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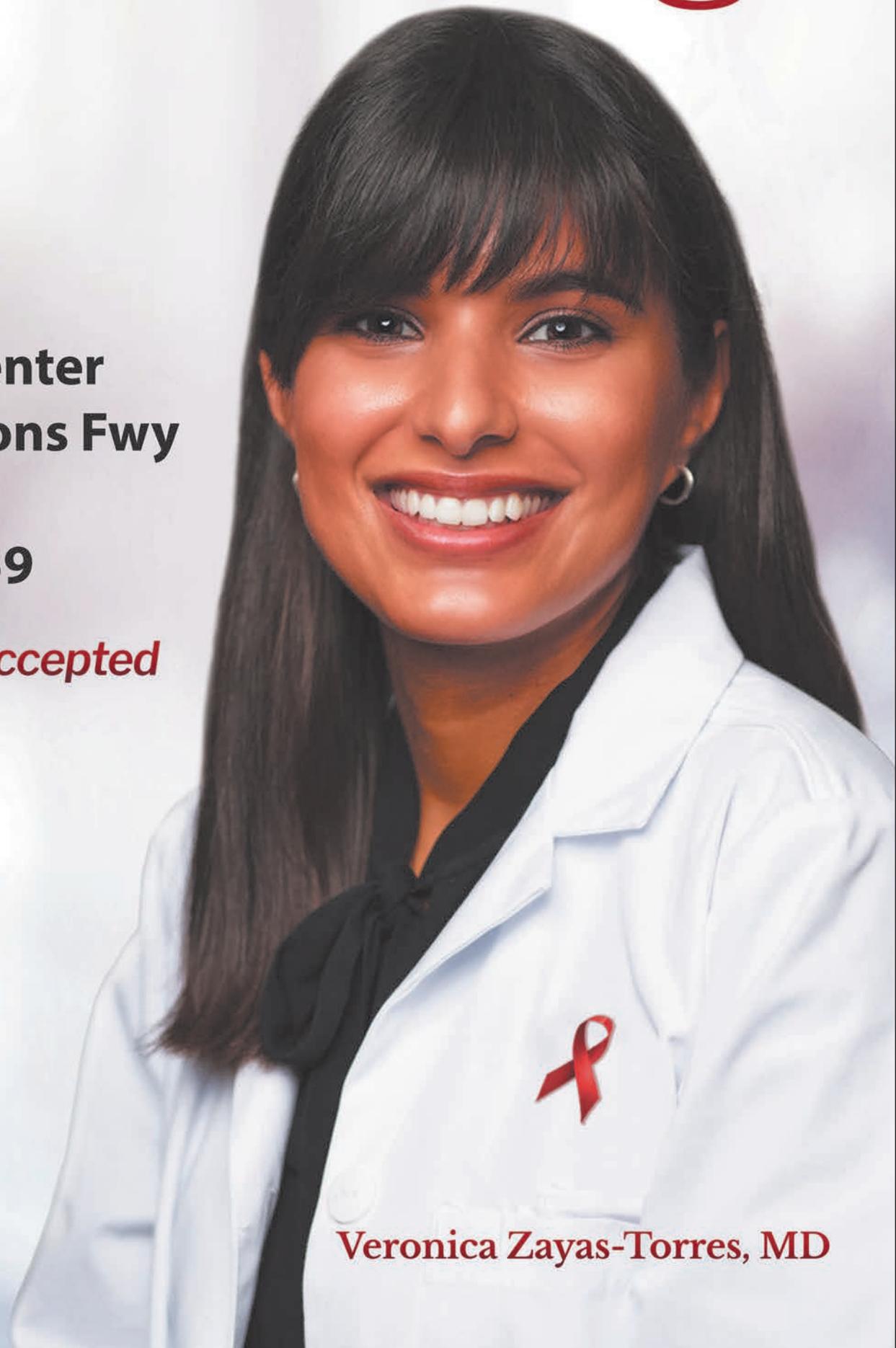
Baker Lio Botello and country singer/songwriter Kam Ross are a gay power couple on the rise

By Jenny Block, Page 8

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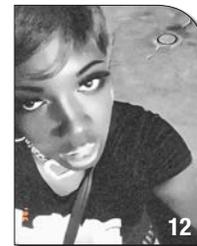
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WHAT'S THE TEA: DallasVoice.com



Dale Hansen

Dale Hansen is retiring

WFAA announced this week that sportscaster Dale Hansen is retiring in September. He's been at the station since 1983.

Hansen became a hero to the LGBTQ community when he aired a Dale Hansen "Unplugged" segment about Michael Sam, after Sam was snubbed by every NFL team because he is gay.

At the time, Hansen thought sportscasters in every market would comment similarly. Instead, no one else said a word, and Hansen went on to appear on *Ellen* and became a hero to the LGBTQ community around the country, but especially here in Dallas.

Since then, he has raised tens of thousands of dollars for Black Tie Dinner and has won Dallas Peace and Justice Center's 2019 Inspiration Award, the Hero of Hope Award from the Cathedral of Hope Church and the Peacemaker Award from the Turtle Creek Chorale. He's won more than 20 Lone Star Emmy Awards and has been named Sportscaster of the Year twice by Associated Press.

— David Taffet

Trans candidate wins Democratic Primary for Erie, Penn., county executive

Transgender candidate Tyler Titus moved one step closer this week to becoming the first openly trans county executive in the U.S. with a victory in the four-way Democratic Primary race for Erie County, Penn., county executive. Titus, president of the Erie School Board, now faces Republican Brenton Davis in the November general election.

Titus, 36, became the first openly transgender person to win any elected office in Pennsylvania when they won their school board race in 2017.

The LGBTQ Victory Fund, which backed Titus in the race, credited the candidate's "ground-breaking ad detailing their coming out story, struggles with their identity and their path to public service," "carefully laid out policy plans addressing everything from increasing broadband access to healthcare reform" and "honesty and transparency [that] resonated with voters" for Titus' win.

— Tammye Nash

Victory Fund will not be endorsing Caitlin Jenner

Victory Fund issued a statement Thursday, May 20, that it will not be endorsing Caitlyn Jenner for Governor of California.

Jenner simply doesn't meet the criteria that all candidates must meet for an endorsement.

Victory Fund requires that its endorsed candidates support full equality for all members of the LGBTQ community.

"While Jenner is running as an out trans person, she's doing it while throwing trans kids under the bus, telling TMZ that she supports laws banning trans kids from sports," Sean Meloy, Victory Fund's vice president of political programs, wrote in a statement. "Caitlyn Jenner isn't with us — and we're not with her."

Victory Fund has endorsed a number of transgender candidates, including Tyler Titus who just won their primary for county executive in Erie County, Penn. Other endorsed trans candidates include Danica Roem, who is running for re-election to the Virginia House of Delegates, Mariah Moore, who is running for New Orleans City Council, and Andrea Jenkins, who is running for Minneapolis City Council.

— David Taffet

The party starts quickly for Pride month this June. Black Sheep Hospitality Group announced its inaugural Trick the Mini Fest on June 4-7, and organizer Rickey Head is looking to bring Pride back into the gayborhood.

"Pride just hasn't been the same since it moved," he said by phone. "So I wanted to give people an opportunity to celebrate on The Strip who don't want to celebrate it elsewhere."

The event will feature a DJ lineup, drag performances, the Lil Miss Trick pageant and the Mr. Trick dance contest.

Tickets are available at Eventbrite.com.

— Rich Lopez

Preston Hollow Dems warn of email scam

Preston Hollow Democrats are warning members and supporters this week about a scam email asking recipients to donate gift cards to the group.

"Be aware there is a fraudulent email circulating," the group notes in an alert on the PHD website and in an email sent to members and supporters. "Do not respond to this email or open any attachments."

Edwards warns, "It did not come from my email address or any other PHD email addresses. It is not associated with George or the Preston Hollow Democrats."

The scam email subject line reads "The Preston Hollow Democrats," and the body of the email says, "Are you available to assist? I am out of the state, and I've got credence in you to take care of this. I would have called your phone, but presently I don't have access to my mobile phone."

"The Preston Hollow Democrats need some gift cards for donation to Veterans at Hospice and Palliative Care Units for Personal Protective Equipment from Corona Virus (COVID-19). I have decided to make it a personal duty. I will be responsible for the reimbursement."

— Tammye Nash

Trick the Mini Fest announced for Pride



Nicole O'Hara Munro

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VOICES

OPINIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Finding hope after the pandemic

Religious institutions found themselves at the center of the COVID crisis, finding ways to continue to worship while responding to grief

More than 570,000 Americans have died from COVID-19. That's more deaths than American soldiers lost in World War II, the Korean and the Vietnam wars combined.

But pandemics and wars are difficult to weigh against one another. Wars typically happen far away, and those who go to fight them understand that they may not return. In a pandemic, death comes to our shores, and everyone is enlisted. It's a moment in time that has the power to shift our sense of being. As a minister and leader of a congregation fighting on the home front in this battle, I have seen more heartache and loss than any society should have to endure. Religious institutions found themselves at the center of this crisis as we attempted to respond to the toll of human grief while finding novel ways to gather together and live out our faith.

I am proud of our efforts at the Cathedral of Hope. We started Zoom groups, recorded messages of encouragement and broadcast sermons from empty sanctuaries into living rooms. On many Sundays, the liturgy of the pandemic



The Rev. Neil Thomas
Guest Columnist

stress, uncertainty and sometimes tragedy to find ourselves on the cusp of victory. As vaccines are distributed, herd immunity is eventually achieved, and restrictions are lifted or modified, many churches are preparing to return to in-person worship.

This is an exciting moment. COVID has been a worthy opponent, and it feels like we are nearly on the other side of it. But our David and Goliath moment may just be getting started, and we can't let our excitement obscure the challenges ahead.

Like King David in the Bible, it would have been easy to let fear consume us as we faced the giant standing before us. In the story, David was outsized and outmatched, but he did not let fear get in the way. It took courage and encouragement — the things we'll need most going forward — to face new challenges

was about making do with what you have and hoping some of it sticks.

I'm not sure if we always succeeded, but we persevered through

ahead.

We may have slain one giant, but new ones will emerge, and having courage to face them doesn't mean fear disappears. It means we stand strong no matter what tries to knock us off our feet.

With in-person worship services, we may never recover to pre-COVID level. We may have to deal with the personal trauma of returning. We may be frightened of trying to establish a kind of normalcy that doesn't exist yet, to accept that some of us can't go back to "before" — and this is where our worship spaces and family in faith can help. We can encourage one another as we walk through the doors once more, in faith that we are right where we need to be, while fully recognizing and respecting another's choice to continue to worship from home where they need to be.

We must also learn to trust again. After spending so much time away from friends and colleagues, we will have to re-learn what it means to live in a community again. We may wonder, "How can I trust my neighbor to mask up, or stay home if she's sick?"

Doubts have taken hold of us because we have been deprived of opportunities to be vulnerable, to serve and be served by one another, to simply interact with others on a regular basis for more than a year.

For most of us, we have been forced to become more self-sufficient. But healthy societies and congregations rely not on

individualism alone in hard times but on relationships we build with one another. It will take some time, but I am confident trust will return to our worship spaces.

Finally, we'll need hope. A pandemic is nothing if not a hope-killer. It stretches us, tests us, brings us to the very edge of despair. But I have hope that you will find hope in the coming days and weeks.

I have hope not only because the end of this pandemic is near but, most importantly, because I choose to exercise encouragement and to trust in others. Our job isn't to find superhuman strength during a pandemic; our job is simply to love and lean on one another.

We must love others as we have been loved. This is the fertile soil where hope, when cultivated in a community, will blossom.

The road to full recovery may take longer than we might like, and many churches will choose to continue with online or hybrid options that proved so valuable during COVID. Our church will do so.

Regardless of how our communities move forward, one thing is certain: We must move forward together. By encouraging ourselves and others, building trust, and cultivating hope in our lives, we can defeat any giant that stands in our way.

The Rev. Neil Thomas is senior pastor of Cathedral of Hope United Church of Christ.

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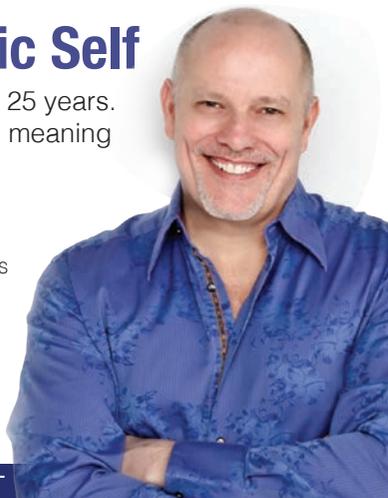
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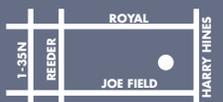
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POWER couple

PROFILE

Baker Lio Botello gets 'Krafty' with the support of his country-music-singing partner Kam Ross

JENNY BLOCK | Contributing Writer

Lio Botello, 32, is one crafty queen. Actually, he is Krafty Kween, maker of baking goodies that look as good as they taste. His day job is managing a Farmers Insurance Agency, he explained, but "My second full-time job is baking and crafting for my business." Formerly with Sugar Daddy's, he grew up in Fort Worth.

"I lived in Hurst for nine years before finally making the move all the way across DFW to Dallas," he said.

Botello's former partner in business and in his personal life was a pastry chef. That's how his career in baking began.

"Living together, I was around it all the time," he said. "I have always been creative, and I love making beautiful things. I was assisting most of time [at Sugar Daddy's], taking care of all of the marketing and social media for our business, and I slowly just taught myself to do more and more."

He's been baking as a lead and solo baker for almost a year now after assisting for almost three years.

Botello says he is inspired by "the impact a cake or dessert has on someone's special day, whether that be their birthday, anniversary, Mother's Day or a promotion. If one of my beautiful desserts can be in the center of a table surrounded by people celebrating something, then my heart is full."

"I love watching someone's face light up when they receive the cake or treat that was ordered for them, but even more so the joy it brings the person gifting the item," he added.

Almost a year ago now, Botello left Sugar Daddy's. "I decided to focus on my business and take on my biggest fear — baking on my own," he said. "My ex-business partner and I had just run our course in business,



and it was what was best for us." Shortly after, his ex-partner decided to close Sugar Daddy's completely.

But Botello didn't miss a beat. Still, because he had always been assisting rather than working as a lead baker, he knew he still had plenty to learn.

"But I am always excited to learn," he continued. "Surprisingly, my biggest mentor was one of my competitors from my time on Netflix's *Sugar Rush* — Amy from Amy's Cupcake Shoppe. She has been a tremendous help any time I have questions or feel unsure about something."

While at Sugar Daddy's, Botello worked with a number of charity organizations. "I always enjoyed heading up these projects and being a dessert sponsor for various events," he said. And he is proud to say that he is continuing that charity work at Krafty Kween, adding, "I actually just locked in working with DIFFA Dallas for their event this fall. I am extremely excited

about that."

Grateful for his success with his recent pivot, Botello said it's not something he could ever have done alone. "One of my good friends and regular customers, Alyssa Edwards [Justin Johnson], has been a great return customer and also a great mentor as I have tried to navigate becoming a solo entrepreneur," he said.

"The sweets are always sweet," Johnson said. "I think Lio just is such a wonderful guy. They've been making things for all of my events, my studio and for me, personally, for... I mean, it's been a good minute. They would make my birthday cakes. They baked all of the things for all of my studio. They would bring cupcakes to my students."

"He's just a creative person, and I think we're fans of each other's worlds."

Botello's current partner — in life alone this time and not business — is Houston native Kameron Ross, 31.

"He and I have been together since October of 2019," Botello said. "We actually saw each other for the first time at Alyssa Edwards' Labor Day party."

Johnson added, "I introduced them. And little did I know, they would end up being together. So, I guess that's a crazy little thing called love. But I wasn't caught off guard, because they're both really sweet souls."

Botello and Ross crossed paths again a few weeks after the party, and the two have been inseparable since, Botello said. And that, Johnson said, makes sense, really. "They connect with people really naturally and easily. They remind me of a lot of one another in that sense, because they're so inviting when they walk in a room."

A graduate of Binn College, Ross is a senior key account manager for a hospitality tech company when it comes to making a living. But he's a country mu-

sic singer/songwriter when it comes to making his dreams come true.

Ever since he was a kid, Ross has wanted to be a musician. "When I was 8, my parents took me to a Shania Twain concert, and I knew then that that was what I wanted to do," he said. His first album was released in 2006.

"I am passionate about performing and being on stage. I love connecting with people through the lyrics in whatever song it is that am singing," Ross said.

"It's so important to have these clear role models and these people that are not afraid to be themselves. And Kam being so proud of who he is. I mean, that is inspiring to me," Johnson said.

Ross released his first single in almost 15 years — "If I Could Go Back" — just last month, on April 16. He said he has two more releases planned for this summer and that he is really excited to be putting out his own music again.

He was recently booked to perform at



All photos courtesy Marcos Covos Photography

Ross was a contestant on Season 15 of *America's Got Talent*, which aired last summer in the midst of the pandemic. He made it all the way to the quarter finals.

"He had an amazing time on the show and loved that they gave him a platform to share his voice with people all over the country," Botello said of his partner.

Johnson is certainly sold on Ross' talents, too. "I remember seeing Kam sing live for the very first time at Alexander's years ago," he said. "I think it was a karaoke night. And I'll never forget. I turned to our mutual friend, and I said, 'That is a star. He is a star. And he is the future of country music.'"

Johnson continued, "There are just some people that have a natural quality on stage. [Ross] has that 'it factor.' And then you start peeling back layers, and you meet this human that is truly a bright light in this world.

Fair Park in June for Dallas Pride, and, he said, "Performing at Pride is exciting for me, having been an artist that struggled with being a gay country music singer when I was younger to now be performing at Pride."

Burgeoning careers and romance: It doesn't get much better than that. As Johnson said of his friends, "When two like-minded souls connect, it's just magnetic. And I've watched their relationship blossom into the beautiful couple that they are inside and out. It's important that we recognize that, because sometimes we can get caught up on someone's outer features, but they're both very creatively inspired.

"I love that they support one another in their creative ventures. Both of them have this drive that is just a force. I mean, they really are a beautiful power couple," Johnson said. ■

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NEWS FROM THE LEGISLATURE

With time running out in the 87th Texas Legislature, activists watch two bills targeting trans youth

JAMES RUSSELL | Contributing Writer
james.journo@gmail.com

Republicans in the Texas Legislature are so intent on making life hell for transgender kids that even some Democrats are joining them. As the biennial 140-day open season on civil rights and liberties comes to a close, lawmakers have prioritized and passed legislation banning abortion after six weeks, further restricting access to the ballot box, limiting lawsuits against 18-wheeler drivers who hurt or kill someone and allowing guns to be carried without a permit.

The abortion restrictions, which also allow for any private citizen to sue someone who receives, performs or is an accessory to an abortion, was signed into law by Gov. Greg Abbott on Wednesday, May 21, as was the trucking bill. The others remain in conference committee, where members from both chambers work out the differences between their respective chamber's version of the bills.

Other bills making their way through the legislature include a measure requiring that any professional sports team with government contracts play "The Star-Spangled Banner" before starting a game and a measure banning "critical race theory" pedagogy in public schools.

Yet two top Republican priorities — barring healthcare access to transgender youth and requiring they play sports based on the sex on their birth certificate and not their actual gender identity — have consistently stalled despite the momentum similar legislation is gaining nationwide.

While various House versions of these bills died before getting a full vote



Democratic state Rep. Harold Dutton Jr.

on the floor, Senate versions have found new life thanks to the efforts, in one case, of a Democrat.

Two Senate bills remain on the radar of LGBTQ groups: Senate Bill 1311 by Sen. Bob Hall, R-Edgewood, and Senate Bill 29 by Water, Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee Chair Charles Perry, R-Lubbock. The former bans gender affirming care for transgender children. And SB 29 would codify existing University Interscholastic League policy requiring students play on the teams based on their biological sex and not their gender identity.

While UIL already prohibits most transgender students from participat-

ing in athletics that align with their gender identity, it does allow students to use amended birth certificates; SB 29 would take away that option. The bill is waiting to be taken up by the Calendars committee, which decides when bills are heard on the House floor.

SB 1311 would ban gender-affirming health care for transgender youth, punish doctors for providing transition-related care by revoking their licenses and ban insurance coverage of the practice. It awaits committee referral. Equality Texas has named SB 29 as a top threat to trans youth.

SB 29 has had a rocky road on the way to hitting the House floor. It passed eas-

ily in the conservative Republican-held Senate on a party line vote of 18-13 while its House companions died. But the Senate versions have been revived.

When the committee held its initial vote on SB 29, Democrat Rep. James Talarico of Round Rock called it "lipstick on a pig," adding he knew his Republican colleagues on the committee don't like the bill. Voting it out would be "enough to tarnish the name of this committee," he said.

House LGBTQ Caucus Chair Mary Gonzalez, D-Clint, urged her colleagues to vote no after hearing testimony from educators who opposed the bill. And



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What happened to Tiffany?

Police still have no clues in the murder of Tiffany Thomas

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com



Dallas police continue to investigate the murder of Jermaine Thomas, 38, also known as Tiffany, who was found shot to death on Saturday morning, April 24, at a car wash at 7171 American Way near Red Bird Mall. Although they were “presenting as female” at the time of the murder, and photos provided to police show the victim presenting as female, Dallas Police LGBT Liaison Officer Chelsea Geist said family members told police the victim didn’t identify as transgender.

According to police reports, when a police patrol sergeant was flagged

down by a passerby of an unresponsive person lying on the ground at the car wash. The officer found the victim on the ground, unresponsive, with a gunshot wound.

Dallas Fire and Rescue responded and pronounced the victim deceased at the scene at 1:45 a.m. Witnesses reported hearing gunshots in the area at around midnight.

Pocahontas Duvall Crowe said that it is common for family members to deny someone is transgender, especially after a murder. But, she added, other members of the trans community will usually know the victim and will come forward to point out that the person was just coming out as trans or that they hid their trans identity from their family.

But, she said, this case is different. Crowe said she has asked around her extensive network in the trans community and found no one who knew Tiffany.

“Lots of trans people don’t have access to other trans folks,” Crowe said, adding that coming out as trans can be a very lonely process and not everyone connects to the trans community.

Still Crowe said, even though Tiffany may not have identified as transgender, they were somewhere on the trans spectrum. Referring to the picture the family released, Crowe said, “She didn’t look like somebody who just jumped into it.”

In their photo, Tiffany’s hair and makeup are done well, something that baffles Crowe, because Tiffany obviously learned hair and makeup skills somewhere. And even if they didn’t identify as trans, they were quickly identified as Tiffany.

And it isn’t just Crowe’s network of friends that didn’t know Tiffany. Both Naomi Greene at Abounding Prosperity and Carter Brown with Black Trans Men/Black Trans Women said no one in their organizations knew Tiffany either.

Carmarion Anderson-Harvey is the Alabama state director for Human Right Campaign. She’s originally from Dallas and has been following this case.

“Whether or not the individual identified as transgender, the focus should remain that this was a beautiful black human, someone’s child, someone’s loved one and, more importantly, a life that did not deserve to be taken through any form of hate, prejudice, or discrimination,” Anderson-Harvey said.

Often it’s difficult to come out as trans and truly live as one’s authentic whole self, she said, stressing that that can be especially true in the Black community. “This may contradict cultural norms, which often are binary and give no room for living free from fear or rejection,” Anderson-Harvey said. “The truth will live only with the individual and is not predicated on other thoughts, perceptions or opinions.”

She said she hopes there will be a break in the case and that Tiffany and her family will find justice.

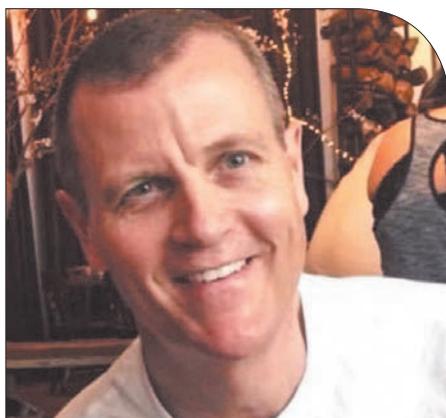
Dallas police ask that anyone with information regarding the murder of Jermaine “Tiffany” Thomas contact the Dallas Police Homicide Unit at 469-475-6004 or email andrea.isom@dallascityhall.com. Reference case number 070623-2021.

Crimes Stoppers will pay up to \$5,000 for information leading to an arrest and indictment in this case. ■

Alan White’s body found

Police hope to know cause of death soon but aren’t yet calling it murder

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com



The Dallas County Medical Examiner has yet to determine the cause of death for Alan White, the Dallas gay man who disappeared last October and whose body was found last week. But police hope to have more information soon, according to LGBT Police Liaison Chelsea Geist.

White’s body was found near Paul Quinn College in south Dallas on May 13. A survey crew working for the college

found the remains in a wooded area and called 9-1-1. White disappeared on Oct. 22.

White and his husband, Rusty Jenkins, both left their home at around 4:45 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 22, driving separate cars on their way to separate gyms. White was last seen leaving the L.A. Fitness gym at CityPlace around 6 a.m. He was driving a black Porsche Macan, a loaner car from Park Place Motors.

From there, surveillance video from the RaceTrac gas station on Inwood Road at Maple Avenue in Oak Lawn showed him at a pump filling the car with gas. Another video showed him exiting the station onto

Inwood, going north toward his home.

But he never reached home.

White was an executive with KPMG who worked from home and was scheduled to participate in a Zoom call from home at 7:30 a.m. Jenkins filed a missing person report at 11 a.m.

Park Place Motors was unable to locate the car, even though loaner cars are normally fitted with GPS trackers. The car was found a week later about a mile from where White’s body was eventually found. At the time, police said they were waiting for results to come back from SWIFS, Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences.

“It is a very difficult and time-consuming process unfortunately,” Geist said at the time.

In addition, White’s phone was found in the car and police were waiting on warrants from Apple to unlock the phone. Then separate warrants were required for each application on the phone. There has been no word yet from police where they were in that process or if it revealed any clues.

Until his body was found, police were

not calling the case a death, but a disappearance. Throughout the investigation, however, they have been considering all possibilities.

Now, because cause of death has not yet been determined, White’s death has still not been ruled a homicide. Because of the state of decomposition, determining cause of death may be difficult, but Geist said she hopes results would be available soon that can give detectives new clues.

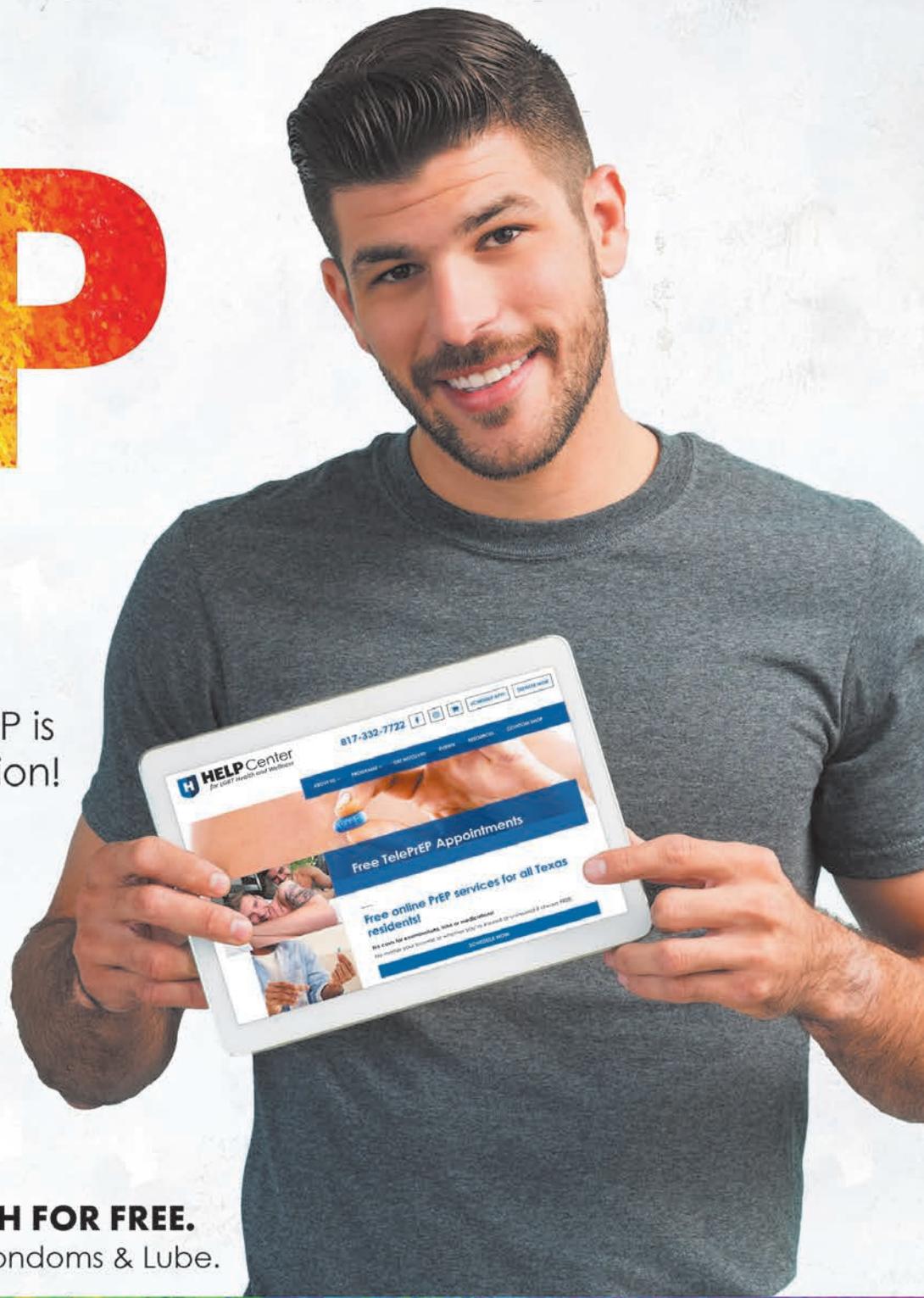
While the case hasn’t been officially ruled a homicide, Crime Stoppers is offering a \$5,000 reward for any information that leads to the arrest and indictment of a suspect in the case. In addition, a private fund has offered \$20,000 for information on White’s disappearance and death.

While police are waiting for autopsy results, they are actively seeking information in the case and ask that anyone with information related to White’s death contact Detective Eric Barnes at 214-283-4818 or by email at eric.barnes@dallascityhall.com, referencing case 188623-2020. ■

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 SCAN ME

PRIDE for all ages

Robin Stevenson (Stephanie Hull Centric Photography)

THE MOMBIAN

Author writes Pride books for tots to teens and those in between

DANA RUDOLPH | Contributing Columnist

There are happily now many children's books about Pride, but Robin Stevenson may be the author who has taken up the subject for the most age groups.

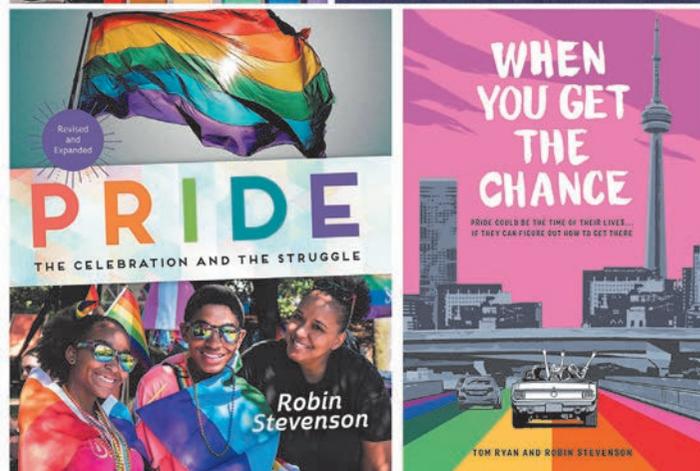
Over the past few years, Stevenson, an award-winning author of more than 25 books in total, has published a board book, a picture book, a middle grade nonfiction book and a young adult novel — all revolving around Pride.

She told me via e-mail, "Pride has always been important to me, but it has had different meanings for me at different times in my life — coming out as a young adult, taking my own child, talking to queer activists around the world in researching my book — and I think all of those meanings have filtered into my writing."

Her most recent book, *Pride Puppy!* (Orca Books, 2021) is an alphabet book and more, bursting with diversity across LGBTQ and other identities. "A for awake, animals and all," it begins, as a young child, a baby, and their two parents (one Black and female; the other white and nonbinary) wake up in the morning and get ready for the Pride march.

Each rhyming page takes us onward through the alphabet and the day, where Julie McLaughlin's colorful drawings show people of various ages, body types, skin tones, cultures, physical abilities, religions and LGBTQ identities. At one point, the puppy gets loose and romps across subsequent pages with the family in pursuit, offering an engaging narrative arc lacking in many ABC books. The book also incorporates a fun "seek-and-find" activity, with additional items to discover on every page.

Stevenson reflected, "When I wrote *Pride Puppy!*, I was thinking about fam-



ilies like mine, who look forward to the Pride parade every year — all the kids who love getting dressed up in fancy outfits, meeting up with friends, eating ice cream in the park, watching the floats go by, listening to music on the stages and feeling like a part of it all.

"But I was also thinking about kids who haven't had that chance, and I wanted to give them a glimpse of our beautiful, diverse, creative community. I tried to write this as a child's eye view of Pride, focusing on the things that might be relevant to a small kid."

Pride Puppy! is an energetic delight, but those who want something more soothing for the very youngest children should try Stevenson's board book *Pride Colors* (Orca Books, 2019). It takes the original meanings of the colors in the Pride flag, as envisioned by creator Gilbert Baker, and turns them into a poem from parent to child: "Yellow sunshine, smiles so bright./I'll hug you, kiss you, hold you tight."

"Board books are all about the relationship between the little one and the adult reader, and with *Pride Colors* I wanted to write a book that conveyed a message of absolute love and acceptance

from caregiver to child," Stevenson explained. "It includes the line 'Be yourself, love who you choose' — I think that is one of the meanings of Pride, and I love to think of children hearing that message from the very beginning of their lives."

For middle grade children ready to learn more specifics about Pride, however, Stevenson's nonfiction *Pride: The Celebration and the Struggle* (Orca Books, 2020) does the trick. It blends a history of the event with a broader look at the struggle for LGBTQ equality plus information about what it means to come out, what to expect at Pride events around the world, fun facts, profiles, a glossary and more.

"Pride offers a factual overview of LGBTQ+ history and community, and lots of stories to encourage and inspire young activists," Robinson said. "It's an outward-looking book, because middle grade readers are at an age when they are often wanting to know more about the world and how they can make a difference in it."

In contrast, her recent young adult book *When You Get the Chance* (Running Press Kids, 2021), written with fellow Canadian author Tom Ryan, "is more about the emotional experience of Pride and what it can mean to a young person — who may be grappling with questions about family, relationships, identity — to feel that they are a part of something bigger."

In that novel, a grandfather's death brings cousins Talia, 18, and Mark, 17, together at the Ontario cottage where they used to spend their summers. They haven't seen each other in years because their parents are estranged. Both teens are queer and struggling with the status of their romantic relationships.

Even though they don't really get along, Mark convinces Talia to take a break from family obligations and sneak off with him and his 10-year-old sister on a road trip to Toronto Pride. They get help from several older queer folks, meet new friends and learn more not only about LGBTQ culture but also about themselves.

Told in alternating chapters by Talia and Mark, this is a fun yet thoughtful book about family, community, and growing up. Mark and Talia are presumed white; supporting characters are of various skin tones and queer identities.

While *When You Get the Chance* and *Pride* are very different, Stevenson said, "They actually touch on some similar themes. ... In my non-fiction book, I explained the history of Pride very directly, while in this teen novel, facts about the Stonewall Uprising and changing ideas about identity are woven into intergenerational conversations between queer adults, teens, and kids."

No matter what age your kids are, Stevenson's books may even spark real-life intergenerational conversations about Pride and identity as well.

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com). Join her June 1 for the 16th annual #LGBTQFamiliesDay: post and share on all social media in support and celebration of LGBTQ families!

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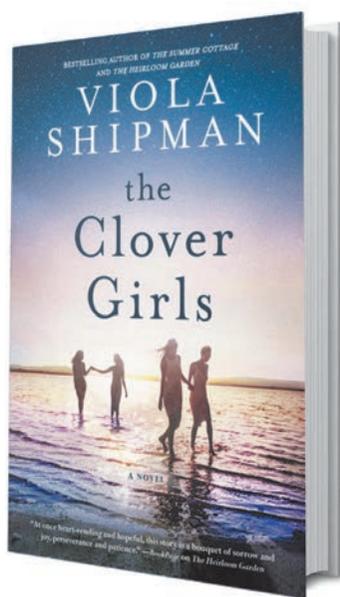
Contrived? A little

ON THE PAGE

But gay man's 'women's fiction' tale is worth a read

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER | Bookworm Sez
BookwormSez@yahoo.com

***The Clover Girls* by Viola Shipman;**
c.2021, Graydon House; \$16.99;
416 pages



The grass is greener on the other side of the fence. Someone else's life is always better than yours, warts and all, and you wanted what she got, partly because she got it first. Greener grass often goes with sour grapes, but, as in the new novel, *The Clover Girls* by Viola Shipman, it ultimately depends on how well you tend your garden.

V, formerly known as Veronica, felt fat. She was sure that her husband, David, was embarrassed by the weight she'd put on since the kids were born and she'd had to give up her modeling career. Yes, she was once a cover model, lithe and beautiful. Now, she had an extra 15 pounds, but no career, no forward-looking future and no friends.

And then she got the letter.

When they were kids at Camp Birchwood, Rachel told her camp-mates that she'd be a famous actress someday. More than 20 years later, she was famous alright — as the spokeswoman for

a misogynistic political candidate. Everybody hated what Rachel said on his behalf, and they sometimes hated her, too. But she was happy — wasn't she?

And then she got the letter.

As Liz sat next to her dying mother, it hit her: Liz's own kids and grandkids would never take care of her like that when the time came. So what kind of legacy was she leaving, then? There was her online store and a respectable amount of sales, but the creativity she had as a girl — the talent her friends appreciated — had never quite taken hold. And where were those friends these days, she wondered.

And then she got the letter.

Em said she'd be dead by the time they read their letters, that the cancer had metastasized too far for a cure. Sweet, dear Emily was the only one who'd kept track of everyone; she'd hoped the friendship-shattering event that happened years ago was forgivable, and she took a drastic move to try and make it so.

But is a four-leaf clover that's missing a leaf still lucky?

There's a meme-thread going around social media chiding men who write awkwardly about female characters. You might ask yourself, then, how author Wade Rouse, a gay man writing under a female pseudonym, would do it. The answer is: With a semi-contrived plot and a whole lotta heart.

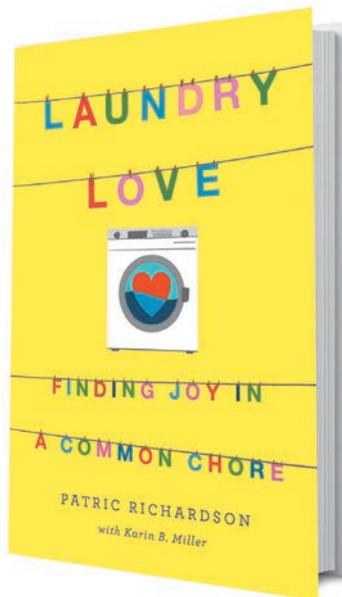
On one end, readers who are used to more action-packed novels may roll their eyes; the main characters in *The Clover Girls* are all celebrity look-alikes, their spat was schoolgirl-silly, the plot lines are oh-so-convenient: How many times will they spread Emily's ashes, and where did Liz get all that fabric?

It's enough to make you squint. And yet, the basic story here is sweet and not outrageously dramatic. Shipman/Rouse instead makes it gentle, loving, squeaky-clean and perfect for sharing with anyone who devours women's fiction like this.

So put aside the go-go-go novels. Look beyond the contrivances, and *The Clover Girls* may be your next obsession. Find it, and you might not be able to leaf it alone.

Learning to love laundry day

***Laundry Love: Finding Joy in a Common Chore* by Patric Richardson with Karin B. Miller;**
c.2021, Flatiron Books; \$25.99; 185 pages.



Tomorrow's outfit is on a chair over there. That's where it's been since you last washed it.

What you wore today came from a basket and off a hanger, the shirt needed ironing, there was a tiny stain on the pants but who noticed? And you just bought new socks, so there's that.

Time to do the wash? Yeah, but get a load of this: *Laundry Love* by Patric Richardson (with Karin B. Miller).

In one of his earliest memories, Patric Richardson's uncle holds him aloft so that Richardson could watch laundry swimming in the washer. He was almost a baby then, but the fascination was set: At age three, Richardson was "over the moon" when he received a toy washing machine as a birthday gift. He remembers that it was Harvest Gold.

Growing up, Richardson absorbed washday secrets from an extended family of women, and he learned the appeal of laundry hung on a line outside. While at the University of Kentucky, he met three professors who taught him about textiles, and employers educated him further. Love of fabric eventually

became Richardson's career, and laundry is his love-language: "Caring for your loved ones' clothes shows them love."

The first thing to know, Richardson states, is that "Our clothes are bossy." If something you enjoy wearing says "Dry Clean Only" on the label, lay it on the kitchen counter, grab a pair of scissors, and cut that label off because, "Anything can be washed at home."

Here, you'll learn how to save time on wash day. Find out why big-brand-name detergents are unsafe, and see what you need to care for your clothes properly. Learn to iron, eliminate horrible stains, wash woolens and other awkward-to-clean items and see how to rescue yellowed linens and special-event clothing like a pro.

Remember, says Richardson, "You don't have to do laundry — you get to do laundry."

These days, though, author Patric Richardson doesn't "get to" very often. His husband, he says, does their wash while Richardson runs a clothing store and offers "Laundry Camp" at the Mall of America. But since not everyone can be a happy camper, there's *Laundry Love*.

If you're thinking that a book about joyfully washing clothes would be a mighty skinny book, you're right, but laundry is only a part of this story here. The rest is biography, and a love-letter to Appalachian and Southern women. In giving props to the women who raised him, Richardson shows how his interest in fabric grew, too; the subject of textiles, which may be perceived as mundane by many, is treated in this light as something precious and accessible.

If you come for the biography, you'll be glad you stayed for the hints as Richardson shows how even the most delicate items can be safely home-cleaned. That fur you love? Done. That stinky-perfumed vintage item you found? Clean. Ahhhhhhh, so pick up the undies in the corner, use Grandma's linens, shop thrift-stores with impunity. Go ahead, fear-free. Having *Laundry Love* should take a load off your mind. ■

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WIRE

From Page 10

Rep. Diego Bernal, D-San Antonio, said it was all about politics for Republicans worried about primaries. He asked, "Is the cost worth it?"

It died with one Republican absent and Dutton voting present. Then in a dramatic reversal, Dutton brought the bill back up for a vote after his bill allowing Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath to remove school board members was killed on a technicality by Rep. Alma Allen, a Houston Democrat. Democrats generally oppose that bill but Dutton has advocated for more state control over the Houston Independent School District for poor performance.

"I don't know how big this problem [trans youth in sports] is, and I wish I did, because I'd be in a better position. I can tell you this," he said before the roll call, "the bill that was killed last night [allowing Morath to remove ISD board members] affected far more children than this ever will."

As a consequence of killing his bill, he brought SB 28 back in retaliation. Dutton even went so far as to sign on as a

House sponsor of the bill, joining Rep. Ken King, a West Texas Republican.

Committee member State Rep. Diego Bernal, a San Antonio Democrat told the Texas Tribune it was "soul-crushing" and that "bringing it back up, was used as a form of retaliation by the chairman," Bernal said.

Dutton was slammed by LGBTQ advocates. Human Rights Campaign State Director Rebecca Marques said his move showed "the petty and cruel ways that Texas elected officials use the lives of trans kids to score political points without regard to the actual human impact."

He should be on watch.

"We have a track record of supporting pro-LGBTQ candidates and working with lawmakers to expand their understanding of LGBTQ Texans," Marques added. "LGBTQ voters have a consistently high turnout – and they know who stands with them, and who works to harm them."

SB 29 has been sent to the Calendar Committee. The legislative session ends on May 31.

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2 Maxie Johnson

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1 Adam Bazaldua
2 Kevin Felder

Council District 11

1 Barry Wernick
2 Jaynie Schultz

Council District 13

1 Leland R. Burk
2 Gay Donnell Willis

Council District 14

1 Paul E. Ridley
2 David Blewett

DALLAS COUNTY EARLY VOTING DATES/TIMES

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May (mayo) 28	Friday (viernes)	7a.m. to 7p.m.
May (mayo) 29	Saturday (sábado)	8a.m. to 5p.m.
May (mayo) 30	Sunday (domingo)	1p.m. to 6p.m.
May (mayo) 31	Memorial Day	
<i>Polls are Closed</i>	<i>las encuestas están cerradas</i>	
June (junio) 1	Tuesday (martes)	7a.m to 7p.m

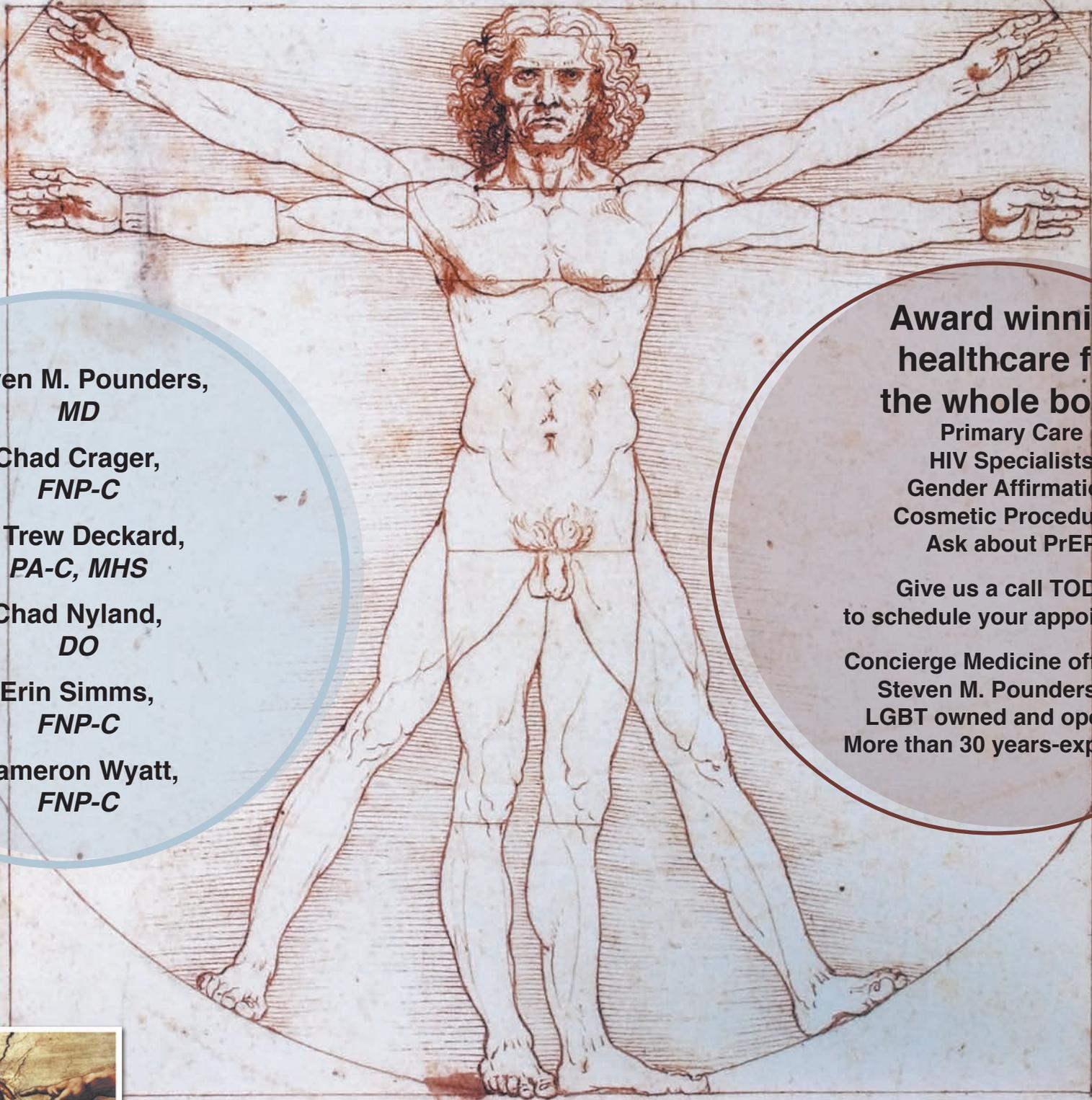
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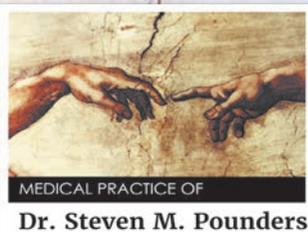
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DISCUSS THIS

The HRC DFW Federal Club holds a virtual mixer Friday, May 21, at 6:30 p.m., which will feature a discussion on how allies can become strategic players in advocating for and advancing the interests of oppressed and marginalized communities. Led by Sara Brummel, North America inclusion and diversity learning and development lead for Accenture, the discussion will include an explanation on the difference between allyship, accomplice(ship) and advocacy. Register at [HRCDFW2021May.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com). The confirmation email will include Zoom login information.



MIX HERE

AIN hosts a Gallery Night, its first mixer and fundraiser of 2021 on Thursday, May 27, from 6-9 p.m., at 1604 Main St. in downtown Dallas. The event features the portraiture and still life work of photographer Brendan Blaney, which draws inspiration from the Dutch masters and focuses on light and composition. The evening starts at La Tarte Tropezienne where attendees can get a glass of champagne and a bite to bring to the gallery. A percentage of purchases at La Tarte Tropezienne and of Blaney's work benefits the clients and communities of AIN. Visit [Facebook.com/events/135370881915776](https://www.facebook.com/events/135370881915776).



READ THESE

Award-winning author **Robin Stevenson** has written more than 25 books overall, including four books about Pride, each written with a specific audience in mind — from tots to tweens and teens. *Pride Colors* is a board book for the youngest young'uns about the meaning of the colors in the Pride flag; *Pride Puppy* is for toddlers and focuses on a family's trip to the Pride parade. Then comes *Pride: The Celebration and the Struggle*, a booked aimed at the tween group that explains the history of Pride, and *When You Get the Chance* is a young adult book about teenage cousins on a road trip to Toronto Pride. Mombian columnist Dana Rudolph talks about each book, with comments from the author, on page 14 in this issue of Dallas Voice.



Alicia Graf Mack, dean and director of the Juilliard School, will be the featured guest artist at Dallas Black Dance Theater's Spring celebration, streaming for 7 p.m. Saturday through 11:59 p.m. Sunday. See listings for details.

PLAN YOUR WEEK

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

The Gay Agenda is now color-coded: Red for community events; blue for arts and entertainment; purple for sports; green for nightlife and orange for civic events and holidays.

• May 21: Federal Club mixer

Transforming from ally to advocate. A discussion of how an in-group can advance the interests of an oppressed or marginalized out-group. To be a part of the discussion of how allies can become strategic players, visit [DFWFederalClub.org](https://www.DFWFederalClub.org).

• May 24: Lambda Weekly

Dallas City Council District 14 candidate Paul Ridley is the guest on Lambda Weekly at 1 p.m. on 89.3 KNON-fm with David Taffet, Lerone Landis and the late Patti Fink.

• May 22: Mr. Misster Drag Brunch

A selection of champagne with music from resident DJs and special guests and a drag show at 2 p.m. Tickets from \$25 at [Eventbrite.com](https://www.Eventbrite.com). Mr. Misster, 3900 Cedar Springs Road.

• May 22: Karen Chattum book signing

Karen Chattum, author of *Tired of Being Tired*, will sign copies of her book on AIDS awareness among black women. A portion of proceeds benefits AIN. From 1 a.m.-1 p.m. at Home2 Suites by Hilton, 1300 E. Centre Park Blvd., DeSoto.

• May 22: Pilobolus in the Garden

A TITAS-commissioned site-specific work, *Pilobolus in the Garden* will take audience members through a physically and emotionally moving performance experience that explores the vistas of the sculpture garden while exploring the nature of nature. Nasher Sculpture Center, 2001 Flora St. at noon, 1:30 p.m., 3 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Tickets at [ATTPAC.org](https://www.ATTPAC.org).

• Through May 22: Butterflies Are Free

Rover Dramawerks presents the classic comedy *Butterflies are Free* by Leonard Gershe at The Core Theatre, 518 W. Arapaho Road, Richardson. Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m. and Saturdays at 3 and 8 p.m. [RoverDramaWerks.com](https://www.RoverDramaWerks.com).

• May 22-23: The Wars of the Roses

Shakespeare Dallas presents a staged reading of Shakespeare's history plays: *Henry VI Part I*, *Henry VI Part II*, *Henry VI Part III* and *Richard III* at Samuell-Grand Amphitheatre, 6000 E. Grand Ave. at noon.

• May 22-23: Dallas Black Dance Theater

DBDT's Spring Celebration performance features guest artist Alicia Graf Mack, dean and director of the Juilliard School. The virtual performance can be streamed from Saturday at 7 p.m. to Sunday at 11:59 p.m. \$30 per household. [DBDT.com](https://www.DBDT.com).

• May 23: WOOD/SHOP

The third in a series of three programs features innovative new works by Bruce Wood Dance company dancers Weaver Rhodes and Seth York at 4 p.m. on Zoom. Free. Register at [BruceWoodDance.org](https://www.BruceWoodDance.org).

• Through May 23: Cotton Patch Gospel

This rustic musical full of bluegrass, country, and gospel music is "the greatest story ever retold." Outdoors at the back lot of The Firehouse Theatre, 2535 Valley View Lane, Farmers Branch. \$36. [TheFirehouseTheatre.com](https://www.TheFirehouseTheatre.com).

• May 25: Name and gender change workshop

Lambda Legal discusses what the process looks like in Texas to secure state and federal identity documents. Lawyers can receive CLE credit. Meeting via Zoom. [LambdaLegal.org](https://www.LambdaLegal.org).

• May 27-29: Tenants/Tenets

TENANTS/TENETS is a futurist dance theater performance that spontaneously generates a fully functioning society in which its community must determine their responsibility to each other, based on their individual identities, presented by Very Good Dance Theatre at the Wyly Theatre, 2400 Flora St. at 8 p.m. Tickets at [tickets.attpac.org/production/55208](https://www.tickets.attpac.org/production/55208).

Look for extended listings online at [DallasVoice.com](https://www.DallasVoice.com)

Ask Howard

HOW TO DO THE WRONG THING RIGHT

Memorial Day Weekend's just around the corner, summertime's unofficial start. The itch of everyone suddenly craving to escape for a fun vacation this year is near deafeningly palpable! Travel is on everyone's mind — somewhere, anywhere, just get me outta here! Biden's promise of 100 million fully vaccinated in the U.S. has been fulfilled, twice over, no less. So one would think that traveling the world over might now — for the fully-inoculated, certainly — be entirely their oyster to pick from. One would be dead wrong.

Even if your tropical island dream vacation plans this summer take you to a “welcoming” nation, here's the ugly, raw truth about your vaccination card: For traveling abroad, it counts for less than even nothing. Zilch! Go ahead and have it laminated if you like. It's worth as much as the vacuum-sealed plastic you'll spend to protect it in. But there exists no national data base in regards to who has or hasn't been inoculated. Hell, any 12-year-old can Xerox perfectly that tatty paper rectangle's fraudulence. And anybody with the power to grant access through swinging airport doors couldn't give one flying duck about your so-called “Proof of Vaccination.”

OK, serenely now, let's everybody just swill a long, tall draught of our Sex-on-the-Beach and get right to it, shall we?

Dear Howard: I want to go traveling overseas this summer — a faraway beach, somewhere exotic with plumaged birds and suckling pigs roasted in graves with banana leaves. I'm done pacing around, stuck Covid-bound here in Texas. I wanna hit someplace friendly and aspersions-free where I can openly dig a bulging bikini on a wild isle of dudes by a palm tree in the sand!

So, what's the deal this summer with traveling internationally? Are proof of vaccinations now a requirement? I don't trust them vaccines. But, still, I wanna get around. I'm thinkin' big, like Tahiti, Bora Bora . . . Raiatea, even! There's gotta be some backwater jewel that has sparkling, untainted beaches, not pawn shops and stripper poles and sandy beaches glittering with spent shell casings. I can't do another Redneck Riviera same-old/same-old. I even saved up my stimulus check money! Just toss a dart for me over toward the Indian Ocean somewhere and tell me where she sticks. Just once in my life, I wanna be **Thong-Tan Thor!**

Dear Thor, The Island Sex God: I can't speak for the Society Islands or the Seychelles, but as it just so happens, I did actually spend a month last week in The Maldives, which I believe may be in your hand grenades-&-horseshoes' range of Indian Ocean options. Advertised as the ideal “Vaccine Tourist Destination,” this bare-inches-above-sea-level nation is comprised of a coral-reef archipelago chain of over 1,200 islands located three degrees above the equator and surrounded by nothing but endless sea. The Maldives are ideally located to contract nothing. And everybody this summer is looking to travel anywhere other than where they've spent their last year cooped-up, rushing toward nowhere. The Maldives is ideally situated to contract absolutely nothing infectious by anyone. Let's go there!

But, wait. There's a catch to traveling to a place where three days, two jumbo jets, one seaplane and a bouncing speedboat are needed just to get there. In this new world order, no matter whether you're traveling steerage and staying in a one-star sex hotel, or whether you're roughing it via a Qatar Airlines' First-Class Cabin, followed by a 24/7 personal butler on your five-star island resort, the answer to any question asked of said staffer will always be a smilingly

emphatic, “No!” Nodding affirmatively, with a graciously lilting bow, endearingly pressing his palm against

his heart, “No, I'm afraid is not possible at

the moment.” Immediately, there follows the requisite faux frown, replete with now sagging palm upon his heart. Aridly, he whispers the slammed gate that assuages any possible scintilla of personal integrity, responsibility, fault or blame: “COVID.”

But why can't we join another couple for dinner at their table tonight whom we met today at The Whale Bar, where nobody is even allowed except guests here of your hotel, all of whom have been thoroughly vaccinated already, only then to be force-tested, yet again, 72 hours prior to our arrival here on this bleached coral clod? Because only family members may sit together at the same table.

But we have zero family members with us; that was the whole point of coming here! We're sick of our family members. We came here to mingle again, finally, with total strangers — totally vaccinated strangers!

At the risk of being labeled a politically-incorrect racist xenophobe, or worse, I'm nevertheless gonna send up this trial balloon of advice for any of you out there still planning a same-sex couple's vacation this summer to an institutionally acolyte part of our world: Don't even think about it. They have ways of retaliation toward forwardism, far slyer than just, oh, Doha Stadium's regular, run-of-the-mill public stonings for those layover passengers caught to be engaging in Mile-High-Club antics, or whose luggage contain even a molecule of fabric in a shade other than mortuary. If nothing else, COVID has taught extremists how better to priori-



tize their hatreds. They've learned the long game. After all, why murder a poor fellow just for guzzling a long rope of jizz from a big happy penis when extortion/blackmail can provide both a steadily reliable stream of money on the side and suck the very life out of the deviant's soul, simultaneously!

On the surface, sure, everything looked so *Fantasy Island* meets *Finding Nemo*, yet one never shook the feeling that something just wasn't quite, well, sane. Case in point: My dear friend Tasha, and I met an erudite gay couple who'd jetted over for a quick holiday from Abu Dhabi, where they resided as “roommates” in one of the city's premier hotel residences. The elder of the two — when faced with the sudden decree that every guest would now have to take yet another COVID test within 72 hours prior to their scheduled departures, suggested that every test would return with a false positive forcing us all to stay another 14 days. Happily his accusations didn't play out. In fact, within a sea of otherwise unanimously negative test results, only one guest on the island's entire registrar received a positive. (I'll give you three guesses who, and the first two don't count.)

So take your unrevealed thrills where you can find them, bois, and enjoy your summer, wherever your paradisaical, teetering-tottering stumbles may take you. Yes, here's to you, Rona: Bottom's up . . . BITCH!

—Howard Lewis Russell

Got a question about forbidden love, jungle lust, tropical taboos or anything else Howard can offer his torpid take on? Email him at AskHoward@dallasvoice.com



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For complaints regarding **Sexual Orientation** and **Gender Identity**;

HOUSING, including the rental and sale of housing and all other business practices related to a person's housing activities;

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PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION, service in restaurants, theaters, retail store, and non-governmental public services (relative to sexual orientation only).

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this week's solution

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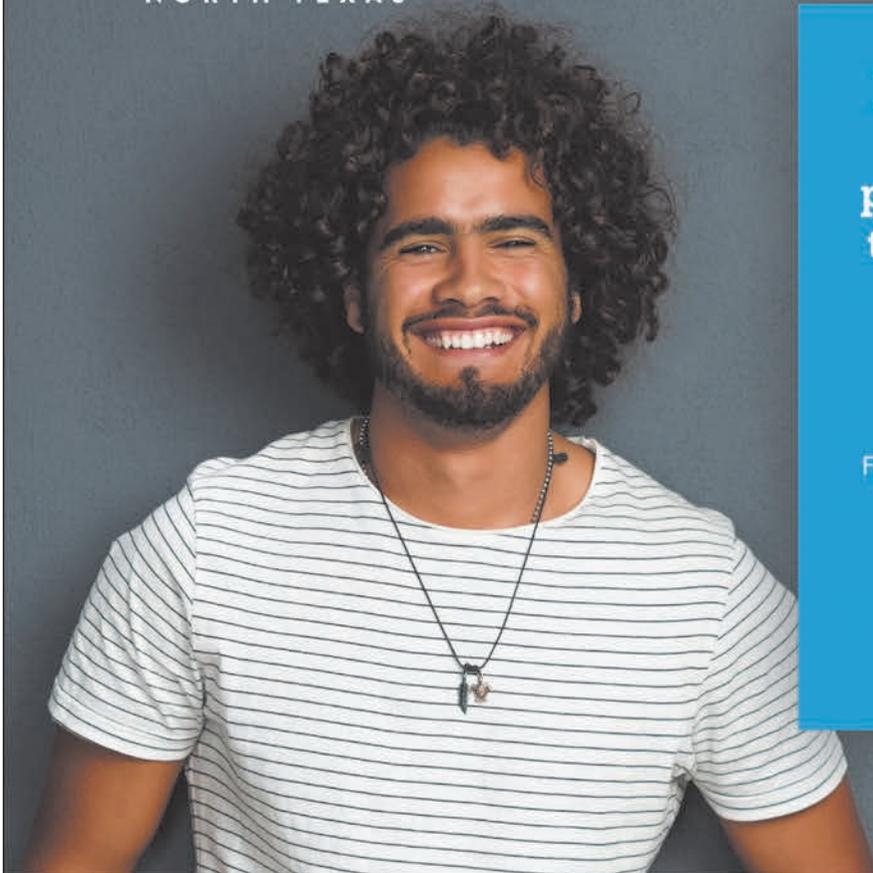


Black Lives Matter at JR's



Bowser, Aaron & Adam at The Balcony Club

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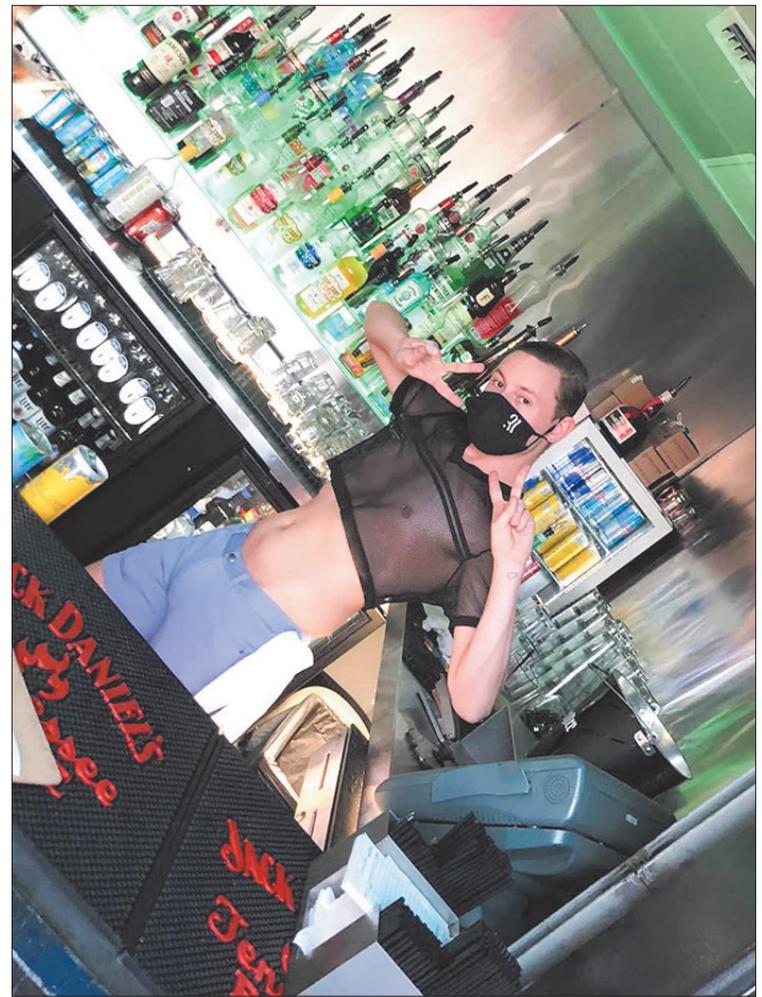
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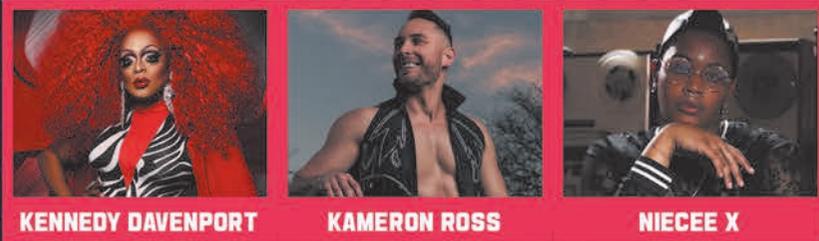
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Solution on Page 24

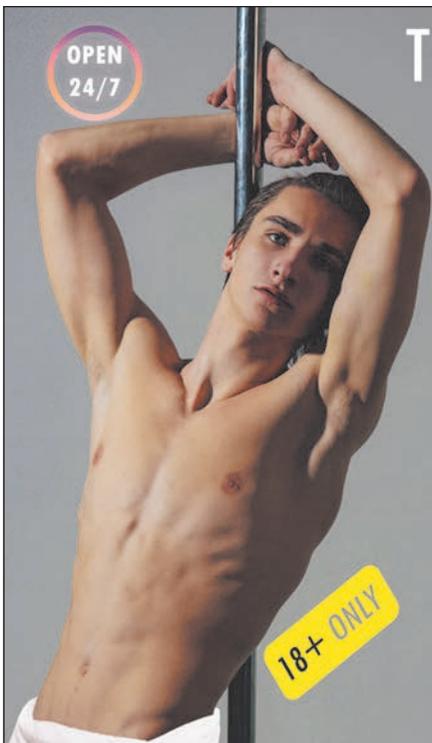
Across

- 1 Nutty as a fruitcake
- 5 Remarkable hole
- 10 Little fairies
- 14 Northern capital
- 15 Geometry calculations
- 16 Simba's love, on Broadway
- 17 Start of a quote by Ma in *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*
- 20 Petticoat junctions?
- 21 Taxpayer's ID
- 22 Cover for head or shoulders
- 23 Words in an analogy
- 25 One place to stick it
- 27 More of the quote
- 30 More of the quote
- 34 Home st. of Jim Nabors
- 35 The Continent, to Britten
- 37 Perlman of *Cheers*
- 38 Debtor's slips
- 40 *Dallas* setting
- 41 Eat it
- 42 Titanic, e.g.
- 44 Straight to ___
- 46 Half a fly?
- 47 Female hormone
- 49 Like a metrosexual
- 51 Drag queen Gene

Down

- 2 Umlaut pair
- 2 Straight AIDS victim Arthur
- 3 Bitch botherer
- 4 Agee of the *Amazin' Mets*
- 5 It's stimulated by Bernstein
- 6 Playground retort
- 7 Precious stones
- 8 Where space ships start
- 9 Sink-trap shape
- 10 Slang for a small member
- 11 Poet Angelou
- 12 Farmer's tool
- 13 Bellow in the library?

- 18 Davis of *King*
- 19 Voyeur's confession
- 24 Carpenter's connector
- 26 Witherspoon of *Big Little Lies*
- 27 Ethiopia's Selassie
- 28 California middle name
- 29 Claim 9 inches online, say
- 30 Asp secretion for Cleopatra
- 31 *Gone with the Wind* guy
- 32 Rock-bottom
- 33 Pol in the Bears' hometown
- 36 Mardi Gras crowd, e.g.
- 39 Treacherous types
- 43 Top of the mouth
- 45 *The ___ Love* of R.E.M.
- 48 Robert of *Camelot*
- 50 Top floors
- 52 Cut
- 53 Part of a drag queen's wig
- 54 Shed item
- 55 Shakespearean verb
- 56 Star Turner
- 57 *Spamalot* writer Eric
- 58 Dijon dusk time
- 59 DeLaria of comedy
- 62 High arcing shot



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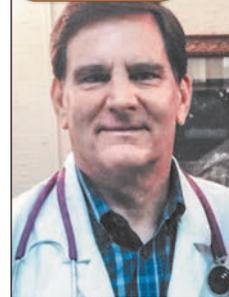


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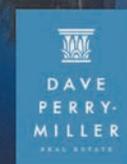
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