

# dallasvoice

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## 5 YEARS LATER

The lasting impact of the Pulse shooting

By David Taffet, Page 8



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# Bites from our blog

WHAT'S THE TEA: DallasVoice.com



## Arlington Council sets 2nd reading of nondiscrimination ordinances

The Arlington City Council voted unanimously this week to approve an update to the city ordinance banning discrimination in housing and to approve a completely new ordinance banning discrimination in employment and public accommodations.

The Tuesday night, June 8, vote came on the first reading of the new and amended ordinances. The changes have to be approved on second reading, which is set for next Tuesday, June 15, before they go into effect.

Arlington resident DeeJay Johannessen, CEO of the Arlington-based HELP Center for LGBT Health and Wellness, said he was “shocked that the vote was unanimous. I was even more shocked that there was no one there to speak against the ordinances.”

Johannessen explained that the council voted to amend the existing ordinance banning discrimination in housing to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the protected classes. But, he added, the ordinance banning discrimination in employment and public accommodations is “completely new.”

“Until now, the housing ordinance was the only nondiscrimination ordinance the city of Arlington had,” Johannessen said.

— Tammye Nash

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## Proclaiming Pride

The Fort Worth City Council this week issued a proclamation honoring LGBTQ Pride Month. Sharon Herrera with LGBTQ S.A.V.E.S., pictured left, and Tyler Long with Trinity Pride, right, accepted the proclamation from Councilmember Ann Zadeh. Felipe Gutierrez, president of Tarrant County Stonewall Democrats, said, "I'm a proud and out Fort Worth resident and enjoy uplifting our local LGBTQ organizations. We celebrate Pride and promote self-affirmation, dignity, equality, and increased visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people in Fort Worth. I'd like to wish everyone a Happy Pride Month!"

The city of Coppell this week issued a proclamation honoring Pride Month, likely it's first-ever recognition of Pride Month, according to a Coppell resident who attended the meeting during which the proclamation was issued. A large crowd of families and youth people waving rainbow Pride flags was present for the near-unanimous vote on the proclamation. But the vote was not without a bit of controversy: The lone holdout was Councilmember John Jun, who abstained from the vote after reading a lengthy statement explaining why he was choosing to abstain.

The Rowlett City Council also issued a Pride Month proclamation, despite opposition by some who showed up at the council meeting to complain that they were offended by the proclamation. Rowlett went a step further and marked Pride Month by lighting up the city's water tower in rainbow-colored lights.

— From Staff Reports

## Beto registers voters in Dallas



I met Beto O'Rourke at Joy AME Church in South Dallas just before he was about to meet the pastor and knock on doors in the neighborhood to register new voters with his organization Powered by People. The group registers voters and fights voter suppression.

O'Rourke said members of his group have become certified voter registrars in every county, and he's engaging future voters by talking to people about issues that interest them. What interests O'Rourke right now is voter suppression. He said thanks to the efforts of people like Rep. Jessica Gonzalez, those efforts in the Texas Legislature have been at least delayed.

So the big question was whether O'Rourke is running for governor in 2022, and I joked that he should feel free to announce that in Dallas Voice. His honest answer was that he'll do what will best serve the people of Texas, whether that's as a candidate or campaigning for another candidate.

How successful has his group been? He's

gotten hundreds of people certified as registrars who have registered thousands of new voters.

One of the most successful efforts has been registering young voters at a high school in Laredo. He hopes to expand that effort around the state.

— David Taffet

## Todrick Hall drops his album, announces concert

DFW's own Todrick Hall dropped his brand-new album, *Femuline*, Tuesday, June 8, the

same day that tickets went on sale for his March 26 concert at Texas Trust CU Theatre in Grand Prairie.

Tickets are on sale now at [AXS.com](https://www.axs.com) and at [TexasTrustCUTheatre.com](https://www.texasTrustCUTheatre.com).

The new album was released on frtyfive Records, and it features Todrick working with a whole host of famous names — from Chaka Khan Brandy, from Tyra Banks to "TS Madison and Nicole Scherzinger.

— Tammye Nash

## ADOPTABLE / CUTIE



Meet **Cutie**. She came to the SPCA of Texas from a cruelty case with her litter of puppies. Since then, all of her babies have been adopted, so now it's her turn to find a happy ending. Cutie is sweet as can be and very smart, too! She already knows commands like

sit and come, and she is leash trained, crate trained and house trained. She's the total package! Her goofy, fun-loving personality makes it easy to fall head over heels for her, and in return she shows plenty of love to all of her human friends. Cutie would do best in a home as the only pup and with kids ages 12 and up. She has been spayed and microchipped and is current on all age-appropriate vaccinations. To celebrate #ShelterPetSummer, you can adopt an adult dog or cat from the SPCA of Texas' shelters for only \$25. The special will be offered for pets located at the SPCA of Texas' shelters and in their foster homes, and adoptions will be by appointment only. To request an appointment to meet Cutie, please visit [SPCA.org/DogAdopt](https://www.spcatexas.org/DogAdopt).

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## The IMPORTANCE of marriage equality

Rights that hetero couples take for granted are hard-won and precious for same-sex couples

The time is right, so I want to share something that illustrates the importance of equality and equity in general, and Pride month in particular. As some of you may know, my dad is gay. He came out in the late 1990s.

He met his future husband, Troy, in 1999. They initially lived in Arkansas and then moved to Dallas, Texas. As one might expect, neither of those states were exactly friendly to the LGBTQ community.

As an additional factor, Troy is African-American. While not an issue for many of us, even heterosexual mixed-race couples still face occasional stigma. And given that *Loving v. Virginia* was only decided in 1967 (just seven years before I was born), one might see why such relationships still face obstacles.



**Joel E. Benecke**

Guest Contributor

Despite that, they lived their lives on their own terms. In 2006, Dad was diagnosed as HIV-positive. The very first thing he did was tell Troy. It was a difficult time for Dad. Troy stuck with him the entire time and provided the love and support that most of us hope we receive in the face of such difficult news.

As they persevered through that together, I would occasionally ask them about their thoughts on same-sex marriage. They both said they would like to be married but that they still felt as though that was a societal approval of something that they already knew was right. Despite that, they both ad-

amantly agreed that marriage equality needed to happen to ensure the rights of others.

Thankfully, the *Obergefell* decision legalized gay marriage nationally. And in 2018, Dad and Troy were married after having been partners for over 19 years. While that was, in and of itself, very important, let me continue the story to explain why.

In late 2019, Troy was diagnosed with late-stage cancer. After over a year of valiantly fighting, and with Dad by his side the whole time, Troy passed away on May 5, 2021. Dad was there for that as well.

Marriage equality is what allowed Dad to be by Troy's side and allowed him to be intricately involved in the medical and end-of-life decisions that many married couples take for granted.

Sharing our lives with someone is for many of us a very basic human need and a right that we need to protect. Our legal system cannot and should not be used to separate people from each other or from their rights.

So anytime you see someone attempting to subvert those rights, or in any way demean or repress other humans because they happen to disagree with their lifestyle, I urge you to think of my Dad and Troy.

I also urge you to think of how important it is for a spouse or partner to be involved with some of the most important decisions we will ever experience. And when you think of that, I urge you to follow through and be active in protecting those rights for everyone, regardless of whether or not you happen to agree with their lifestyle.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. Happy Pride Month to you all. Hold fast and keep fighting the good fight. ■

*Joel E. Benecke is the cofounder and managing partner of BenLath Law Group, based in West Chester, Penn. His father is Gary Benecke, eligibility supervisor with Resource Center in Dallas. Gary Benecke's husband was Troy Pruitt. June 25 marks the sixth anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in Obergefell v. Hodges legalizing marriage equality nationwide.*



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# Pride in Pictures

## PRIDE

**T**hey say a picture is worth a thousand words, and when it comes to the Dallas Pride celebration last weekend in The Coliseum at Fair Park, these photos say it all.

Dallas Pride staged two nights of entertainment at The Coliseum, and on Saturday night, Dallas Voice photographer Kat Haygood was there to catch all the action.

Look for more Pride photos in this issue of Dallas Voice (Carrollton Pride on pages 20 and 21, and Pride weekend on the Cedar Springs Strip and at City Tavern downtown in Scene, beginning on Page 30), and throughout the weeks to come.

Happy Pride Month, everyone! ■





# One heart, One pulse, Keep dancing, angels

## REMEMBERING PULSE

June 12 marks the 5th anniversary of the Pulse massacre

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer  
taffet@dallasvoice.com

I watched as each person who stepped off the bus began to cry. I followed, and as my feet touched the ground, I began to cry as well. It was 2017, and we were at Pulse nightclub in Orlando in 2017, almost a year after the massacre that took 49 lives and severely injured another 53 people the year before during Pride Month.

June 12 is the five-year anniversary of the Pulse shootings.

I was in Orlando for an LGBTQ journalists conference that day in 2017. Before taking us to dinner, our bus stopped at the new shrine. We got to see what was left of Pulse.

At the time, chain link fence surrounded the property, which was covered with banners and flowers, photos and other items paying tribute to those killed. The site was preserved as a memorial to those who died.

This week, to write this piece, I pulled out my pictures of the site and went through them. And I was crying again. The Pulse shooting had a profound — and lasting — effect on the LGBTQ community.



mara, Jayda.”

“Rodolfo Ayala: Te queremos mucho — con amor. M.”

“Edward Sotomayor: Friend. Brother. Son. The legend lives on.”

Pictures of the 49 victims, each framed in black, reminded us that each of these individuals was a person who loved and was loved. They were just people out having a fun evening, dancing and celebrating Pride — until the gunfire erupted.

After a three-hour stand-off, the police killed the single gunman. Before he was shot, the killer told negotiators the shooting was revenge for the American invasion of Iraq. The shooter, though, was born in the U.S. of Afghan parents. And many believe that the killer, despite his claims to police, was a closeted gay man and that his own self-hatred drove him to target the patrons of an LGBTQ bar. His father recalled that the shooter had gotten irrationally angry some months before when he saw two gay men kissing in public, and his wife at the time of the attack has since said she and other members of his family thought he was gay.

The question on everyone’s mind in the immediate aftermath of the massacre was simple: Why didn’t police end the violence faster to save lives?

The answer was simple: “They couldn’t move in sooner because they didn’t know for sure what was happening. They couldn’t be sure that coming in sooner wouldn’t end up with everybody dead,” explained A’zsia Dupree, a cast member from Pulse who performed at the Round-Up in Dallas a few months after the incident.

The Pulse shooting was the deadliest attack in the U.S. since Sept. 11, 2001, and it was the deadliest mass shooting by a single gunman at that time. The 2007 Virginia Tech shooting that took 32 lives was the deadliest until the shooting at Pulse, and just a year later, 2017, when 58 people were killed and 489 wounded in a mass shooting at a country music concert outside the Mandalay Bay hotel in Las Vegas.

Just after midnight on June 12, 2016,

The evening I visited Pulse, we spent an emotion-filled hour at the site. Each of us read every tribute. We each read the names of the victims — not repeating those names would have been disrespectful. We read each banner. Because not reading each tribute was unthinkable.

“Love more. Hate less,” read one banner. “We will not be defeated,” said another. Simple messages: “Orlando united.” “I have no words.” “One heart. One pulse. Keep dancing angels.”

There were tributes to individuals, as well:

“Shane Tomlinson: You will always and forever be in our hearts. Maibel, Ja-

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**PULSE**, From Page 10



patrons at Pulse called 9-1-1 for help while barricading themselves in the bathroom and hiding under the bars. Survivors recalled hearing the gunman say that he wouldn't stop his massacre until the U.S. stopped bombing his country.

In Dallas, the new Resource Center building on Cedar Springs had just opened a few weeks earlier. The LGBTQ community responded to the shooting in Orlando by gathering for a vigil there that night. About 1,000 people came.

Then-Dallas Police Chief David Brown was among the speakers at that vigil. This was just weeks before four DPD officers and one DART officer were killed, and seven other officers and two civilians were wounded. Current Mayor/then state Rep. Eric Johnson attended the vigil for the Pulse victims, as did then-Mayor Mike Rawlings and half the

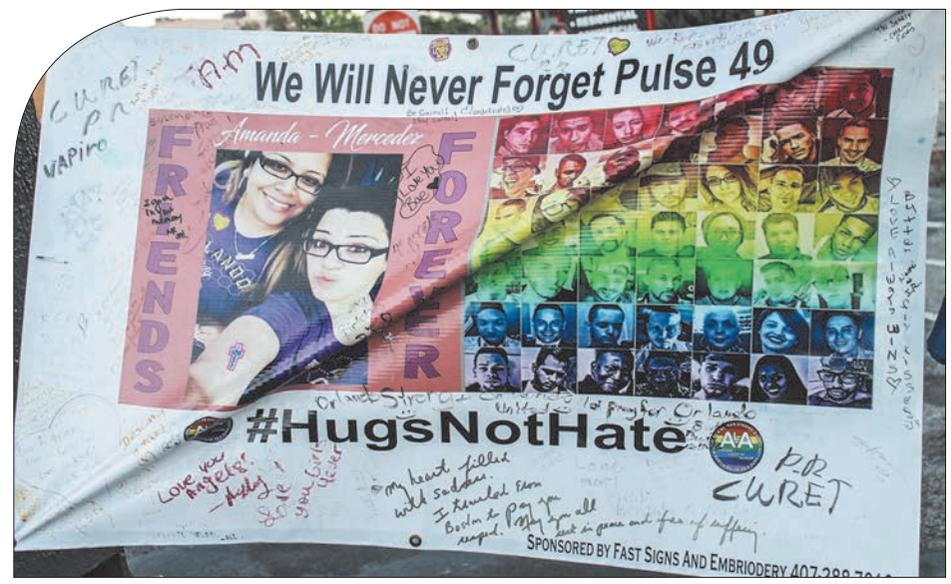
Dallas City Council.

Clergy participating included the Rev. Neil Thomas from Cathedral of Hope, Rabbi Andrew Paley from Temple Shalom and Imam Omar Suleiman. All were there to condemn the murders and help heal the LGBTQ community. Even more elected officials sent their condolences to the grieving LGBTQ community.

One exception was U.S. Rep. Pete Sessions, whose district at the time included parts of Oak Lawn, including most of Cedar Springs Road. At the time, Sessions made the bizarre claim Pulse wasn't a gay bar, and that the victims were Latino. It wasn't clear if Sessions understood that there were LGBTQ Latinos, or if he simply thought it was OK for these particular LGBTQ people to be killed since they were Latino.

As it turned out, at least one of those

**PULSE**, Page 25



# IT'S UNANIMOUS

## ARLINGTON PASSES NON-DISCRIMINATION ORDINANCE!

DeeJay Johannessen, HELP Center CEO, testified before the Arlington City Council this week to recommend adoption of an anti-discrimination ordinance that included housing, employment and public accommodation protections for sexual orientation and gender identity. We applaud the Arlington City Council and Mayor Jeff Williams for unanimously passing this ordinance with nobody speaking in opposition to its adoption.

Passage of the ordinance, with overwhelming support, is an exciting and welcomed advance for LGBT+ equality in Arlington, America's 49th largest city.

Central to our mission, HELP has worked with city leaders for several years to ensure city services and programming are welcoming and inclusive of the LGBT+ population.

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Arlington City Council member Andrew Piel (left) & Arlington Mayor Jeff Williams (right) present the 2021 Pride Month Proclamation to DeeJay Johannessen, CEO HELP Center for LGBT Health & Wellness.



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# No rainbows in Ranger land

SPORTS

The Texas Rangers are the only Major League Baseball team NOT to have an LGBTQ Pride event

DAVID WEBB | Contributing Writer  
DavidWayneWebb@yahoo.com

**I**rony will be at play when the Texas Rangers face off against the Houston Astros in the Space City team's first annual Pride Night, dubbed "Baseball is for Everyone," at Minute Maid Park in Houston on June 16.

The Rangers and the Astros entered this season as the last two hold-outs among Major League Baseball's 30 teams when it came to sponsoring Pride celebrations. Whether they win or lose against Houston, the Rangers will be the only team left not participating in Pride at game's end. And to date there is no indication when, if ever, there will be such a celebration at Globe Life Field.

That is a question now on everyone's mind.

The Rangers responded to Dallas Voice's inquiries with a statement, issued by Executive Vice President of Communications John Blake, saying the team welcomes and respects everyone. But the statement did not mention Pride.

"Our commitment is to make everyone feel welcome and included in Rangers baseball," Blake said in the statement. "That means in our ballpark, at every game and in all we do — for both our fans and our employees. We deliver on that promise across our many programs to have a positive impact across our entire community."

The situation is frustrating, says Rafael McDonnell, communications and advocacy manager for the Resource Center of Dallas. He started lobbying the Rangers to become more inclusive in the area of LGBTQ matters in the spring of 2019 as part of a broader initiative directed at all professional sports teams in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Representatives of the Rangers met at the Resource Center to learn about LGBTQ issues and to consult about what needed to be done. And



Rafael McDonnell

the team responded favorably by adding sexual orientation and gender identity protections to employment policies and developing education programs aimed at curbing LGBTQ discrimination and harassment both internally and externally, McDonnell noted.

McDonnell also enlisted the help of Billy Bean, an openly gay retired professional baseball player who is now vice president and special assistant to MLB Commissioner Robert D. Manfred Jr. Bean lobbied the Rangers on LGBTQ issues, and the Rangers sought his help in the training of seasonal employees.

The Rangers stepped up to the plate on all points — with the exception of celebrating Pride during a home game, McDonnell noted. But the dialogue about Pride celebrations continues, according to both McDonnell and Blake.

"They've never indicated one way or the other," McDonnell said. "A lot of

groundwork has been laid, but we're stranded on third base, wanting to make it home."

The Chicago Cubs started the Pride tradition among MLB clubs in 2001, and their event is now called Out at Wrigley Field. Other teams followed Chicago's lead and began adopting the practice. The LGBTQ sports publication Outsports reported in 2019 that only the Rangers and the Astros lagged behind.

Houston's LGBT Chamber of Commerce started lobbying the Astros, and the team announced it would host a Pride celebration in 2020. The game was cancelled because of pandemic restrictions, so the first annual celebration will be this month.

Only two MLB players are known to have been openly gay: Glenn Lawrence Burke and Billy Bean.

Burke, who played for the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Oakland Athletics from

1976 to 1979, came out as gay to his team's owners and teammates while he was still playing. Burke is credited with inventing the "high-five" tradition after he ran on the field to congratulate a player for hitting a home run. He came out publicly by saying, "They can't ever say now that a gay man can't play in the majors, because I'm a gay man and I made it."

Burke died of AIDS-related causes in 1995, the same year that Bean retired from Major League Baseball. Four years later, in 1999, Bean revealed his sexual orientation.

The Pride Project analyzed social media responses to MLB's Pride events nationwide in 2020 after the Outsports story was published. MLB's Pride celebrations range from large productions to simple discounts on game tickets. The analysis showed that Pride events draw large numbers of LGBTQ fans to the games, including many who otherwise might not feel comfortable attending professional sporting events.

The bottom line is that teams benefit financially from the additional ticket sales, and the positive optics of helping to normalize a marginalized group may also help active team members become more comfortable coming out.

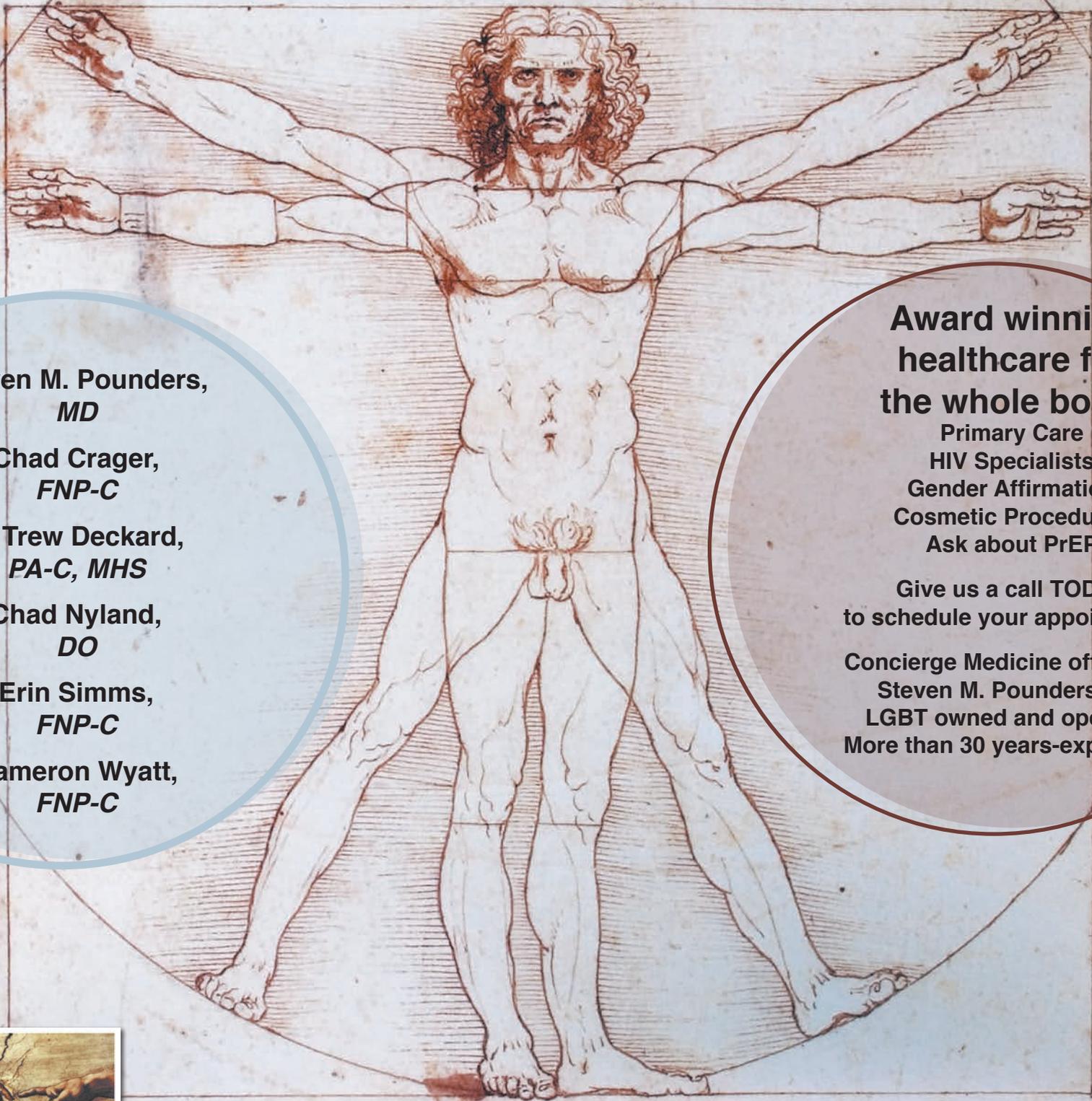
How professional sports teams approach Pride celebrations is of more critical importance than whether the event is staged or not, said Lisa Howe, vice president of memberships and programs for North Texas LGBT Chamber of Commerce, which has helped professional sports teams in the DFW area plan Pride celebrations. She noted that a "hush-hush strategy to sell lots of tickets to the gay people and hope no one beats them up in the parking lot" will backfire on the team.

"One good way to frustrate a lot of people is to sell a lot of tickets, and there are no rainbows and nothing on the jumbotron making announcements through the night," Howe adds. "They need to anticipate pushback and be ready to say they are not afraid to put their brand on that to support other communities. They need to be the one doing the pushing and the marketing. That's good when they take ownership of it."

McDonnell pointed out that the news

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**MIKEY ROX** | Contributing Writer  
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**A**fter a season-long hiatus from hosting in-the-stands fans at its 30 ballparks and stadiums due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Major League Baseball (and its Minor League Baseball feeder system) is back — and you know what that means: All them butts!

Aside from gawking at your favorite players' posteriors in form-fitting pin-striped pants — while following CDC protocol, of course — there are plenty of queer cheers to give for America's national pastime. These are gayest things you didn't know about pro ball.

### Glenn Burke broke the first barrier, but it may have cost him

As an outfielder for the Los Angeles Dodgers from 1976 to '78 (and widely regarded co-inventor of the high-five — true story), Glenn Burke broke ground as the first active MLB player to come out as gay to his teammates and bosses. While he was asked to refrain from making his sexual orientation public by Dodgers' top brass, Burke told *People* magazine in 1994 that his "mission as a gay ballplayer was to break a stereotype," and he thought it worked.

In other interviews and in his autobiography, however, Burke suggested that prejudice drove him out of the sport, not the injury that sent him back down to the minors after a year with the Oakland Athletics.

The A's released Burke from his contract before the end of his injured farm-team season, and he retired from the game in 1980.

In the initial years following his retirement, Burke competed in 100- and 200-meter sprints at the inaugural Gay Games in 1982 and in basketball at the



Billy Bean

1986 Games, and for many years he played for the San Francisco Gay Softball League. Burke died of complications from AIDS in 1995.

### Burke befriended Tommy Lasorda Jr., and Tommy Senior wasn't happy about it

Legendary Dodgers manager Tommy Lasorda Sr. — who led the team to two World Series championships, four National League pennants and eight division titles during his 20-year stewardship from 1976 to 1996 — had a gay son. Burke befriended the younger Lasorda, which angered the "family values" manager, causing a rift that likely contributed to Burke being traded to the A's after three seasons in Los Angeles.

Lasorda Jr. died of AIDS complications in 1991 at age 33. Lasorda Sr. died earlier this year without ever having admitted he had a gay son.

### It's been 22 years since the second MLB player publicly acknowledged his sexual orientation

Billy Bean, an outfielder for the Detroit Tigers, L.A. Dodgers and San Diego Pa-

dres from 1987 to 1995, came out in the *Miami Herald* in 1999, four years after retiring. Besides Burke, he remains the only other former MLB player to publicly acknowledge his homosexuality post-career.

No active player has ever come out publicly, and no former players have come out since. In 2003, Bean released his autobiography *Going the Other Way: Lessons from a Life in and out of Major League Baseball*, and in 2014 he was named MLB's first Ambassador for Inclusion.

In 2016 that role was expanded to vice president of social responsibility and inclusion, and today Bean serves as vice president and special assistant to the commissioner.

### The L.A. Dodgers are the only team for whom both players who have come out as gay played

Both Burke and Bean played for the Dodgers during their MLB careers — and as history tends to repeat itself, maybe there's a gayby on the Dodgers' roster right now. If that's true, here's hoping he has the courage to come out and make history while an active player, put the final nail in the coffin of the Dodgers' homophobic past and serve

as an inspiration to aspiring young pro ball players everywhere.  
No pressure.

### Statistics suggest there are dozens of closeted pro baseball players

In a 2015 article for the *New York Times*, economist and public policy scholar Justin Wolfers wrote that, based on the proportion of American men who have admitted to being gay or bisexual (though not necessarily out), there must be closeted MLB players actively taking the field. Thirty MLB teams each have 40-men rosters, equaling 1,200 players who don't publicly identify as queer.

"If baseball players are as likely to be gay as other men their age — let's go with an estimate of 1 in 25 — then the odds that none of these men are gay is one in two sextillion," Wolfers wrote. "A sextillion comes after a trillion, quadrillion and quintillion; it is a thousand billion billion."

Of course, there may be gay or bisexual men in MLB who have ripped a page from Burke's playbook and only confided within their own club. Time will tell.

### Lower-level pro ball has a much better coming-out average

Since Sean Conroy, former pitcher for the independent Sonoma Stompers, came out publicly in 2015 while still on the team's roster — the first-ever active pro ball player to do so — a handful of others have followed in his pioneering footsteps (at various stages of their careers), including MiLB players David Denson, Tyler Dunnington, Jason Burch and John Dillinger.

### The San Francisco Giants made rainbow history for Pride 2021

MLB teams are known to incorporate cause-based logos and patches into their uniforms throughout the season — like the pink breast cancer awareness



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## SHA-WING, From Page 16

ribbon, for instance, or camouflage to show military appreciation.

But on June 5, 2021, the San Francisco Giants became the first team in big-league history to rainbow-ize its uniforms, including a right-sleeve home jersey patch in Pride colors and a matching logo on players' hats, in celebration of its LGBTQ+ fans.

"We are extremely proud to stand with the LGBTQ+ community as we kick off one of the best annual celebrations in San Francisco by paying honor to the countless achievements and contributions of all those who identify as LGBTQ+ and are allies of the LGBTQ+ community," San Francisco Giants CEO Larry Baer said in a statement.

### A scripted series about gay professional ball players may be coming soon

Author Peter Lefcourt's novel, *The Dreyfus Affair: A Love Story* (1992), about homophobia in baseball that follows two MLB players who get caught

up in a sex scandal should be required reading for any on-the-spectrum queer sports fans, but if you're adverse to cracking open a dusty book, the live-action TV adaptation may be coming to a streaming service near you.

Universal Television has optioned the novel for development with Oscar and Emmy-winner David Frankel (*The Devil Wears Prada*) tapped to direct and co-write the pilot with Lefcourt.

The project has been in development in some form for the past 28 years. Studios put the kibosh on Lefcourt's and Frankel's original movie scripts in 1996 — Disney was even interested at one point — citing lack of commercial appeal.

But we all know that's just industry code for "We're too pussy to make this gay movie, so here's *Evita*."

### These are the best butts in baseball according to Us magazine

There's no definitive queer ranking

of the best butts in baseball (and it's a shame there isn't), but a few years ago *Us* magazine asked its readers, majority females, to rank MLB's greatest assets.

Phillies left fielder Rhys Hoskins, Cincinnati Reds pitcher Matt Harvey, New York Yankee Giancarlo Stanton, Nationals right fielder Bryce Harper and Dodger Cody Bellinger rounded out the top five — figuratively and literally.

Perfectly acceptable. Fine badonkadonks all around.

But are there better booties at-bat?

Consider Diamondback David Peralta, Los Angeles Angel Mike Trout and Orioles first baseman Chris Davis the next time they take the plate.

Seventh-inning stretch, anyone? ■

*Mikey Rox is an award-winning journalist and LGBT lifestyle expert whose work has been published in more than 100 outlets across the world. He currently works for the Atlanta Braves. Connect with Mikey on Instagram @mikeyroxtravels.*



## RANGERS, From Page 14

of the Rangers being the lone holdout on Pride among MLB teams has not fared well for the team in the sports world at large and among LGBTQ sports fans.

"Supporters of a Pride Night have really taken the team to task on social media," he said. "It's out there in the community that there is a demand for that. I'm wondering if they didn't read the room right. Maybe they didn't anticipate there would be so much frustration."

But there is room for optimism that the Rangers will come around, McDonnell added. Other sports teams, including the Dallas Mavericks, Dallas Stars, Dallas FC and Dallas Wings, host Pride celebrations. All of Dallas' professional sports teams, including basketball, baseball, football, soccer and hockey carry language in their employment policies addressing LGBTQ people, and Dallas appears to be the only major market that can boast that, McDonnell said.

"I'm hoping it will give [the Rangers] pause to reconsider," he said. "That's ultimately my hope." ■

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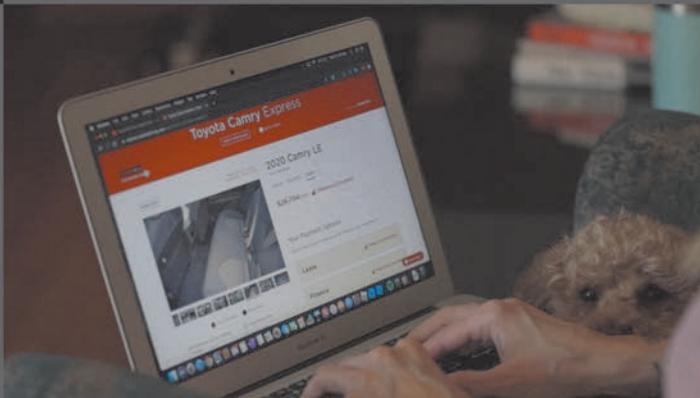


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**PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION**, service in restaurants, theaters, retail store, and non-governmental public services (relative to sexual orientation only).

If you suspect discrimination in these areas and wish to file a complaint call:

**214-670-FAIR (3247)**



**Rose Flores**

A memorial service for Rose "Rosie" Flores, who passed away suddenly on April 5, will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, June 19, at Agape Memorial United Methodist Church, 5111 Capitol Ave. in Dallas. Anyone who knew her is welcome to attend. Rosie was from Robstown, Texas, but had lived in Dallas for many years. She studied in the vet tech program at Dallas College/Cedar Valley Campus, and worked in guest services at the Dallas Zoo, a job she dearly loved. Rosie had also worked for many years at Jugs bar as a barback and bartender.



**Gregory S. Waite**

Gregory Scott Waite, 62, died unexpectedly on May 23, 2021, in Dallas. Greg's gentle, loving spirit coupled with his dedication and love of life made him a stellar man. He had a generous spirit; he never met a stranger, and received everyone with an open heart. Greg was born May 9, 1959, in Lewiston, Maine. He married John Marshall Arney in Dallas, and they spent 31 loving years together. They traveled the world both for work and pleasure. Greg was a long-time member of the Cathedral of Hope. He imprinted on the souls of many people across the globe and will be missed by many. Greg was preceded in death by his beloved mother and father, Clint and Thelma Waite, and his sister, Jenny Waite, all from Maine. He is survived by his cherished husband, John Arney; his brothers and sisters, Mike and Jan Enos, Valerie Enos, Annette and Sam Jackson, Jo Delle and David Brackett and Stan Waite and Heather Nadeau; numerous nieces and nephews all over the country, and his loving aunts, Barbara Angell, Marilyn Shaw and Lois Lefevre. A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, June 26, at 3 p.m. at the Cathedral of Hope, 5910 Cedar Springs Road. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in memory to the Greg Waite Memorial Fund at Cathedral of Hope: [OnRealm.org/CathedralofHope/-/give/Waite](http://OnRealm.org/CathedralofHope/-/give/Waite)

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# ‘A bucket of chicken’

(Photos courtesy of Diana Bracken and others)

## PRIDE

Carrollton’s first Pride event ‘couldn’t have gone better,’ organizer Bob McCranie says

**TAMMYE NASH** | Managing Editor  
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“If I ever suggest getting a bucket of chicken and going to the park for a picnic, knock me in the head,” Bob McCranie said this week, joking about how what started as a simple picnic in a Carrollton park to celebrate Pride Month and encourage people to get out and vote in the city’s runoff election turned into Carrollton Pride.

It really all started with the city elections in early May. The races for Place 1, Place 5 and Place 7 “all had strong chances of going to runoffs,” McCranie said, and he knew that if that happened, the key to an ultimate victory would lie — as is often the case — in voter turnout in the runoffs.

As it happened, Steve Babick won the Place 1 council seat without a runoff. But Nancy Kline and Annette Reese were in a runoff for Place 5, while Rusty Pendleton and Michelle Ocker made the runoff for Place 7. So McCranie approached a friend with the city and asked about requirements for using a city park for a picnic. After it was “subtly suggested” that he not try to use the city park — “and I’m still not sure why” — McCranie asked about using the field west of the Horizons Unitarian Universalist Church for the picnic. “Then we said, ‘You know what, forget about the field. With all this rain, it might be really wet. Can we use part of your parking lot?’ And they said sure.”

McCranie is a Realtor and owner of Texas Pride Realty. Since he was primarily footing the bill for this little Pride picnic, he figured it was only fair that Texas Pride Realty have a booth at the event. Then one booth turned into five booths. And five booths turned into 40 booths, plus a food truck and even an ice cream truck.

In the end, he said, “I’m guessing around 600 people showed up. We filled that parking lot up easily. It could not have gone better.”

Mayor Kevin Falconer was there, along with “about half the council. The mayor pro-tem [Steve Babick] even opened the event.” The council also approved a proclamation honoring Pride in Carrollton.

“I have never done anything on this scale before, and we threw it all together in just 47 days. It took a lot of preparation and last-minute planning, but it was totally worth it. Everyone had a great time,” McCranie said.

“After 18 months [of COVID-19 and the resulting quarantine], our community really needed to get out and see each other again. And this just happened in the right spot at the right time,” he continued. “After four years of Trump and 18 months of COVID, our whole country is in flux, trying to get back to some semblance of normal. And everybody just needed that release.”

For McCranie, who remembers what happened when he first moved to Carrollton and became active in city politics, Saturday’s Carrollton Pride celebration was even sweeter.

“In 2003, when I moved here, nobody was doing LGBTQ work outside The Loop [I-635],” he said, recalling how, when he started volunteering to work the polls at city elections, letters started going around calling on officials to get rid of “Gay Bob.” He also recalled how, when then-Mayor Becky Miller participated in Dallas’ Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade, Carrollton residents started circulating petitions calling on the council to pass a law prohibiting city officials from participating in Pride events again.

“In 18 years, to go from all the threatening letters and the petitions and ‘Get rid of Gay Bob’ to this event, it’s just amazing. It all just clicked,” McCranie said. “And this shows, too, that Pride doesn’t have to be some mega-monolithic event. It truly can be just a bucket of chicken in the park!”

“Now it’s time to start planning for next year.” ■





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**BEHIND THE CURTAIN**

# Setting the scene



Theatre 3 and director Joel Ferrell

Theatre 3 brings its traveling show 'The Music Man' to Cedar Springs

**RICH LOPEZ** | Contributing Writer  
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For its first equity live show in some time thanks to a certain pandemic, Theatre 3 decided to hit the road. Armed with a classic musical staple and a small cast, the company's boutique production of *The Music Man* will perform at three venues during its run, and on Wednesday, the denizens of River City, Iowa, will come alive at Union Coffee Shop in Oak Lawn.

Perhaps most productions of the Meredith Wilson musical would involve a large cast and big production values. There's a big train scene opener; there is the Independence Day celebration and the "76 Trombones" boys band.

But Theatre 3 and director Joel Ferrell wanted to strip their new show down — like, way down.

"We talked a lot about the show being very portable and malleable. My dream going into this was that we could pick it up and plop it down in a park in the middle of the city," Ferrell said by phone. "I think we've forgotten that, thousands of years ago, theater was outside; it was transient. So this one for me has been an experiment."

Ferrell expanded on the idea saying that *The Music Man* is a character-driven show that can be told regardless of pro-

duction. In his days as a director at Casa Manana, he credited his experience of working in the round for allowing him to stage this unique production with confidence.

"It's a Shakespearean show in a way. There's no real need for the costumes and large sets, because it's about the characters. I don't know if Meredith knew he was doing that with this show," Ferrell said.

The cast is 10 strong, and, save for the leads, those actors play all the extended characters of the show, which is performed across three stage set-ups.

The show opened at the Coppell Senior Center, which Ferrell described as a bucolic backdrop for the show. Come Wednesday at Union Coffee Shop, he expects an entirely new ambience to the show.

"The thing about Union is that you may have airplanes, fire trucks and people out on the street. It'll be a free-for-all, but I love that. I know these 10 actors can handle the chaos smack in the middle of Oak Lawn," he said.

But bringing it to Oak Lawn was a bit of a conscious decision: *The Music Man* might be a slice of small-town Americana, but Ferrell sees a deeper side to the story that can resonate among the LGBTQ community.

"Meredith celebrated this community of people who are completely imperfect and stubborn. They're slow to change, but once you're a part of that community, you can be as weird and as wonderful as you want to be. That is my community in some ways, and you build trust to



Taylor Nash and Ania Lyons

get in, but you can always be you," he said.

Ferrell added that he, along with Theatre 3 artistic director Jeffrey Schmidt, music director Vonda K. Bowling and associate artistic director and producer Christie Vela, cast the show with "an eye toward anybody who came to see it could see themselves in a million different ways"

"I hope people see themselves reflected today and portray any damn character they want to. We have gay, straight, gender fluid in the cast and therefore feels to us much more as a complete community," he said.

Bringing it to Union has additional significance for Ferrell. Sure Theatre 3 is heading to the gayborhood, but the space itself has its special meaning. Union isn't just a coffee shop but also a worship community and arts venue founded by Rev. Mike Baughman whose wife Rachel

Baughman is the senior pastor at Oak Lawn United Methodist Church.

"Some time back, I met both Mike and Rachel Baughman, and I knew about Union from its inception and that it has focused on being a safe space for LGBTQ youth and the community," Ferrell said. "It was clear to me that it was so mission-driven to care for and be protective of a community who may feel marginalized in their own city. When I first went there, there was a trans youth meetup group. It was so clear to me that Union was offering a space I would have desperately loved to have at their age."

After its run at Union, "The Music Man" will perform next at Texas Discovery Gardens June 30-July 4.

The Music Man opens Wednesday-June 20 and June 23-27 at Union, 3705 Cedar Springs Road. Tickets are \$75 for a two-person socially distanced square and can be purchased at [theatre3dallas.com](http://theatre3dallas.com).



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killed was a straight mom who had gone dancing with her son and who threw her body over his when the shooting began to save his life.

The LGBTQ community across the country and around the world was overwhelmed with grief. Lesbian singer/songwriter Melissa Etheridge wrote a song called "Pulse" that she released within days of the shooting. The Dallas Wings wore a special jersey at their games that week emblazoned with the words "Orlando Strong."

The city of Orlando responded by purchasing the Pulse nightclub and turning it into a permanent memorial. The deaths of Pulse survivors over the next year made national news, and the LGBTQ community grieved again.

Chris Brodman, 34, was found dead at a birthday party in Tampa in August 2016. Paramedics tried to revive him after his body was found in the yard, but he was declared dead shortly after. Brodman had made it safely out of Pulse after the shooting started. Jahqui Sevilla, 20, survived the Pulse massacre, but died in a car crash in Orlando the following May. Reports indicated she lost control of her car.

The Rev. Neil Thomas has marked the anniversary of Pulse each year by reading names of the victims at Cathedral of Hope. This year, he said, the One Orlando Alliance has asked churches to ring their bells in memory of the victims.

Thomas described the shooting at Pulse as an act of hideous backlash amid growing acceptance of the LGBTQ community grows. Pulse, he explained, was part of the community's sacred ground. Our bars were where we thought we were safe. For Thomas, the Pulse shooting falls into the same category as mas-

sacres at churches and synagogues.

While shootings have been normalized in the U.S. to the point where we often don't remember details of a particular mass shooting a week later, the LGBTQ community has been insistent in keeping the memory of Pulse alive.

"We're all family, and it was an assault on our family," Licensed Professional Counselor Candy Marcum said of the shooting. That assault, she said, took place where we go to play and have fun. It was something that doesn't happen in everyday life and that we have no way to prepare for happened and that causes trauma.

"Murder in a nightclub?" Marcum said "It doesn't belong there." And murder in the place where so many members of our community go to feel safe for the first time in their lives? That causes trauma that stays with you, Marcum said.

So how should we respond? "It's important to remember, honor and commemorate," she said.

Possibly another measure of just how deeply the Pulse massacre affected the LGBTQ community is a GoFundMe that was established for the victims of the shooting. That effort brought in \$7.8 million for survivors and the families of victims. It was, at the time, a GoFundMe record. And One Orlando has raised more than \$27 million that has been distributed to survivors and families of the victims.

On June 12, we mark five years since that deadly night in Orlando. While the grief for many may no longer be as sharp and ever-present, it does remain — a reminder that despite our progress toward equality, hate has not been defeated. And hate can be deadly.

On June 9, Congress voted to make Pulse a national monument. ■




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**Denali Foxx, one of the contestants on the 13th season of RuPaul's Drag Race, also known as a figure skater and choreographer, performs at 11 p.m. Saturday, June 12 at The Urban Cowboy Saloon, 2620 E. Lancaster Ave. in Fort Worth. See the listings for more information.**

## PRIDE AGENDA

*A special calendar of events celebrating Pride and the DFW LGBTQ community.*

- **June 12: Drag Bingo: Bubbles+Bingo**  
Oso Climbing Gyms, 1330 Conant St. in the Design District, hosts Drag Bingo: Bubbles+Bingo, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., featuring host Cassie Nova. The event includes prizes, mimosas and pancakes, all free with a membership or day pass. This inaugural event is in celebration of Pride Month, and is the first of what will be monthly events. For information visit [ClimbOso.com/schedule](http://ClimbOso.com/schedule).
- **June 12: OutFTW Field Day and Picnic**  
OutFTW holds a family-friendly field day with games including tug-o-war, spoon races, a water balloon toss, and obstacle course, bounce houses and more. Every player gets an OutFTW Field Day shirt and swag. There will also be music and food trucks. Register at [OutFTW.com](http://OutFTW.com).
- **June 12: Denali at The Urban Cowboy**  
Denali Foxx, one of the contestants on the 13th season of RuPaul's Drag Race, also known as a figure skater and choreographer, performs at 11 p.m. at The Urban Cowboy Saloon, 2620 E. Lancaster Ave. in Fort Worth. For more information visit [Facebook.com/TheUrbanCowboySaloon](http://Facebook.com/TheUrbanCowboySaloon).
- **June 13: Catholic Pride**  
New Ways Ministries is hosting Catholic

LGBTQ Pride with an interactive prayer service on Zoom from 2-3 p.m. central time. Register at [NewWaysMinistry.org](http://NewWaysMinistry.org).

- **June 13: Downtown Tyler Drag and Pride Walk**  
Dress in Drag and walk the Tyler Downtown Square. Sign-up for the Talent Showcase. Drag and Pride Walk at 10:30 a.m. Talent show at noon. Downtown Tyler on the Square.
- **June 13: Glamazon Prime Drag Brunch**  
The Urban Cowboy Saloon, E. 2620 Lancaster Ave. in Fort Worth, presents Glamazon Prime Pride Drag Brunch from noon-3 p.m. Tickets are \$10-25 at [EventBrite](http://EventBrite). For information visit [Facebook.com/TheUrbanCowboySaloon](http://Facebook.com/TheUrbanCowboySaloon).
- **June 18: Pride Party +**  
Virtual kickoff of Dallas Arts District's Pride Party + with Terry Loftis as Master of Ceremonies, Miss Dallas Southern Pride, Porsche Paris, Dezi 5, and Miss Southern Pride, Kennedy Davenport. 6:30-7:30 p.m. [Vimeo.com/showcase/prideparty](http://Vimeo.com/showcase/prideparty)
- **June 18-20: Juneteenth Unity Weekend 2021**  
Hosted by Dallas Southern Pride. Free. Sheraton Suites Market Center, 2101 N. Stemmons Freeway is the host hotel. Code DSP for \$89 rate. Ultimate Mega Party at Gilley's Dallas, 1135 S. Lamar St. on Saturday from 10 p.m.-3 a.m.

- **June 18: Crystal Methyd at The Urban Cowboy**

Drag queen Crystal Methyd, a top four contestant in the 12th season of RuPaul's Drag Race, performs at 9 p.m. at The Urban Cowboy Saloon, E. 2620 Lancaster Ave. in Fort Worth. For more information visit [Facebook.com/TheUrbanCowboySaloon](http://Facebook.com/TheUrbanCowboySaloon).

- **June 19: Pride Party +**

Pop-up performances on the Sammons Park Community Stage including Kennedy Davenport, Uptown Players, Bandan Koro and Dezi 5 from 3-5 p.m. Programming at the Crowe Museum of Asian Art, Dallas Museum of Art and Nasher Sculpture Center. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Full schedule at [DallasArtsDistrict.org/pridepartyplus](http://DallasArtsDistrict.org/pridepartyplus).

- **June 19: Millennial Drag Show & HipHop Night**

The Urban Cowboy, 2620 Lancaster Ave. in Fort Worth, hosts the Millennial Drag Show and Hip Hop Night beginning at 9 p.m.

- **June 20: Pride Party +**

Virtual and on-site programming from the Crowe Museum of Asian Art, Dallas Museum of Art and Nasher Sculpture Center. from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Full schedule at [DallasArtsDistrict.org/pridepartyplus](http://DallasArtsDistrict.org/pridepartyplus).

- **June 20: Teen Pride**

Art activities, live performances, advocacy

training free for ages 13-19 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Dallas Museum of Art.

- **June 25: Human Rights Campaign Dallas**  
Fort Worth and the Dallas Wings for "Dine with Pride Courtside: A Virtual Event." The event includes a panel discussion with Dallas Wings players and coaches and Human Rights Campaign staff, a Q&A Session, an auction and door prizes. Tickets are \$40 and include access to the virtual event, a ticket to the Dallas Wings' 2021 or 2022 Pride Game and an HRC membership or membership renewal. A link to attend will be emailed to all registrants the week of the event. For information email [zack.hasychak@hrc.org](mailto:zack.hasychak@hrc.org). Ticket sales end at 5 p.m. Central on Wednesday, June 23.

- **June 25: Lessons From Our Community**  
Liberty Lounge, 515 S. Jennings in Fort Worth, hosts "Lessons From Our Community: Stories About the Fight for Equality," beginning at 5 p.m.

- **June 25: Devine Miss Diva Show**  
The Devine Miss Diva Show returns to Club Changes, 2637 E. Lancaster Ave. in Fort Worth, beginning at 11 p.m.

- **June 26: Trinity Pride**  
A hybrid celebration will consist of a live stream of Virtual Trinity Pride Fest on Facebook Live as well as at official Trinity Pride Partner locations throughout Fort Worth at 7 p.m.

# GAY AGENDA



## PLAY HERE

OUT Fort Worth presents **The Alphabet Mafia Field Day and Picnic** Saturday, June 12, beginning at 10 a.m. at the Trinity Park Pavilion,

2401 University Drive in Fort Worth. There will be music and food trucks and, of course, traditional “field day” games such as a tug-o-war, spoon races, water balloon toss, an obstacle course and more, with teams divided into two brackets — one for teams including children under 18 and a second bracket for teams without members under 18. Those who choose not to compete can take advantage of other activities, including a kid-friendly area with bounce houses.



## WATCH THIS

The Urban Cowboy Saloon, 2620 E. Lancaster Ave. in Fort Worth, continues the Pride Motn party with an appearance by **RuPaul's**

**Drag Race Season 13** contestant Denali Fox, in a show hosted by Frida Monet and Chanel LaMasters, and also featuring Rajah O'Hara — also a Drag Race alum and a contestant in the upcoming Drag Race All Stars Season 6 — and Glam Davenport. Tickets are \$20-\$100; meet and greet is at 9:30 p.m.; show is at 11 p.m.

## WALK THIS



The Tyler area's LGBTQ community and its allies respond to a recent incident in which someone was verbally assaulted after asking

if there were any local LGBTQ bars or drag shows with a **Downtown Drag and Pride Walk** on Sunday, June 13, from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., at the Tyler Downtown Square. There will be a talent showcase at noon. It's free to enter and the sound system will be provided.



## EAT THIS

Prism Health North Texas presents **Cheesemonger's Faves**, an event benefitting LifeWalk 2021 and featuring the gourmet cheeses of

Scardello Artisan Cheese, 3511 Oak Lawn Ave. Tickets are \$40, and participants get eight cheeses hand-picked by Scardello's expert cheesemongers, a fresh baguette from Empire Baking Company and a printed guide of each cheese's profile so they can follow along during the Zoom class on June 17 as the cheesemongers discuss their favorites. Tickets and more info are available at PHNT.org.



**DIFFA Dallas hosts a picnic Sunday, June 13, in Klyde Warren Park featuring a DIFFA-curated picnic meal with wine and spirits, adult snow cones, entertainment by DJ Jen Miller and more. See listings for details. (Photo by Cassie Quinn)**

## PLAN YOUR WEEK

Have an event coming up? Email your information to Managing Editor Tammye Nash at [nash@dallasvoice.com](mailto:nash@dallasvoice.com) or Senior Staff Writer David Taffet at [taffet@dallasvoice.com](mailto: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.

### JUNE

#### • June 11: Name, gender change clinic

UNT College of Law and Resource Center hold a name and gender change clinic via Zoom. Register at Resource Center's Facebook events page. Facebook. [com/events/2341757352621789/?a-context=%7B%22event\\_action\\_history%22%3A\[%7B%22surface%22%3A%22page%22%7D\]%7D](https://www.facebook.com/events/2341757352621789/?a-context=%7B%22event_action_history%22%3A[%7B%22surface%22%3A%22page%22%7D]%7D).

#### • June 11-Aug 22: Tomoo Gokita: Get Down

Dallas Contemporary presents Japanese artist Tomoo Gokita's first North American museum exhibition: *Get Down*. Dallas Contemporary, 161 Glass St. [DallasContemporary.org](http://DallasContemporary.org).

#### • June 11-17: Rooftop Cinema

Summer series of outdoor films at Dallas Heritage Village, 1515 S. Harwood St. June 11: *The Princess Bride*, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. June 12: *Dirty Dancing*, *Scary Movie*. June 13: *The Notebook*. June 14: *Grease*. June 15: *Pretty Woman*. June 16: *Fight Club*. June 17: *Legally Blonde*. Tickets at [RooftopCinemaClub.com/heritagevillage](http://RooftopCinemaClub.com/heritagevillage).

#### • June 12: Queer Reads

Queer Reads is an online book club that meets the second Saturday of every month from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Register at [dallaslibrary.librarymarket.com/events/queer-reads-book-club-0](http://dallaslibrary.librarymarket.com/events/queer-reads-book-club-0).

#### • June 12: Ashley Brundage book signing

Ashley Brundage is a trans woman and former executive director of the Tampa LGBT Chamber of Commerce. She'll be in Dallas promoting her new book *Empowering Differences* at Sue Ellen's, 3014 Throckmorton St. [EmpoweringDifferences.com](http://EmpoweringDifferences.com).

#### • June 13: Catholic Pride

New Ways Ministries is hosting Catholic LGBTQ Pride with an interactive prayer service on Zoom from 2-3 p.m. central time. Register at [NewWaysMinistry.org](http://NewWaysMinistry.org).

#### • June 13: DIFFA Picnic in the Park

DIFFA presents a picnic in the park that includes a picnic blanket with a space for up to four people, a DIFFA-curated picnic meal with wine and spirits, adult snow cones, entertainment by DJ Jen Miller and surprise performances. 1-4 p.m. at Klyde Warren Park. \$300 for four. Tickets at [one.bidpal.net/diffapicnic/welcome](http://one.bidpal.net/diffapicnic/welcome).

#### • June 13: Downtown Tyler Drag and Pride Walk

Dress in Drag and walk the Tyler Downtown Square. Sign-up for the Talent Showcase. Drag and Pride Walk at 10:30 a.m. Talent show at noon. Downtown Tyler on the Square.

#### • June 13: Glamazon Prime Pride Drag Brunch

Join the cast for Glamazon Prime drag brunch from noon-3 p.m. at Urban Cowboy, 2620 E. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth. Tickets at [eventbrite.com/e/glamazon-prime-pride-drag-brunch-tickets-150815775043](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/glamazon-prime-pride-drag-brunch-tickets-150815775043).

#### • Through June 13: Hedda Gabler

Undermain Theatre presents a virtual performance of Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*. \$20. [Undermain.org](http://Undermain.org).

#### • June 15-17: DEI Conference

The Texas Diversity Equity & Inclusion Conference virtually brings together LGBTQ Chamber member businesses and other certified businesses, DEI professionals, supplier diversity professionals, employee resource group members and more.

#### • June 15-26: A Solitary Man: The Music of Neil Diamond

Selling over 10 million records worldwide with 38 top 10 hits, Neil Diamond is one of the best-selling musicians of all time. From halls of fame to lifetime achievements, Diamond's career has spanned six decades and reaped dozens of awards. Casa Manana, 3101 W. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth. Ticket start at \$65 and can be purchased at [CasaManana.org](http://CasaManana.org).

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

# Cassie Nova

## ASK A DRAG QUEEN

From allergies to interviews to guppies

Happy Pride month y'all. So, this is what is going on with me so far this month: Apparently, pollen has decided it is celebrating Pride in my fucking face. Every tree, flower or weed has bukkaked me without consent. I'm thinking of letting my nose hairs grow out a few inches as a defense mechanism to protect my interface.

Allergies get me every year, but this season has been a rough one. At times it feels like someone is blowing up a balloon in my head. To be totally candid (and not trying to gross you out but ...): Not a lot of mucus but instead, a steady flow of tear-like snot. My nose is literally crying. So attractive.

Plus, my throat itches so bad I wanna take a baby bottle cleaner and shove it down my gullet so viciously that I look like I am churning butter. This is a weird way to start out this column, so let's move on.

One of the things I am excited about for Pride month is an interview I did last week with WFAA for a segment called "Now that I have your attention." I'm not sure when it will air, but please watch out for it. The day we filmed, it rained; I felt horrible and nearly cancelled twice. I made sure I had some fresh hair in my signature red — thank you, Sweet Mark — and spent extra time getting my make up TV ready. I wanted to look as good as possible. Whaa-waaa — things did not work out that way.

I know I can be overly critical of myself, but I also have eyes. I forgot the segment was going to be filmed in black and white. Duh! My hair coulda been any color!

The camera people were so professional and fabulous, but that lower angle is not so great for a thick bitch like me. I looked like a thumb or Honey Boo Boo's momma on a good day. It is what it is; I'm heavier than I wanna be, and that damn camera just magnified it. Thank God I am pretty.

The thing about the interview: It's not about my looks; it's about what I said. And I am a little nervous to see how I come across. I said things in reference to my coming out that are still a bit sensitive when it comes to my family. I didn't



say anything untrue, but the words that were said to me back then in no way reflect my current relationship with the parentals.

We've gone full circle and back again. I just hope that my mom, in particular, isn't hurt by me talking about the past. It is a part of my story — a hard part that in many ways built me into the strong yet sometimes emotionally stunted person I am today. The past is just the recipe that makes up who you are today.

I sound like a fucking redneck philosopher. My point is .... Hell, I don't think I have a point. I just hope the segment turns out well. It was very cathartic.

Y'all Sue Ellen's is finally reopened! As I write this, last night was their first night back. All I can say is wow! They were packed! These weeks since the Rose Room and Station 4 reopened have been incredible, but something was missing. Sue's were the final piece to the puzzle. As crazy as the night was for the entire block, it felt so good to see that bar a-hoppin.'

I apologize for my random trains of thought, but now I want to tell you about my aquarium. My husband and I have had various sized aquariums since we have been together. When we first got together, we had, I think, a 150-gallon giant

aquarium. It was huge, took up an entire wall in our tiny house. It had five huge Oscars about the size of large dinner plates and a plecostomus (a sucker fish) that was at least two feet long! We eventually had to sell the whole thing, fish and all, to a lady that ran a dog grooming business. It was just too big for us.

Fast-forward to a few years later, and I missed having an aquarium. Now we have nice 20-gallon tank set up in an opening between two rooms. It is in full view in both the kitchen and the back room. We have kept a bunch of different types of fish over the years, and they have led long, wonderful lives. They provide a little mental getaway for me everyday as I watch them swim and live their little fish lives.

This past year we had a lonely little red, silver and blue tetra, the lone survivor of three tetras we bought at one time. We also have guppies — two really beautiful males and two little ol' plain-Jane females. The two females would get pregnant, and we would watch for them to give birth, but we never saw any little babies.

About five months ago, both of the females passed away within a few weeks of each other, so we decided it was time to get some new fish fam. We got some

tetras for our lonely little guy and our little school of fish are doing amazing. We also got two more little female guppies. They were both pregnant within a few days. Our little stud guppies wasted no time with flirting or foreplay; it must have been an immediate fish fuck fest.

Our aquarium has lots of real plants growing in it. One of the plants is a grass that breaks off and settles into another space and takes up residency. We just let it go; I love all of the green, and it just makes the whole tank feel more alive.

Well apparently, we have created the perfect conditions for baby gups. One day I noticed a tiny lil-bitty baby swimming through the grass. I didn't get my hopes up. Guppies are known to swallow children faster than a gay man. Then I saw another one, and I thought, "Hide little babies! Stay hidden till you are big enough not to be a snack."

As of yesterday, I counted about 19 baby guppies, ranging from specks with tails to half inch monsters. I love it. I love watching them grow and change, but they won't be babies for long. I'm not sure what we are going to do, but for now it is cool to see so much life thriving in my little world.

I guess everyone is getting guppies for Christmas!

This is just a bunch of Saturday morning brain vomit! Happy Pride! Remember to always love more, bitch less and be fabulous! XOXO, Cassie Nova.

### this week's solution

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# SCENE



Soraya showing her Pride

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Avery, David & Ethan



Alan at the Classic Chassis Car Club meeting



*Pride*

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20 | 21

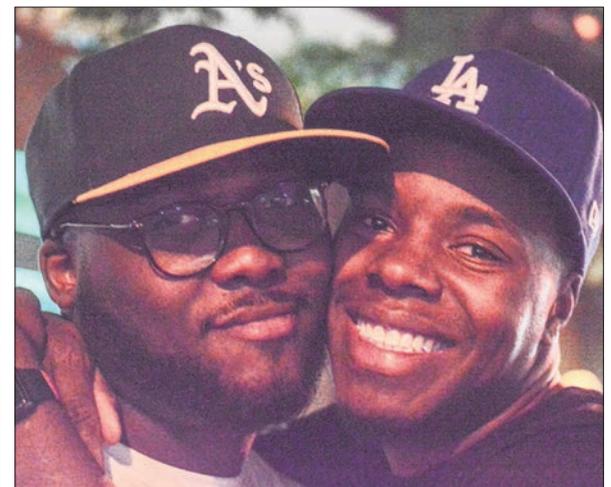
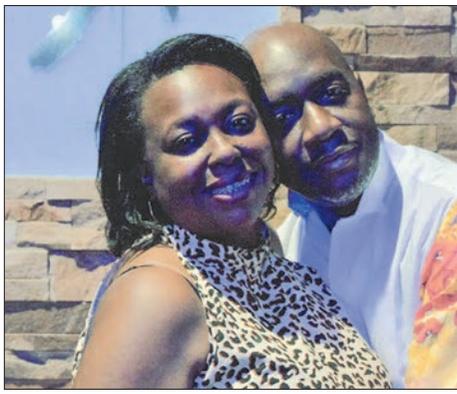
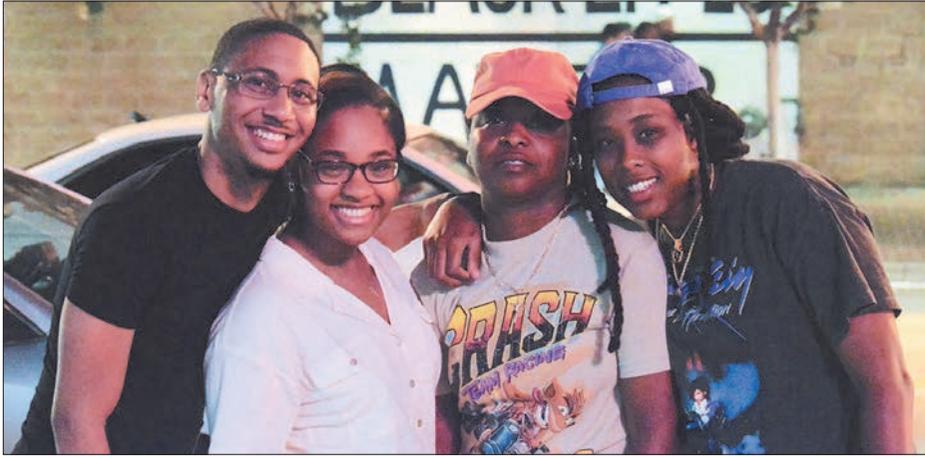
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# Pride Weekend on the Strip



# Pride Weekend at City Tavern



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# PUZZLE | De Nada, Renata

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| 67 |    |    |    |    | 68 |    |    |    |    | 69 |    |    |    |    |    |

Solution on Page 27

## Across

- 1 Shakespeare's foot
- 5 Stone of *Easy A*
- 9 Came to grips with
- 14 Cabbage, to Cocteau
- 15 Teacher's surprise
- 16 \_\_\_ Paris
- 17 Singer Vikki
- 18 Sch. for your first mate
- 19 Recipient of Bugs' kisses
- 20 HBO miniseries with Renata
- 23 Classic western
- 24 Pulled the plug on
- 25 *Jumpin' Jack Flash*, to Jagger
- 27 Some like it hot
- 29 Notre Dame is on one
- 32 Tops a dessert
- 34 Cold War letters
- 35 Where people don't sleep with the opposite sex
- 38 Top floor
- 40 Start of a quote from Renata
- 42 End of the quote
- 45 Irene of *My Favorite Wife*
- 46 "Tangled" hair, for example
- 47 Means of access
- 49 Embarrassing situation

- 51 Have an orgasm in the vicinity of?
- 55 What you do in a Cole Porter song
- 61 She played Renata
- 63 Renata's married name
- 64 Cry after getting the shaft
- 65 Peace Nobelister Wiesel
- 66 Will and Grace shared one
- 67 They push big boats
- 68 Queen of Carthage
- 69 Endora portrayer

## Down

- 1 Former govt. watchdog
- 2 Melville's whale hunter
- 3 Alanis, who performs gay weddings
- 4 City suffix
- 5 Real stallions, for example
- 6 Calls to duty
- 7 Pre-kiss insert, perhaps
- 8 Gaily colored flower
- 9 Gay rights supporter Sally
- 10 Grant of *Weeds*
- 11 Lea Delaria, for one
- 12 Plumb, and others
- 13 Aachen article
- 21 Lake, to 50 million Frenchmen

- 22 Big name in China
- 25 Rock Hudson movie of 1956
- 26 Line of Rupert Everett
- 28 *Spamalot* writer Idle
- 30 City on the Rhone
- 31 Rob on the screen
- 33 Ellen and Vance, e.g.
- 36 Construction co. project
- 37 George Frenn, in many a still photo
- 39 Plane name
- 41 Party big shot
- 43 Emulated Chris Meloni's hairline
- 44 One from the land of the cut
- 48 St. of Liberace Museum
- 50 It's for sweaters
- 51 Coagulate
- 52 *From Here to Eternity* setting
- 53 Bean type
- 54 Lesbos love
- 56 Abbreviated musical?
- 57 Jackie's designer
- 58 James of *East of Eden*
- 59 River of northern France
- 60 *A Room of \_\_\_ Own*
- 62 Keanu in *The Matrix*

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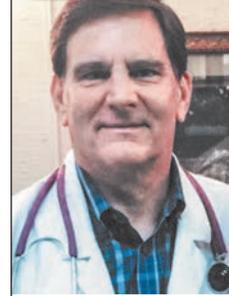


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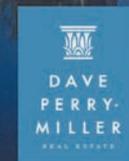
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