all signs of Alzheimer's.

Taking Care of Our Own is an LGBTQ caregiver conference that Coalition for Aging LGBT is presenting in partnership with the Alzheimer's Association the morning of Feb. 12.

Speakers will give information about

Alzheimer's Disease and dementia and its impact on the LGBTQ community and will offer a number of resources available to the community. For

Rob Emery eldercare professionals, a breakout session will be offered on cultural competency. Social workers and licensed professional counselors may receive 3.0 CEUs.

Rob Emery, one of the organizers and speakers at the conference, called eldercare an LGBTQ issue. Often, he said, care for an elderly parent is left to the LGBTQ child who is seen as the sibling without their own children to care for and therefore the one most able to provide care for their parents. Anecdotally, that even happens in families where the parents rejected their gay, lesbian or transgender child.

But Emery said he thinks there's another reason: LGBTQ people are compassionate and caring people. When we are rejected by our own families, we learn to form our own families of choice and care for each other. And that was never so true as during the AIDS crisis.

In assisted living facilities and nursing homes, LGBTQ people are often forced to go back into the closet to protect themselves from bullying, neglect or abuse. Emery said that's why CFA LGBT's work with senior living facilities is so important. If they're not interested in caring for LGBTQ people, the community needs to know that. If a facility wants to provide care for LGBTQ seniors and is working with the coalition to offer socially relevant programming, that's important information to know as well.

Emery said he thinks memory care facilities come under their own category. People who work in those homes are used to hearing just about anything, so when an LGBTQ person's filter is gone, and it isn't possible for them to mask who they are, there are rarely repercussions.



Rob Emery

LGBT OLDER ADULTS AND DEMENTIA

Age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer's disease

An estimated **2.7 million** LGBTQ people are over age 50

The LGBTQ community and Alzheimer's

Over 400,000 Texans are living with Alzheimer's, and the LGBTQ community is not immune. Nationwide, an estimated 7.4% of the LGBTQ older adult population is living with dementia, and that number will continue to climb. An estimated 2.7 million LGBTQ people are over the age of 50 — and age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer's disease.

If you are a caregiver of someone with Alzheimer's disease, you already know the difficulties you face on a day to day basis. Making long-term care and end-of-life care decisions can be emotional and difficult. Openly discussing these situations with the person with dementia while he or she is still able to do so can help ensure you understand his or her wishes and prevent stress or disagreements with family later on.

Due to the cognitive decline that occurs as a result of dementia, at some point, the individual will no longer be able to make medical and care decisions. Advance directives are legal documents that specify preferences regarding these decisions, including end-of-life care. Regardless of marital status, it is important for all couples to create advance directives to ensure that their wishes are followed. In the absence of advance directives, treatment and care decisions will be the responsibility of the person's spouse, or if the person is not married, a blood relative, usually a parent or sibling. This can't be stressed enough. Alzheimer's is the most expensive disease in the nation.

Fear of discrimination and a history of negative interactions with health care providers may be an obstacle to seeking care. For example, one survey found that 40% of LGBTQ older adult respondents say their providers don't know their sexual orientation. If you're anxious about seeing a doctor, a little research and preparation can help you feel more comfortable.

Check for referrals to health care providers from the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA.org) or an LGBTQ community center in your area. You can also visit alz.org/care to find helpful caregiving information and resources.

If you have questions or just need to talk with someone, you can call the 24/7 Alzheimer's Association helpline at 1-800-272-3900 where you will always be immediately connected with a caring person. For more information, please plan on attending The Dallas & Northeast and the Fort Worth North Central Texas Chapters of the Alzheimer's Association LGBTQ Alzheimer's Caregiver conference online,

Friday, February 12, 9:00 am – 12:30 pm.

Register at 1-800-272-3900 or visit www.tinyurl.com/AlzLGBTQ

LGBT people have greater health disparities, many of which are risk factors for dementia, including:

- Depression
- Obesity
- Alcohol and tobacco
- Lower rates of preventive screenings
- Cardiovascular disease
- HIV/AIDS



7.4%

of the lesbian, gay and bisexual older adult population is living with dementia



LGBT adults living with dementia face unique challenges in accessing support:

40%

report that their support networks have become smaller over time



34%

live alone



Up to 30%

experience lower rates of access to care

Alzheimer's is the most expensive disease in the nation

51% of LGBTQ older people report being very concerned about having enough money to live on



Fear of discrimination can delay access to care

40% say their health care providers don't know their sexual orientation



alzheimer's association

sage Advocacy & Services for LGBTQ Elders
We refuse to be invisible

Sources:
• Alzheimer's Association and SAGE, Issues Brief: LGBT and Dementia
• Jason Flatt, Ph.D., MPH, et al. Dementia Prevalence Among Sexual Minority Older Adults. Funder: U.S. National Institute on Aging
• Hanneke Rhodus-Meester, M.D., et al. Median Survival in Memory Clinic Cohort Is Short Even in Young Onset Dementia. Funder: Alzheimer Nederland Stichting Dronthe
• Yonnie Leung, Ph.D., et al. 100 Years and Beyond: Investigating the Prevalence of Dementia in Centenarians and Near Centenarians from 17 Population-Based Studies. Funder: The Dementia Momentum Initiative

Visit alz.org for additional information, support and resources.

CFA, Page 11

The perfect gift

A guide to Valentine's Day gifting in the time of COVID

Valentine's Day is now upon us, and it's going to be an unusual one for sure. But just because it's going to be different, doesn't mean it isn't going to be wonderful. Still, if everything going on is stifling your creative juices when it comes to the perfect gift, here are a few suggestions to get the ideas flowing again.

— Jenny Block

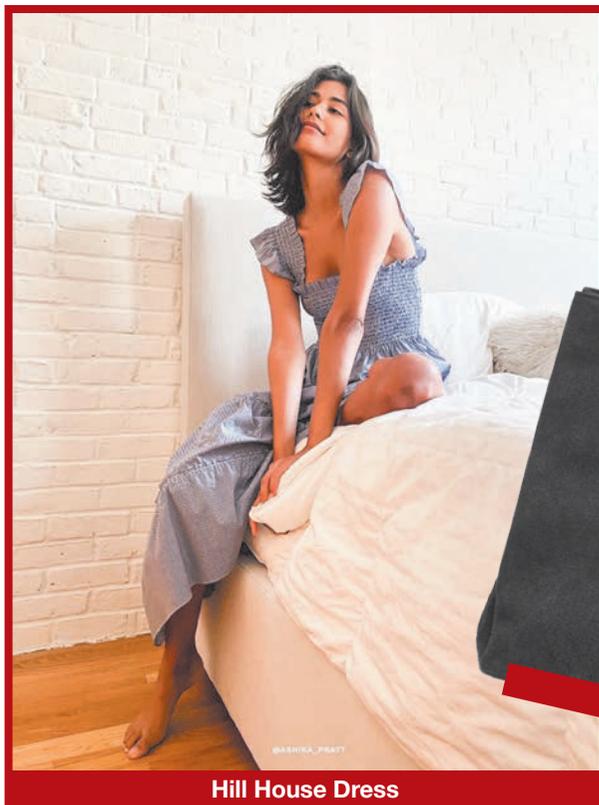
Dress the Part

These Nap Dresses from Hill House are so dreamy, seriously. The fabrics are so lovely and soft, and the dresses look and feel fabulous on — perfect for quarantine lounging in style. And the Bridgerton vibe is hard to resist. ... The Story Of makes the dreamiest of dresses out of the most heavenly fabrics for anyone who likes to feel like they're meandering in the tropics, even if the kitchen is as far as the apple of your eye is going these days.

Aryka Randall, filmmaker, author and founder of TTF Mag, has a line of sweatshirts and tees that are irresistible with bold statements as simple as TOMBOY and as FEMME. Trust me, you'll love them. A wrap from Bleusault is always a welcome gift because they are made of the softest fabric ever and can be worn in more ways than you'll ever get to try. Seeing as we're all still spending most of our time at home — or we should be, anyway — jeans that look like they're for going out but feel like they're for staying in are key. Enter Mott & Bow; your Valentine will swoon for sure.

Great Escape

When the one you dig does get to leave the building, if you want to give back and give a gift, the FEED Work Bag is fashionable, functionable and adored



Hill House Dress



FEED Work Bag

Wicked and Rent. It's going to be a spectacular season.

Team Quarantine

If you're looking for Valentine's gifts that are particularly practical during this peculiar time, Sanikind is an Earth-friendly hand-sanitizer with really cute refillable containers in lots of cute colors — complete with carabiner for easy attaching! For something that brings a little light in the darkness, And the People Stayed Home by Kitty O'Meara is an illustrated poem that is sure to do the trick.

All things beauty have been tricky to keep up with staying at home. Here are a few items that make it a little easier: the TatBrow Microblade Pen to whip those brows in shape; the Nailboo Dip Kit lets you give a manicure that's dangerously close to what you get at the salon, and Murad Intense recovery cream and rapid dark spot correcting serum will help keep your Valentine's skin from looking like it hasn't seen the inside of a spa for the last year. If a tan is part of your love's beauty routine, they're going to dig the Pure line from Bondi Sands with Hyaluronic Acid, Vitamin C and Vitamin E.

Fruit of the Vine

Sometimes the best gift is the simplest gift, like a lovely bottle of wine. Nice Wines is doing a Bouquet of Rosés that include a half-dozen impressive dry rosés all wrapped up with a pretty red bow. If you prefer your rose bubbly — or your bubbly a rose — Mionetto has a



Rumpl Puffy Blanket

by celebs. If getting chilly is your Valentine's MO, the Original Rumpl Puffy Blanket outdoor blanket is a packable, portable blanket that goes everywhere. With a ripstop shell and insulation made from 100 percent recycled materials, it's warmer and more durable than ever.

Into every life a little rain must fall, so if you're wondering if all of the fuss about the Davek umbrella makes sense, the answer is yes. It's a real smooth operator and a beast in the wind. And the teeny one is so teeny! And yet still functional!

And since these days we never know what we'll encounter when we leave the house, prepare the one who holds your heart with this silly but practical gift: The Original Pickle Box. It's got a baseball cap, cotton shopping bag, pair of sunglasses, lip balm, matches, three face masks, hand sanitizer, toothpicks, tweezers, nail clippers, sewing kit, tissues, alcohol wipes and bandages.

If you want to give the gift of peace of mind and help keep your Valentine's phone safe when they have to step away, the AquaVault PhoneVault Personal Safe allows them to do just that.

Soon, we're going to get to leave the house safely. I promise. Why not give a gift of that promise with season tickets to the 2021-2022 Germania Insurance Broadway Series, presented by Dallas Summer Musicals. The six-show package includes *Jersey Boys*, *Hadestown*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Mean Girls*, *Oklahoma* and *Frozen*, with options to add *Hamilton*,

rose prosecco that is the prettiest pale pink. Weed Cellars offers a sparkling rose at a super affordable price point. (The name harkens to the lifestyle not

the ingredients.) If beautiful pinot noirs are what you're on the prowl for, you'll want to know about Red Electric Armstrong Vineyard, an Oregon wine from the Willamette Valley. Speaking of Oregon, take a minute to consider Remy Wines, owned by lesbian winemaker Remy Drabkin, with impressive offerings from Washington state as well.

There's no Place like Home

Since we are spending so much time at home, we might as well make home the nicest possible place to be. Nanor candles in scents like Opulent and Ambrosial are a no-brainer if you're looking for a romantic gift that keeps giving. And, although it's for the body and not for the house, I have to mention yummy Nanor's Rose Scrub, too, which has the same effect.

The heaven-sent Always Pan should be called the Everything Pan because it basically does, well, everything — all with its super-duper non-stick surface, wood spatula, steamer basket and lid. I don't generally gush about cookware. But I love everything about this pan. And we are cooking at home a lot these days.

And goodness knows we could all use a good night's sleep these days. The Black-lesbian-owned Nap Bar is where you go for the nap of your life, but while it's closed due to COVID, you can treat your sweet to their Perfect Sleep Box, complete with Soy Based Candle, Vegan Aromatherapy Pillow Mist, Blackout

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LinkedIn



Remy Wines

Cloud Pineapple Party Mask and Cream which is all about giving you that dewy look that's all the rage. And if you really want to go all out, check out Cle de Peau's sumptuous Volumizing Crème. I won't say it's magic. But it's as close as cream in a jar can get.

Maybe innovation is more your Valentine's cup of tea, in which case they'll really dig the Sola Wave Wand that combines microcurrents,

warming, and vibration.

Think insta facial in the palm of your hand! And for a gift that looks as good as it smells, Dolce & Gabbana Dolce

Rose celebrates

the most classic symbol of love — the rose — in sweet luxury.

Always Wise to Accessorize

If your love likes to accessorize, there are so many fun things to choose from. Kendra Scott is doing the sweetest little heart focused pieces, in their Ari Heart collection, including pendant necklaces and bracelets that come in a silver or gold with a plethora of stone color choices. Looking for something practical and adorable? Keebos makes super cute phone cases that have long straps for cross body carrying and pockets on the back for cards and IDs.

Wrist Pop is a pretty clever way to up one's Apple Watch game with scarf watch bands in patterns from classic to artsy. The Dusk band with skulls and snakes and swords is pretty cool. Ekster has this super chic cardholder with RFID blocking that's très James Bond and an equally-sleek laptop sleeve that organizes all the must-haves.

If your Valentine would appreciate a pair of readers that look really cool and protect their beautiful baby blues (or browns or greens or...) check out Cadis' blue blocking stunners. (Obsessed with the Matte Gopher!) ■



Dallas Summer Musicals

Sleep Mask, Theta Brain Wave Sounds and one bonus item.

And when the one you want to spoil needs to tune in to tune it all out, they'll love this idea: Every month SkullCandy offers a new Mood Boost Bundle with kick-ass headphones and arty surprises, and proceeds from the sale helps "people find hope and treatment for mental health issues through non-profit movement, To Write Love on Her Arms." Great sound and a great cause.

My Furry Valentine

If you want to treat your furbaby this Valentine's Day, you might as well do it in the healthiest way possible. The Bow Wow Labs Bully Buddy keeps your buddy from choking on bully sticks and their Waggy Wafers are as loved by dogs as they are good for them. If you want to really spoil your waggers rotten, Olympia Provisions now offers Pet Provisions, charcuterie for dogs which is way too easily mistaken for the human kind!

All Things Bright and Beautiful

If you want to treat your someone like beauty royal, gift them with a treat from Charlotte Tilbury, like her Flawless Filters, perfect for selfies and Zoom calls, and Hayaluronic Happikiss for color and plump. If your person's more of a skincare kind of person, gift the Fluffy

A daughter's love, in poetry

Lesléa Newman, best known for the classic *Heather Has Two Mommies*, has also released a book of poetry called *I Wish My Father*, which deals with the death of her father.

After her mother died, care for her father mostly fell on Newman, even though she has two brothers. But she called that responsibility a blessing.

Newman's poetry tells the story of her father finally retiring as an attorney as he approached his 90th birthday. She writes with humor and poignancy as she tries to see things through her father's dimming eyes.

At a restaurant, an older man at the next table recognizes her father's school ring. They went to the same college. He's impressed with the man's sharp vision. But then the other man's son puts a bib

on his father, and Newman notices her own father turning away in sadness to give the older man his dignity.

Her father continued to work as an attorney well into his 80s. One judge tells her father to stand near the bench. Obviously, her father reasons, the judge made the request because he was having some trouble hearing.

Her father's pain in selling the home he'd lived in for 60 years is Newman's pain as well, as she moves him into assisted living. He finally agrees to move and give it a year. He died, she notes, 11 months and 27 days into his stay at the facility.

While each poem carries some sadness — getting rid of her mother's clothes that her dad kept in their closet for years after her death, visiting the neurologist to get a dementia diagnosis, driving — there's warmth as each step approaching his death draws father and daughter



Lesléa Newman

closer.

I Wish My Father, along with *I Carry My Mother*, a previous book of poetry chron-

icling her mother's death, are wonderful works for anyone with aging parents or are dealing with their recent loss.

— David Taffet

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SENATE, From Page 6

Alphonso David, president of the Human Rights Campaign, congratulated Buttigieg for his "historic confirmation" in a statement.

"This confirmation breaks through a barrier that has existed for too long; where LGBTQ identity served as an impediment to nomination or confirmation at the highest level of government," David said. "Let this important moment for our movement serve as a reminder to every LGBTQ young person: You, too, can serve your country in any capacity you earn the qualifications to hold."

David also credited President Biden for achieving the historic first for the LGBTQ community, saying Buttigieg's confirmation follows through on a commitment to diversity. "President Biden promised to deliver an administration representative of the diversity of this

nation, and this confirmation is a significant achievement toward that goal," David said.

Ruben Gonzales, executive director of LGBTQ Victory Institute, said in a statement Buttigieg's confirmation is a "testament" to both Biden's commitment to inclusivity and the American people's "willingness to judge a leader by their qualifications, not their sexual orientation."

"Each new political barrier broken inspires more LGBTQ people to consider careers in public service, a virtuous cycle we will accelerate until equitable representation is achieved," Gonzales added. ■

Chris Johnson is chief political and White House reporter for the Washington Blade and a member of the White House Correspondents' Association.



CFA, From Page 7

Identifying Alzheimer's is difficult. There's still no test to see if you have it. Progress has been made in knowing what causes it — a plaque buildup in the brain that causes the loss of memory and variety of behaviors. But that plaque can only be found during an autopsy.

So knowing the variety of symptoms is important in diagnosing Alzheimer's. But then knowing what you can do for a parent, relative or friend is also important.

The week I decided, along with my father's doctor, that my father could no longer drive or live alone was one of the most difficult times in my life. I was able to give my father a choice — either try the memory care facility or come live with me in Dallas. He wanted to stay in Florida and decided to give the place we found a try.

At the time, I didn't know others going through the same thing, which made it more difficult. Not only was I taking his car and home from him, but I had to take away his mail. He couldn't distinguish between a bill and a solicitation, which is how we became members of the Audubon Society and NRA one week, but his mortgage remained unpaid.

While CFA's conference offers information anyone may use, LGBTQ people with elderly parents will find the information valuable. And the coalition offers a valuable service — that you don't have to go through the experience alone.

LGBTQ Caregiver Conference is on Friday, Feb. 12 from 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Register at 800-272-3900 or tinyurl.com/AlzLGBTQ. ■



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Annnnnnd exhale

Now that the Trump turmoil is done, let's talk about equality

It's been a while since I have sent a column to Dallas Voice. That makes me a little sad, because I really enjoy writing these columns, sharing thoughts and questions with the readers. If I can provoke thoughtful discourse, that's a win in my book. The reason I've been on a self-imposed hiatus is because the Voice is published once a week; I would usually write down some thoughts on a Sunday, edit the piece after giving it some thought on Monday and send it in on Tuesday.

The trouble was, with Trump in the White House, I could write about his engaging in a conspiracy to overturn an election on Sunday, and by Wednesday he'd inspired a crowd of violent MAGA zombies to assault the Capitol!

And suddenly, just like that, a semi-well crafted column is old news!

It has been like this for quite some time.

Now that President Biden has taken office, many of us have been able to exhale, at least little. Inauguration Day featured me ugly crying happy tears on my couch. The nation is still sharply divided; there are a mountain of problems, and we are still near the high point of a deadly pandemic. But at least the guy at the top has some compassion and sanity.

Since his inauguration, I've yet to wake to a tweet of some ridiculous policy announced at 3 a.m.

President Biden seems to respect the truth, which has taken a beating over the last four years. The nation has been the proverbial "frog in the pot," never fully realizing just how insane things were getting until the liar-in-chief got on a plane to Florida — where he will blend right in, by the way.

Still, there are a few things that have continued to perplex me; please feel free to reach out if you have answers.

First of all, we have a raging pandemic; 420,000 Americans have died. I personally know more people who have been infected than who have been vaccinated (and it's not even close). A survey of some 6,000 Americans indicated that 83 percent understand that masks and social



Leslie McMurray
Accidental Activist

distancing can help prevent the spread of this deadly pathogen. (WTF are the other 17 percent thinking??) But a follow-up question showed that only 51 percent wear a mask when in crowded gatherings or out in public?

HOW?!

Then the corollary: Why is it easier to potty train a toddler than it is to teach a full grown adult how to properly wear a mask?

Seriously.

Every time I'm out (which isn't often); there are nitwits wearing the mask below the nose. Is your nose magical? Does it prevent virus particles from attaching or does it not expel them when you breathe or sneeze? No, it doesn't. You aren't helping, and you just look ignorant.

Then there was the guy who wore the mask properly, then pulled it down to his chin, sneezed (!!) and then re-fitted the mask.

Seriously?

Now that Trump is out of office, the religious wing nuts are getting all riled up again. I'm not a religious person, but I have read the Constitution. And it seems to me that, in that document, both those who are religious and people like me are protected from discrimination, which is fair and correct. But saying people like me joining the U.S. Army or enjoying the protection of the Equality Act are infringing on YOUR religious freedom is puzzling to me. Just what is your religion, anyway?

I remember when Katie and I got married. Representatives of organized religion (not all of them, but some loudmouths like Tony Perkins and our own Robert Jeffress) thought marriage would become meaningless with marriage be-

ing between "two men, two women, three men and a woman." It didn't and hasn't. My being married to Katie hasn't changed any other person's marriage. Your free practice of religion remains on solid ground.

I read the Equality Act — all of it. Every word. The word "religion" is mentioned in two ways — as one in a list of protected classes, like: "race, religion and national origin." The other time is when it says that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act can't be used to challenge the rights listed in the Equality Act.

In other words, don't discriminate. And if your religion requires you to regularly assault other American's human rights, that's a messed up religion. You might want to find another kinder, more compassionate religion. After all, when it comes to freedom of choice, the ultimate choice is deciding which religion you want to follow. You can even change your mind.

But that's not so with your sexual orientation or gender identity. Being discriminated against because of those things is just plain wrong.

Freedom of religion is just one of the first 10 amendments to the Constitution. It's not above or below any of the others. It's on an even par with free speech, free press and the right of the people to peaceably assemble.

So stop acting as if it sits atop all others. It doesn't. It's also as much about the government not establishing a religion as the free exercise clause is about practicing it. But there are prudent limits: If your religion involves human sacrifice, the government is going to want to have a word with you.

And if your religion is not about helping the needy but instead about judging others and discriminating, well then, your religion is one of the reasons we need the Equality Act.

You can believe what you want, but there have to be limits to your actions. And that is as it should be. ■

Leslie McMurray is transgender education and advocacy associate at Resource Center in Dallas. She is also a regular columnist for Dallas Voice. Read more of her blogs at lesliemichelle44.wordpress.com.

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A Mustang for the masses



2020 Ford Mustang EcoBoost is not just for gearheads

CASEY WILLIAMS | Auto Reviewer
crwauto@aol.com

2020 Ford Mustang EcoBoost

Four-passenger, RWD Coupe
Powertrain: 2.3-liter T4, 6-spd manual
Output: 310hp/350 lb.-ft. torque
Suspension f/r: Ind/Ind
Wheels f/r: 18-inch/18-inch alloy
Brakes f/r: disc/disc
Must-have features: Style, Engine
Fuel economy: 21/30 mpg city/hwy
Assembly: Flat Rock, MI
Base/As-tested price: \$26,670/35,850

Ford is relaunching the legendary Mustang Mach 1 for 2021. And I'm excited for it and can't wait to throttle its big powerful V8 engine!

I'm also a fan of the demonic Shelby GT500 and its 760-horsepower supercharged V8. Both grace the dreams of gearheads, but the Mustang we have

here will find love beyond hardcore enthusiasts. It runs with an EcoBoost turbocharged four-cylinder engine, which proves you don't need big power to enjoy the drive.

If you just flipped through the photos, you would never think there's an engine with only four cylinders beneath the long sexy hood and behind a classic pony-strewn grille. No matter what's between the fenders, this is my favorite Mustang design, with an aggressive stance accentuated by 18-inch wheels, fastback roofline and wide rump with triple sequencing tail lamps. LED headlamps, foglamps and triple-lit elements behind each lens connect the car's past to its future. Full-length racing stripes and a subtle rear spoiler are perfect touches.

Back to that engine: The 2.3-liter turbo-four delivers 310 horsepower and 350 lb.-ft. of torque through a six-speed manual transmission. Not only is it a joy to click-flick the shifter through the gears, but it also contributes to frugal





fuel economy ratings of 21/30-MPG city/highway.

It wasn't that long ago that a Mustang GT with a V8 barely produced that much power, and it sure as Henry didn't get compact crossover fuel economy.

Choosing a four-cylinder doesn't mean you have to shop in the bargain bin of interiors. Our Premium trim comes with heated/cooled leather seats, leather-wrapped steering wheel and stitched coverings for the traditional twin-cowl dash. Metallic trim adds flair, and an intuitive touchscreen employs icons for audio, climate, navigation, and apps. Connect devices with Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and 4G Wi-Fi. Thump the audio and enjoy.

In the lower dash is a push-button starter and a series of toggles for the stability control, steering and drive modes. The last two allow drivers to customize their experience: Select from light Comfort to heavy Sport steering. The other switch primarily configures throttle response and stability control intervention when you move through Comfort, Normal, Sport and Track settings. Launch control mode gets you cleanly off the line if you want to test your skills on a track.

Beyond chasing acceleration, driving this Mustang allows you to focus on the refinement you might not expect from a high-revving power coupe. Especially with this generation's independent rear suspension, the car has evolved into a car that hardcore enthusiasts can appreciate but also one that import intenders will feel meets their high standards. It's more Audi than Cobra.

Steering is spot on, and the car feels planted, no matter the road. It's a daily driver that enjoys a good romp on the weekends.

Rev it up, shift down, and let it rip.

I can't wait to review the 2021 Mustang Mach 1, but all of that attitude is unnecessary. I would be plenty happy to have the EcoBoost in my own driveway. It drools swagger, goes fast and thoroughly comforts passengers. Best of all, efficient fuel economy makes it inexpensive to operate.

Mustangs start at just \$26,670, but our Premium edition came to \$35,850. Competitors include the Chevy Camaro, Dodge Challenger, Subaru WRX, and VW GTI.

Send comments to Casey at AutoCasey@aol.com; follow him on YouTube @AutoCasey.

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screen



Funny that way

Brandon Ingram as Arjie and Rehan Mudannayake as Shehan in *Funny boy*.

Set against Sri Lanka's 26-year civil war, 'Funny Boy' holds messages for today

GREGG SHAPIRO | Screen Savor
GreggShapiro@aol.com

Based on the acclaimed 1994 novel of the same name by gay writer Shyam Selvadurai (who co-wrote the screenplay), *Funny Boy* (Array) is directed by Deepa Mehta (who co-wrote the screenplay with Selvadurai). Mehta, who is straight, is no stranger to queer material, having written and directed the award-winning 1996 lesbian feature *Fire*.

Set in Colombo, Sri Lanka, during the mid-1970s and early 1980s, especially turbulent years leading up to the beginning of the civil war between the Tamils and the Sinhalese that lasted for 26 years, *Funny Boy* is timely for a variety of reasons. At a time when tensions are particularly high here in the U.S., with our own civil war seemingly looming daily, *Funny Boy* serves as a kind of warning. Equally important is the central theme of sexuality and acceptance that propels the story.

When we first encounter 8-year-old Tamil boy Arjie (Arush Nand), he is dressed as a bride, and his sister Sonali (Araina Nand) is dressed as a bridegroom. They are having a play wedding with cousins and friends. But the fun is short-lived when the adults, including Arjie's concerned father Chelva (Ali Kazmi) and seemingly less upset mother Nalini (Nimmi Harasgama), get involved.

When a relative tells Chelva that Arjie is a "funny boy" he is visibly disturbed. Chelva has pinned all of his hopes on his older, more athletically inclined son Diggy (Avlok Wignaraja).

Fortunately for Arjie, he has cool and worldly Aunt Radha (Agam Darshi), his father's sister, for support and encouragement. She takes Arjie to an audition

for a local stage production of *The King & I*, and he gets a part. Meanwhile, Radha, who has been promised in an arranged marriage to Toronto-based Rajan (Kanishka Ranabahu) begins a relationship with cast member Anil (Ruvini DeSilva), whose family is Sinhalese.

The reaction of Radha's family members, including the matriarch (Seema Biswas), is an indication of the troubles to come. When Radha is seriously injured in a Sinhalese attack on a train it's clear that things are only going to get worse.

By the movie's early 1980s midpoint, teenage Arjie (Brandon Ingram) is enrolled in high school. It is there that he meets Sinhalese Oscar Wilde-quoting classmate Shehan (Rehan Mudannayake). Before long, the teens realize that they have many things in common, including being queer as well as a mutual attraction.

Around the same time, Jegan (Shivantha Wijesinha), the son of a family friend who is involved in the revolutionary Tamil Tigers movement, has been sent to work for Chelva at the beachfront hotel he owns. It is through Jegan that we continue to see the deadly cultural divide become even more dangerous.

The dramatic tensions of the story continue to mount. Arjie and Shehan are caught in a compromising position by Chelva. Jegan is arrested as part of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Chelva and Nalini's marriage is straining under the pressures. Mobs of Sinhalese attack Tamils on the streets and raid their homes.

As previously stated, the timing of the release of *Funny Boy* couldn't be better than at this particular moment. If people are able to overlook some of the issues, including the lack of Tamil actors among the cast members and issues with the language spoken on screen, *Funny Boy* is still worth seeing for its various messages of understanding. ■

Rating: B-



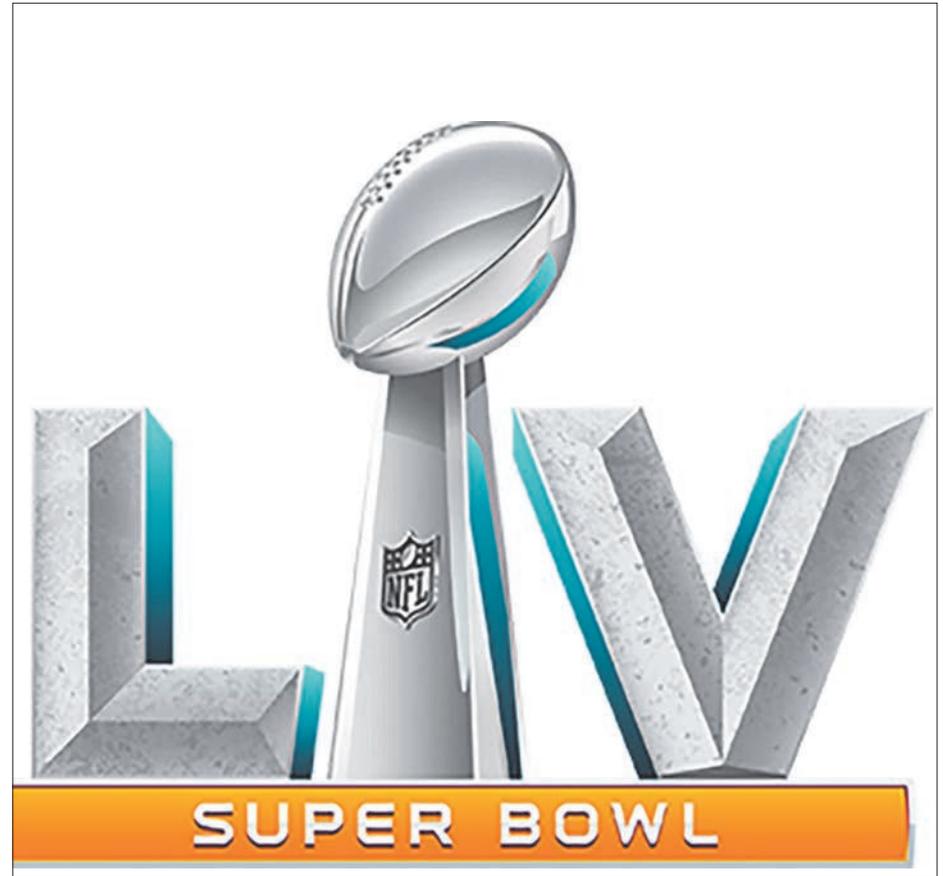
FRI 02.05

Fort Worth's **Jubilee Theatre** kicks off its 40th season with a streaming presentation of Katori Hall's *HooDoo Love*, a tale of love, magic, jealousy and secrets, directed by Wambui Richardson and starring Jade Massentoff as Toulou, J.R. Bradford as JIB, Kris Jasper as Candy Lady and Nathan D. Thurman as Ace of Spades. *Streaming through Feb. 28 at Vimeo. Tickets are \$20 to access the video for a 48-hour period. For details visit JubileeTheatre.org.*



SUN 02.07

Curbed Vanity: A Contemporary Foil, the first solo museum exhibition for Booker T. graduate Chris Schanck, pairing Gilded Age silversmithing from the museum's collection with pieces built by Schanck out of found objects from the immediate neighborhood of his Detroit studio. *Admission is free. Runs through Aug. 29. Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 N. Harwood St. DMA.org.*



SUN 02.07

It's time for **Super Bowl 55**, and the Kansas City Chiefs, led by quarterback Patrick Mahomes of Texas, are looking for their second consecutive Super Bowl championship. But they will have to go through the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and their legendary quarterback, six-time Super Bowl winner Tom Brady. Kickoff is at 5:30 p.m. CST on CBS Channel 11 in DFW.



Jenny Block

Girl on Girls

Meeting the challenge of Valentine's Day in a pandemic

This is going to be a really weird Valentine's Day. I mean there's lots to love: We have a president we can be proud of who loves us and respects us and wants to take care of and protect us. There are vaccines for COVID-19 that are slowly but surely being administered. And some days feel like spring already, one of the many benefits of living in Texas.

But it's still going to be really weird.

There aren't going to be fancy dinners in packed restaurants. No theaters with full houses. No romantic movies to be seen shoulder-to-shoulder with other couples.

We're going to have to think differently this year. We're going to have to opt for picnics and outdoor events. We'll have to spend the holiday learning how to create new things in the kitchen or crafting pretty whatnots. We'll have to go on hikes or kick around the soccer ball or go horseback riding with our person.

So here's the thing: This is our moment. Now's our chance to do something that we don't get to do every day in such a dramatic fashion. We have the chance to decide if we're going to make the most of it or be-

moan the worst of it. We can hold on to the expectations we've had from years passed, or we can do with this holiday what we've had to do with so many other things during the pandemic: turn things on their heads and make something entirely new out of it.

I mean, maybe it's a good thing. Valentine's Day is kind of a tough holiday, anyway. It's a make-believe, card store day. But it's almost impossible to not buy into it, to not want to create the perfect Valentine's Day for your person and to not want the same done for you.

And if you don't buy in, people think you're some heart-broken curmudgeon. In other words, you can't win for losing when it comes to Valentine's Day.

This year though, we have no choice but to take on a new perspective. We can't have the same expectations because those expectations literally cannot possibly be filled. I mean, they could, I suppose. But it would be foolish at best and dangerous at worst. In a way, Valentine's Day this year is a forced lesson in managing our expectations.

What if instead of looking at Valentine's Day as our chosen one's one and only real chance to prove their love to us, we looked at it as a day where we put all of our focus, all of our intention on our love or like or fondness — whatever you want to call it — for that person.

Forget the idea of either of you proving a thing. Instead, this year, let's celebrate the very existence of love. Let's remember it and honor it and nurture it.

Let's make our person their coffee that morning instead of them having to make it. Let's say thank you — and mean it — when

they do the most mundane things for no reason other than that they love us. Let's be present. Let's put down our phones and the remote and talk to one another. Let's be grateful for someone to care for who cares for us. And let's show that with our presence instead of some grand gesture.

It's a day about all kinds of love. So whether you're partnered or not, reach out to friends and tell them you love them and are grateful to have them in your life. Grant yourself some self-care — some real self-care — not just candles and a bubble bath, but the real deal.

Ask yourself what you really need right now: healthy food, a walk around the block, a long call with a close friend or family member, an appointment with a mental health provider.

Just like you would care for someone you love, Valentine's Day is a great time to remember to love ourselves.

Holidays are full of pressure. But it's pressure we put on ourselves from giving too much weight to all the outside noise. You don't have to buy a card; you can make one. You don't have to buy a fancy gift; you can skip it or craft it or even IOU it. You don't have to plan an elaborate surprise; most of us want little more than our person's full and undivided attention and to be reminded that we are indeed "the one."

Do what you might generally forget to do or feel too busy or overwhelmed to do but know that you should do. Pretend like you're courting again. Pay attention. Flirt. Cuddle. The whole nine yards.

This year is not just challenging. It's a challenge. It's a challenge that we can

choose to accept and not just make the best of the situation but instead make the day truly better than ever before.

Let's make this Valentine's Day the one where real love takes the front seat, and all the trimmings slip into the back. Let's use it as a time to reassess and recommit to loving one another with gratefulness and without distraction.

The most romantic thing in the world you can do is make sure your Valentine feels seen. The rest is just window dressing.

this week's solution

R	I	V	E	R	T	A	T	U	R	E	P	S					
O	B	A	M	A	O	L	I	N	I	L	E	T					
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M	I	N	U	T	E	L	O	N	G	E	R						
A	J	A	R		D	O	N	E	I	O	T	A	S				
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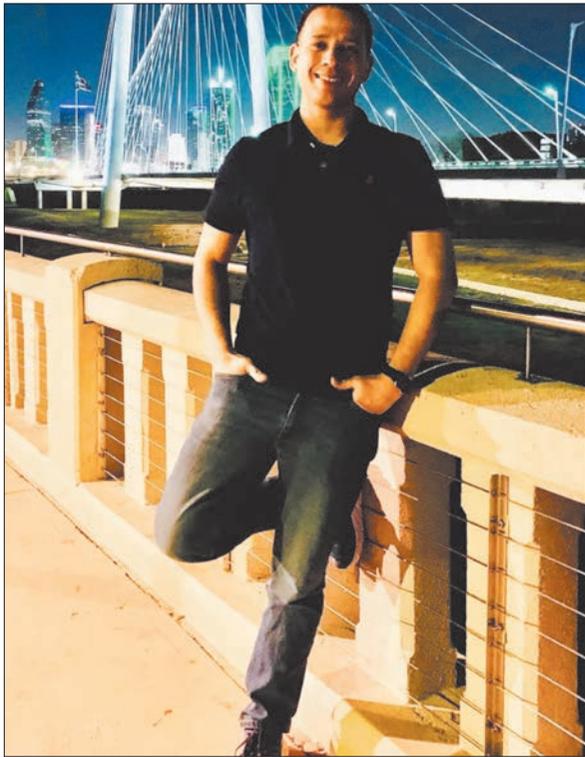
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Kelexis, Greg and Kennedy



Rocky at the Round-Up Saloon



Marquis is all glow'd up



Kristina



Terry Loftis (Photo by Vonda Klimaszewski)



Sean gets covered up



Fantasha



Corey is a big fan



Asia O'Hara



Barbie showing a little bling



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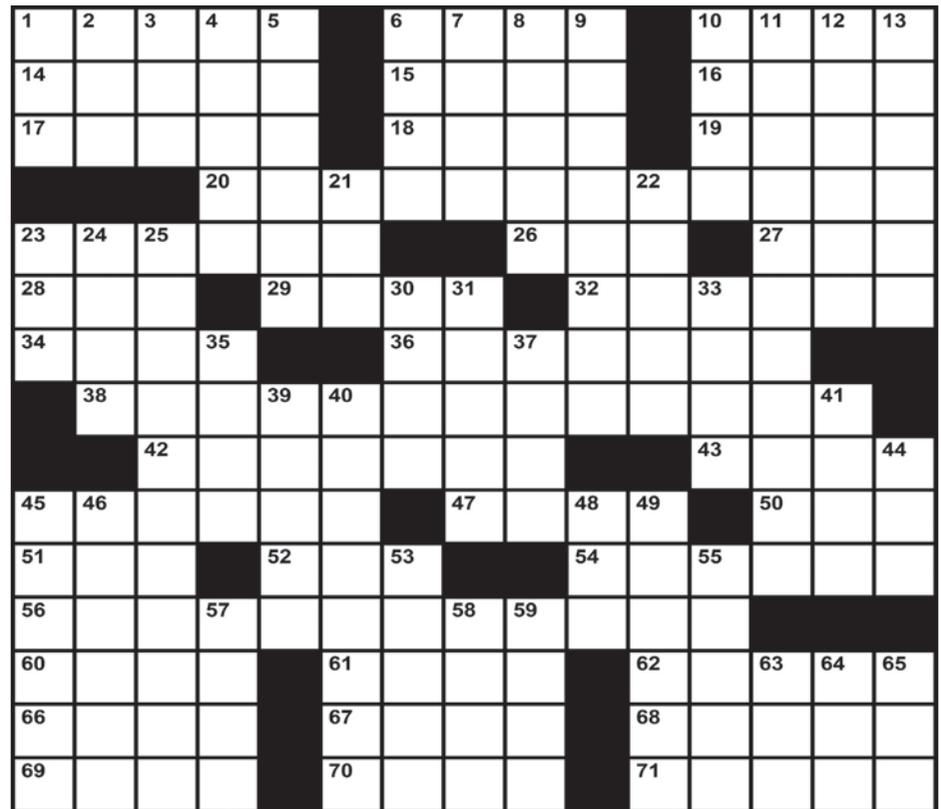
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Solution on Page 18

Across

- 1 "Ol' Man" of Broadway
 6 Russian singing duo
 10 Sales people
 14 Hawaiian President
 15 *Brothers & Sisters* producer Ken
 16 "Why should ___ you?"
 17 Hairy Himalayans
 18 "Do What U Want" Lady
 19 Sign over
 20 Start of Siegfried Fischbacher's definition of a hero
 23 Rubber for your mistakes
 26 Charlotte of *Facts of Life*
 27 Gentle handling, initially
 28 Article for Frida
 29 "Queen of Country" McEntire
 32 Licentious
 34 "___ shame"
 36 Hellish place
 38 More of the definition
 42 Greg, to Carol Brady
 43 Martin's *Ed Wood* role
 45 Rent payer
 47 Spy plane or rock band

- 50 Maugham's extremes
 51 Will Smith title role
 52 Workers under Dr. Torres
 54 Tattoo artist Phil ___
 56 End of the definition
 60 Open a crack
 61 Ready to be eaten
 62 The I's of Socrates
 66 *Peanuts* oath
 67 Capable of performing
 68 Nuts
 69 Perlman of *Cheers*
 70 Worker at the bottom
 71 Bridges in movies

Down

- 1 Fischbacher's partner Horn
 2 "May ___ of service?"
 3 Winery container
 4 Secretes nocturnally
 5 Bacon serving
 6 Take-out on a cheap date?
 7 *American Beauty* screenwriter Ball
 8 Dangerous pussy
 9 By surprise
 10 Puerto ___
 11 Campaign energetically
 12 Parts for Dykes on Bikes

- 13 Olfactory assault
 21 Byron's before
 22 One of the Four Hs
 23 Thornton Wilder, for one
 24 Kind of IRA
 25 Kill Caesar, for example
 30 Coal holders
 31 Firm-fleshed fruit
 33 Attachment found on drawers
 35 Colony dwellers
 37 *Candid Camera* creator
 39 Speed skater Blanchart
 40 Parted the thighs, perhaps
 41 Patron of people in the navy
 44 Silly goose
 45 Hedy of old Hollywood
 46 Wood on a screen
 48 Move one's tail
 49 *The Iceman Cometh* writer Eugene
 53 Where the Kneelers ski
 55 Unswallowed spit
 57 Bear of the night
 58 Not taken in by
 59 Broadway light
 63 When repeated, campy
 64 Even one
 65 Pink Floyd's Barrett

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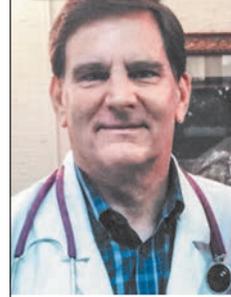
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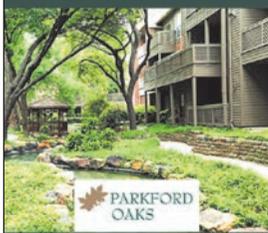
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