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MacArthur High students walk out over Irving ISD's removal of Safe Zone stickers



Hundreds of students, many of them carrying rainbow flags and wearing heart-shaped rainbow stickers on their faces and clothes, walked out of MacArthur High School in Irving Wednesday, Sept. 22, to protest what they said is discrimination targeting the school's LGBTQ teachers and students, according to a report by CBS Channel 11 TV station.

The heart-shaped stickers, the TV station's report explained, are "a symbol many teachers at the campus have used during the past year to signal their classrooms are a safe space for LGBTQ students." But recently, the stickers suddenly disappeared, and teachers and students said they could tell the stickers had been deliberately removed from windows and doors. A laminated Safe Space poster was also removed from outside one classroom.

English teacher Rachel Stonecipher — who told Channel 11 she was "the only openly, very obviously ... lesbian teacher," who was the faculty sponsor for the school's gay/straight alliance, and who, last week, was escorted off the campus without explanation — said she and several other teachers had signed an email to the principal, Natasha Stewart, asking for an explanation.

District officials responded with an unsigned statement — posted on the Irving ISD Twitter feed — saying the district's campuses "are a safe zone for all students — not just our classrooms, but every inch of our schools."

— Tammye Nash

One killed, one injured on Hall Street



One person was shot in the head and killed early Monday morning, Sept. 20, and a witness was injured at 3901 N. Hall Street. Police responded to a call at 2:54 a.m. and found Justin Wayne Dixon, 30, lying on the sidewalk outside the Flamingo Apartments with a gunshot wound. Dallas Fire Rescue pronounced him dead at the scene.

Police didn't identify the injured witness.

Robbery appears to be the motive, according to Dallas Police LGBTQ Liaison Megan Thomas. No hate speech or hate-related motive has been identified.

Funeral services for Dixon were held Friday, Sept. 24, in his hometown of Rio Vista, and a vigil in his memory is set for Saturday, Sept. 25, at 7 p.m. at the Legacy of Love Monument.

The suspect fled the location and is not in custody.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Det. Scott Sayers at 214-671-3647 or scott.sayers@dallascityhall.com and reference case number 170550-2021.

— David Taffet

State Rep. Celia Israel won't seek re-election



State Rep. Celia Israel (D-Austin), one of the founders of the Texas House LGBT Caucus, announced Wednesday, Sept. 22 that she will not seek re-election to the Legislature. She was first elected in 2014 and was the second out lesbian elected to the House after state Rep. Mary Gonzalez, (D-El Paso).

Israel said she may run for mayor of Austin next year. Incumbent Mayor Steve Adler is term limited and cannot run for re-election.

"Today, I am announcing the formation of an exploratory committee for mayor of Austin," Israel wrote on Twitter. "This exploratory effort means I will not be seeking re-election to my seat in the Texas House."

"The heartbeat of a city is people from all walks of life working together and learning from each other. That's why I'm proud that the founding core of my exploratory committee is diverse, with a broad array of lived experiences."

The Legislature is in its third special session. Defending young LGBTQ Texans has been an important part of Israel's legislative agenda. She has sponsored legislation each session to ban reparative therapy. Instead, she and the caucus have spent their time fighting off bills that will penalize trans youth and prevent them from participating in school sports.

— David Taffet

Elvira comes out!



As if we didn't already love Elvira enough, now we find out she's one of us!

The Mistress of the Dark — aka Cassandra Peterson — revealed in her new memoir which was just released Tuesday, Sept. 21, that she has been in a relationship for the last 19 years with a woman named Teresa "T" Wierson.

In the memoir, titled *Yours Cruelly, Elvira*, Peterson explains how she met Wierson at the gym where Wierson worked as a trainer and that she had at first mistaken the "tan, tattooed and muscular" trainer for a man: "Dark and brooding, he gave off such intense energy that when he crossed the enormous gym floor, the waters parted and people stopped in their tracks to stare."

The two became friends, and, when Peterson's 25-year marriage to her manager, Mark Pierson, ended, Wierson moved in with Peterson. They were still just friends until one night — nearly 20 years ago now — when, Peterson said, as they were leaving a movie together she got the urge to kiss Wierson.

Peterson explained that she and Wierson have kept their relationship secret all these years because they felt doing so was necessary to protect the Elvira brand. Peterson was worried she would be abandoned by her fans for "not being what they expected."

Now Peterson — who just turned 70 on Sept. 17 — is comfortable enough to say that she is with someone who makes her feel "safe, blessed, and truly loved."

— Tammye Nash

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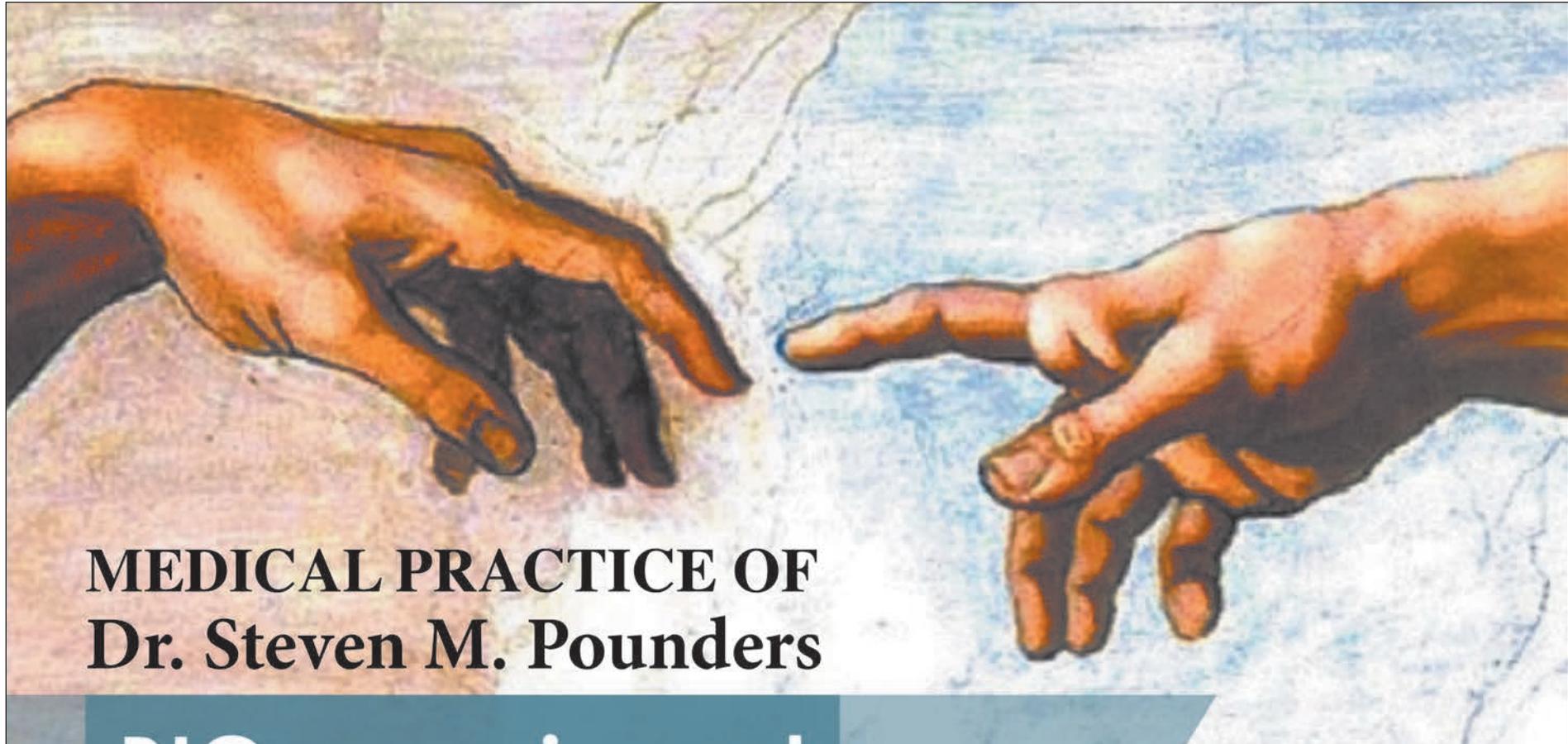
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Not brilliant

Texas' abortion law baffles women and businesses

Even the most ardent pro-life advocates must have cringed, along with those on the platform surrounding him, when Texas Gov. Greg Abbott boasted the state's number one goal "is to eliminate rape." While a laudable aspiration, it did little to credibly answer the question posed as to why Senate Bill 8, the recently-enacted law effectively banning abortion in the state, does not contain an exception for sexual assault.

But to paraphrase, if you can't dazzle them with your brilliance, then baffle them with your "bravado."

If there were a surefire way to eliminate rape, I ask why our two-term, top state official has not already implemented such. Especially since in 2019, the most recent data available, Texas ranked first nationally in the number of reported forcible rape cases. It's also well-established that the majority of sexual assault cases go unreported.

With the passage of SB8, Texas has now separated itself from other staunch, pro-life states to have unquestionably the most restrictive law on still legal, abortion in America — a law many say now places *Roe v. Wade* on life support. The shockwaves have become tidal as women, pro-choice advocates, the courts and even big business try to chart the steps that lie ahead.

You've likely read by now that now under SB8, abortions after a fetal heartbeat has been detected in a woman are illegal. All agree that happens about six weeks into gestation.

SB8 supporters say that's time enough for a woman to decide to terminate a pregnancy. Medical experts, abortion providers and advocates say women don't have six weeks to decide and that many do not know at that point if they are expecting. Their first indication may be a missed cycle, leaving about two weeks to make the true life-altering choice.



Texas Sen. Royce West
Guest Columnist

That's one issue.

Fetal heartbeat bills attempted by some states have been rejected by the courts. But SB8 employs a unique, but un-validated method of enforcement. Although the state promulgated the de-facto, six-week constraint for a legal abortion, SB8 creates a civil enforcement mechanism where un-associated, individuals can sue anyone who "aids or abets" a woman in obtaining an abortion and recover up to \$10,000, plus legal fees.

Expectant women cannot be sued, but doctors, clinics and even those who provide transportation for the procedure could face liability. Self-insured corporations, insurance companies and even ministers are wondering if they can be sued. Whether or not cases are successful, those accused face defense costs.

It's another issue.

State and federal courts are already involved. The U.S. Supreme Court has drawn the ire of abortion advocates and pro-choice members of Congress for not granting an appeal that would have stopped SB8 from going into effect Sept. 1. Critics noted how SCOTUS avoided commenting on SB8's constitutionality.

However, Chief Justice John Roberts was among four dissenting votes and questioned the novel civil enforcement, forecasting a future setting, "so that the courts may consider whether a state can avoid responsibility for its laws in such



a manner."

U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland sued Texas, calling SB8 "clearly unconstitutional." President Joe Biden vowed to fight, calling the bill "an unprecedented assault on a woman's constitutional rights under *Roe v. Wade*." House Speaker Nancy Pelosi plans to bring legislation to the floor to codify *Roe v. Wade*, while chiding the Supreme Court for not blocking enactment.

My question and No. 1 issue is this: Who does SB8 help?

It is predicted that the new law will block 85 to 90 percent of abortions that were legal before its passage. That means at least 85 percent of the 55,140 women who had abortions in 2018 would have had to make other life-impactful choices. While Planned Parenthood has been highly visible, many of the 53,949 abortions performed in Texas in 2020 were by private physicians. Hispanic (19,979) and Black women (15,848) were first and second in the number of terminations, but 14,067 patients that year were white.

Socioeconomics and class also become

factors in this debate. The question of who is able to end a pregnancy may also be decided by who can afford to travel to states like New Mexico, Colorado and Oklahoma for services. The abortion rate for Medicaid recipients is three times higher than of other women.

SB8 supporters tie themselves to the sanctity of unborn life. But where is the same concern for the living and more who we will force to be born.

Texas ranks among the bottom four to five states when it comes to services for the less fortunate and continues to lead the country in its number of uninsured. It's part of our limited government creed in a state that also said you do not need a license or training to openly carry a handgun.

But with the passage of SB8, my colleagues across the aisle should forever forfeit the right to accuse Democrats of government overreach. ■

Royce West is the Democrat representing District 23 in the Texas Senate. He was first elected to his seat in 1993, and his current terms runs through Jan. 9, 2023.

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Dallas Southern Pride returns

PRIDE

DFW's annual Black Pride celebration includes a full weekend of free events

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

Between 10,000 and 15,000 people are expected to attend the 2021 Dallas Southern Pride celebration, which begins tonight (Friday, Sept. 24) and runs through Sunday evening, according to Ahmad Goree, public affairs director for what is one of the largest Black Pride celebrations in the country.

"We didn't get to do [Dallas Southern Pride] last year," Goree said, explaining that Dallas' annual Black Pride events are held each year the same weekend as The State Fair Classic — the annual foot-



Kirk Myers, left, and Ahmad Goree

Dallas Southern Pride schedule

Events are free, but RSVPs are requested. VIP tickets are available for some events. Visit DallasSouthernPride.com for details and to RSVP.

Friday, Sept. 24

- Welcome Reception, 7-10 p.m. at the host hotel, Sheraton Suites, Dallas Market Center.
- Wett, 9 p.m.-2 a.m., Sue Ellen's, 3014 Throckmorton
- Fuel: The Blackout Experience, 10 p.m.-2 a.m., Dec on Dragon St., 1414 Dragon St.
- Friday Night Out, 10 p.m.-2 a.m., Marty's Live, 4207 Maple Ave.

Saturday, Sept. 25

- Dallas Southern Pride Storms the State Fair of Texas, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. at Fair Park.
- The State Fair Classic: Grambling State vs. Prairie View A&M, 4-8 p.m. at The Cotton Bowl.
- The Mega Party, featuring Papoose and Remy Ma, 10 p.m.-2 a.m. at Dallas Market Hall, 2200 N. Stemmons Freeway. General admission is free, but VIP tickets are available.

Sunday, Sept. 26

- Kirk Myers' Signature Brunch, 12:30-4:30 p.m., Gas Monkey, 10261 Technology Blvd.
- Day Party, hosted by Bia, 12:30-4:30 p.m., Gas Monkey, 10261 Technology Blvd.

ball game between Prairie View A&M and Grambling State University, traditionally played during the last weekend of September or the first weekend of October in the Cotton Bowl at Fair Park.

The 2020 match-up between the two historically Black colleges had to be postponed until February 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. While Dallas Southern Pride staged a smaller event around the game in February, it wasn't the same. This fall, though, "The State Fair Classic is back on, and so is Black Pride," Goree declared.

Goree explained that Black Pride celebrations started in Dallas because of the annual Grambling/Prairie View showdown in the Cotton Bowl. "These two historically Black schools would come together in Dallas each fall, and the Black LGBTQ students from the schools wanted places to hang out and party, places to fellowship with each other. A lot of them didn't feel comfortable going to the bars on Cedar Springs because they didn't see people like them at those bars.

"So that's where Black Pride was born here," he added, "as a way to give them a place to go and have a good time."

Springs] required three and four forms of ID from black people."

He continued, "Black Pride allows for the intersectionality of being Black and LGBTQ, whereas majority Prides frequently asked us to identify as gay [first] without taking into consideration that we are recognized as Black even before we can state if we are LGBTQ."

But while Dallas Southern Pride events are created for the Black LGBTQ community specifically, Myers said that everyone is welcome — and encouraged — to attend. "Others are welcome and should come, because this is an opportunity for all LGBTQ folks to celebrate our diversity," he said. "All should come to have diverse experiences and opportunities to socialize and create new friendships and networking opportunities."

While a weekend full of parties and performances make up its core, Dallas Southern Pride — the Black Pride events in the fall and the Juneteenth celebrations each summer — have always included elements aimed at awareness, education, support and health, such as testing for HIV and STIs. In the past 19 months, COVID-19 testing and awareness have been added to the list.

"I think Dallas Southern Pride should deal with the community in its totality," Myers explained. "Socialization is a significant aspect of what we do. However, activism, health, wellness and economic empowerment are also cornerstones of our mission and our work."

Both Myers and Goree said that this year's Black Pride celebration promises to be extra special, returning as it is after having to be cancelled last year due to the COVID pandemic.

Myers said, "This year all the Dallas Southern Pride events will be free! You can expect great venues, great activities and plenty of fun and safe events, including our first-ever "Dallas Southern Pride Storms the State Fair of Texas" day.

Goree added, "Just like we saw with our Juneteenth celebration in the summer, people are anxious to get out and be part of events. The State Fair Classic is back at Fair Park and back on schedule, and Dallas Southern Pride is back on schedule, too." ■



When the organization Dallas Southern Pride was formed, it took the lead in planning the city's Black Pride celebration, incorporating a number of educational and health-related aspects into the full schedule of parties and performances. Kirk Myers, founder and CEO of Abounding Prosperity Inc. and lead organizer for Dallas Southern Pride, said that while Black LGBTQ people are certainly part of and active in the larger LGBTQ community, it is important that Black Pride celebrations continue.

"It is vital to have this celebration, especially now with the social justice issues applicable to Black people," including police brutality directed at Black people, the epidemic of Black trans murders, ongoing racism and more, Myers said, noting that it wasn't that long ago" Dallas clubs on The Strip [Cedar

Latinx flair

PRIDE

Texas Latino Pride returns Sept. 25 with celebration at Reverchon Park

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
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Texas Latino Pride is back, bringing a “celebration of life, culture and dance” to Reverchon Park on Saturday, Sept. 25, from 3-9 p.m., according to Mariano

Pintor, director of public relations for the Texas Latino Pride Foundation.

The eighth annual music festival is intended to “uplift attendees through music and connect the broad range of people who make up the LGBTQIA community,” Pintor said in a press release. “The organization is honored to partner with small businesses and food vendors that span numerous cultures, ethnicities, sexual orientation, and gender identity/expressions.”

Juan Contreras, president and co-founder of Texas Latino Pride, said, “This year, more than ever, our focus has been around the well-being of the community.”

He noted that TLP has partnered with the city of Dallas to provide COVID testing on site during the event, which is being held outside to allow plenty of room for social distancing. Organizers have also partner with Methodist Dallas, which will provide hand sanitizers for attendees, and with Prism Health North Texas, which will “provide HIV and STI testing and will have someone on hand to talk about mental health services and how can we come back from the COVID pandemic in a way that’s safe and progressive,” Pintor added.

Texas Latino Pride was founded in 2014, and, initially, was held in September to coordinate with the larger Dallas Pride celebrations — the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade and the Festival in the Park — that were, at the time, held on the weekend of the third Sunday in September. Dallas Pride has since moved



to the first weekend in June at Fair Park, but, Pintor said, “we chose to keep our event in September to keep Pride in this traditional time frame in Dallas.”

TLP also wants to give LGBTQ Latinx people a chance to celebrate not only their LGBTQ Pride but their Latinx culture as well. “It is important to us that we preserve our culture through music and celebration,” Pintor said. “In the Latinx community we are aware of the shame [LGBTQ Latinx people deal with] that comes from religion and the machismo that is part of the culture. It is hard to celebrate yourself authentically when you are surrounded by those societal and cultural pressures. And sometimes, you just want to listen to some norteno [music] like you would hear at a quinceanera.”

Being LGBTQ and Latinx, Pintor said, “You straddle two worlds. You have to be one person in this [Latinx] world and another person in that [LGBTQ] world. Texas Latino Pride allows us to bring both sides of ourselves together. It gives us a sense of unity we might not find anywhere else.”

He also noted that while the “official” name of the event is Texas Latino Pride, “we often use Latinx in promotional ma-

This year’s celebration reflects the diversity of the community through the diversity of the entertainment scheduled, Pintor continued. That includes live acts like headliner Monica Saldivar who was the Best New Female Artist at the 2020 Tejano Music Awards, Mexican actress, single and model Lorena Herrera the reigning 2021 Miss Continental Juliana Rivera, “a proud Colombian,” he said.

There will also be plenty of local talent, too. Miss Round-Up Mayra D’Lorenzo will host, and popular local DJs will be playing music ranging from salsa to reggaeton to hip-hop and cumbia between live performances.

But, Pintor stressed, this event isn’t just for people of Latinx heritages. “Our board is all inclusive,” he said, “and that tells you something about our approach



Musical performances are an integral part of Texas Latino Pride

terials and in talking about the event, because for some people, ‘Latinx’ means it is just for men, and it is not. It is for men, women and non-binary people. Everyone is welcome.”

And when he says “everyone,” he means “EVERYONE.”

“It is important to remember that ‘Latinx’ or ‘Latinx’ doesn’t just mean those with Mexican heritage or backgrounds. It means Columbians, Puerto Ricans, people from Brazil and Cuba — we need to celebrate all of that, all of us. We are all different cultures, and we all have our own cultural traditions. That is the real beauty of this event.”

being very inclusive. We welcome all communities. We want everyone to come to see what we are about. Come enjoy our food; enjoy our music. We want to bring people together.”

Contreras added, “That we are expecting nearly 3,000 attendees tells us that people from a variety of backgrounds are eager to embrace and celebrate our cultures.”

Texas Latino Pride Festival is Saturday, Sept. 25, from 3-9 p.m. at Reverchon Park. General admission is free; VIP tickets can be purchased online at TexasLatinoPride.org for \$60 and include catered food and signature beverages.

Pride in Plano

PRIDE

North Texas Pride, back for its 10th year, set for Plano Arts Center and Haggard Park

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
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The North Texas Pride Foundation has dubbed this year's Pride celebration "Come As You Are," celebrating 10 + 1 years of being out and proud in Collin County. This isn't actually the 10th anniversary; last year would have been the big 10th celebration. But of course, that damn pandemic got the event postponed and then canceled.

Then the party was going to be held during Pride Month this year. But the delta variant showed up, and the event was again postponed.

But Morris Garcia and his team of organizers assure everyone the 10th North Texas Pride definitely will take place on Saturday, Sept. 25, from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. at the Arts Center of Plano and adjoining Haggard Park. And they have a full day of events planned for their first big LGBTQ community event since things began to reopen.

Performances will take place in the arts center's Saigling House. Those performances include the Empire Cats Band and Driveway Dive Band. Chris Chism will perform, and so will McKinney Bel-



North Texas Pride invites you to "Come As You Are."

ly Dance, directed by Raena. (Raena, an award-winning belly dancer, will also offer a free belly dance lesson after the performance.) The 2019-20 North Texas Pride King Brent Gbear will entertain along with a bevy of drag stars and the royal court.

Six dogs in doggie drag will compete, with the audience voting on best in show.

Outside in the park will be a kids' zone that will include a bounce house, face painters and a teddy bear maker. Garcia stressed that the entire event is kid friendly and free to all kids, ages 12 and under. A \$10 donation to help defray costs is requested of all teens and adults.

Vendor, sponsor and non-profit booths will also set up in the park. Arts and crafts booths are both kid- and adult-friendly.

Two giveaways are scheduled: A

grand prize of outdoor activity games will be given to one lucky child, and an Oculus VR system will go to one adult.

Mixed drinks, beer and wine will be available in the Arts Center. Food trucks will be parked outside.

"I'm excited," Garcia said, "because people need this."

But he also noted that, after a year-and-a-half of canceled events, staging a large event became a little less routine, and he wants to make sure all the last-minute details are handled. He's also a little apprehensive about making sure people social distance and wear masks. Hand sanitizer will be placed around the park with signs reminding people to remain safe.

While this is a Pride event, he said North Texas Pride has always attracted "all kinds of people embracing each other's differences."

Ten events ago — 11 years — North Texas Pride began in an alleyway in

downtown McKinney. Garcia and his husband Tim did all the promotion themselves, "and 225 people showed up," Garcia said.

They enjoyed live bands and a DJ, and the event raised money for C.U.R.E., a Collin-County-based AIDS education organization.

Garcia said that while his goal has never been to be the biggest Pride event in North Texas, the event has grown through the years, moving to various locations to accommodate that growth. He's hoping for a good turnout this year, and he already knows the number of vendors and sponsors this year is double the 2019 number.

Parking is available in Haggard Park and nearby at Plano City Hall and the Plano police station. Coming from Dallas, the easiest way to get to North Texas Pride is to take DART's Red Line to the Downtown Plano Station, which faces Haggard Park. Walk around the park to Avenue H to enter, because the park will be fenced to allow beer and wine to be carried outside.

Although North Texas Pride ends at 7 p.m., the Historical Downtown Plano Association, Plano's downtown merchants association, is extending the evening with music and entertainment on the nearby McCall Plaza stage and holding a wine walk featuring downtown Plano merchants.

Garcia said the merchants association did a great job of coordinating with his group, and the theme for the evening's entertainment will be Pride. ■

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Picking up the 'Pieces'

BEHIND THE CAMERA

Cheryll Allison's new documentary finds hope in tragedy

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
rich@dallasvoice.com

These days Cheryll Allison is caught up in the hustle and bustle of the film festival circuit. At the time of this interview, she had just screened her new documentary, *Pieces of Us*, in Palm Springs. The next day, she was heading home to Dallas to open the Dallas VideoFest at the Angelika.

The struggle is real. But the struggle is also worth it so that her film gets the exposure it needs to spread its message.

"Films will often address assault but not the [victim]," Allison said by phone. "I wanted a film about the recovery and the survivor and how it helps when you have the community in support. It's hard to watch and heartbreaking at times, but ultimately it's a film about hope."

Pieces of Us is a film that looks at the personal journeys of LGBTQ hate-crime survivors. In this case, Allison's subjects are all interconnected.

Her five subjects are transgender activist and New York Anti-Violence Project crisis counselor Victoria Cruz; India's Prince Manvendra Singh Gohil, the world's first openly gay prince; Leia Pierce, a single mother who lost her 9-year-old gay son Jamel to suicide; Jipsta, an out rapper and Brooklyn middle

Queer films at Dallas VideoFest

Sept. 30:

- *Pieces of Us* follows the story of hate crime survivors who connect into a found family of support. 7 p.m.

- *Socks on Fire* centers on a poet who composes a letter to his grandmother as his homophobic aunt and drag queen uncle wage war over her Alabama estate. 9 p.m.

Oct. 1

- *Boulevard! A Hollywood Story* follows Dickson Hughes and Richard Stapley, two young songwriters and romantic partners who find themselves caught in a movie star's web when they are hired to write a musical version of *Sunset Boulevard*. 9 p.m.

All films screen at the Angelika Film Center. videofest.org.



Mykel Dicus flagging in India.
(Photos courtesy Films Gone Wild)

school psychologist who was attacked on a New York City subway platform with his partner; and Mykel, a performance artist attacked in his own home.

It was Mykel who first reached out to Allison.

"I'd known him as a fellow performer back in the '90s. He contacted me in 2018, and we talked about how he was now a survivor of a hate crime," she explained. "What he did, though, was take his recovery public and find community support and bring in organizations and reach out to other survivors."

The prince heard Mykel's story, and that connected them. In turn, Mykel reached out to Leia, and this network grew into a sort of support group.

Allison follows that story, through the camera. She shot the material over a year's time, from Denver to India and had the support of an optimistic producer.

"When funding was secured for the film, Mark Von der Heide, a wonderful gentleman and a gay man, was telling me that this film needs to be made," she said.

As Allison filmed her movie, she

found these "pieces" that were interwoven into this family. She also found it to be a reminder: "This just reminded me of the humanity that exists in all of us," she said. "If we just open ourselves up to love and see these people from different backgrounds — gay, trans, straight, bi — we still have that shared humanity."

"We live in such a divisive time, but this gave me hope."

Allison is based in Dallas now, after living in both New York and Los Angeles. With the film industry so easily accessible digitally, she and her wife decided to move to Dallas and be closer to her family. And they jumped right back into the local queer community.

"We have a condo in Turtle Creek, right in the heart of the gayborhood," she said. "We go to Oak Lawn UMC. We just couldn't be happier with Dallas and the Oak Lawn neighborhood."

And although it's early in her festival run, Allison has some extra feels about having her Texas premiere at the Dallas VideoFest in her hometown.

"I don't think there are words to express how I feel about that," she said. "I have a long history with [festival founder] Bart Weiss. He's been so supportive of my films, so it's such an honor to be



Cheryll Allison

the opening night film in what is now the last DVF."

DVF is the oldest independent festival of its kind in the country showcasing hard-to-find, independent, alternative and non-commercial media not found in conventional avenues. This year marks its 34th year and its last.

"It's a bittersweet honor to open the festival," Allison added. "What a history to be a part of."

Pieces of Us screens at 7 p.m. Sept. 30 at the Angelika Film Center. For a full lineup of films, visit videofest.org.



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Autographs and collectibles

COLLECTIBLES

Zachary McGinnis is opening a store that deals in signed movie memorabilia and much more

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Zachary McGinnis' obsession with collecting autographs and collectibles began when he met Peter Mayhew at conventions. Mayhew, for those who don't know, was the actor who played Chewbacca in seven *Star Wars* movies, a TV film and more.

Mayhew's daughter was McGinnis' age, and they developed something of a friendship. Although Mayhew was British, he married Angie, an American toy dealer and they lived in Granbury. When Mayhew died in 2019, he was living in Boyd and is buried outside the Parker County town.

McGinnis began college at UNT, but as his friendship with Mayhew developed, he began representing the actor. Mayhew connected McGinnis with other celebrities he worked with, and through those connections, McGinnis' business grew.

He continued collecting autographs and found he could make quite a profit selling them. So, he left school and hasn't looked back. The gamble paid off: His Galactic Productions Autographs and Collectibles is now recognized for the authenticity and value of the products he offers.

The pandemic sidelined events that McGinnis would have booked his clients for, and it slowed his travel to conventions and signings around the world. But it didn't slow down his collecting. And at a time when so many stores have closed, and so much business has gone online, McGinnis is opening a new 1,500-square-foot showroom to exhibit and sell his collectibles.

And what a collection he's amassed.

There's a wall of action figures from *Star Wars* and *Star Trek*. When he first saw a display of action figures as a display at a theater, he said, "I want that." By "that" he meant every one made, and



Zachary McGinnis with a life-sized Spiderman figure in his store, above. Above right is the Wookiee head autographed by Peter Mayhew's wife, Angie. (Davis Taffet/Dallas Voice)

now he has 4,000 of them at home in an action figure room.

The centerpiece of the new store is a Wookiee bust that's No. 8 of 50 signed

by Angie Mayhew after her husband's death, accompanied by a letter from Mark Hamill. The posters in the store have been salvaged from train stations



or movie theaters. Advertising posters like these are meant to be destroyed after the film's run, so the ones that remain become valuable.

Some items come from other retail sources. A life-sized Spiderman comes from a Blockbuster display. A spaceship comes from a Toys R Us *Star Wars Episode 1* display. Some are created — like a sign asking people attending one event to wear masks that is signed by a number of the people making appearances including Hercules' Kevin Sorbo — ironic considering that Sorbo is an anti-masker/vaxxer who has bragged about making a scene in public when asked to wear a mask at a Starbucks.

"*Star Wars* is my personal main shtick," McGinnis said, but that doesn't mean all of his collectibles are related to those films.

Costumes from the Power Rangers are on display. He has a signed Mike Modano jersey and a baseball signed by Daryl Strawberry. That signed baseball, by the way, developed into a line of baseballs signed by non-sports celebrities. McGinnis said he brings his own Bic pen and baseballs for them to sign. Sharpies don't work because they bleed into the leather, he explained, adding that he tells signers to press hard on the ball from the first



stroke when signing. His new shop has a case of autographed baseballs.

McGinnis also has several pieces of 3D pop art from the artist Fazzino. One piece featuring a Dallas Cowboys game is signed by Roger Staubach. That happened, McGinnis explained, because he and the former Cowboy quarterback use the same Preston Hollow framer.

McGinnis said some of his clients have become like family. For example, when he booked Mike Edmonds into Plano Comic Con, Edmonds — an English actor with dwarfism known for his roles in *Dark Crystal*, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* and in the *Stars Wars* franchise — said he'd like to stay for a week.

Edmonds came to the event every year, and on one visit McGinnis decided to come out to him. He had trouble with the words, he said, but Edmonds put him at ease saying, "You can't help what you're trying to tell me, just like I can't help being short."

McGinnis is holding a soft opening for his store on Friday, Sept. 24, from 5-7 p.m. and Saturday, Sept. 25, from noon-2 p.m., featuring guest appearances by Cindy Morgan, best known as Lacey Underall in *Caddyshack* and Lora/Yori in *Tron*, and Kenn Scott who played Rafael in *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. ■

The store's grand opening will be Oct. 22-24. It's located at 13400 TI Blvd. Suite 4.



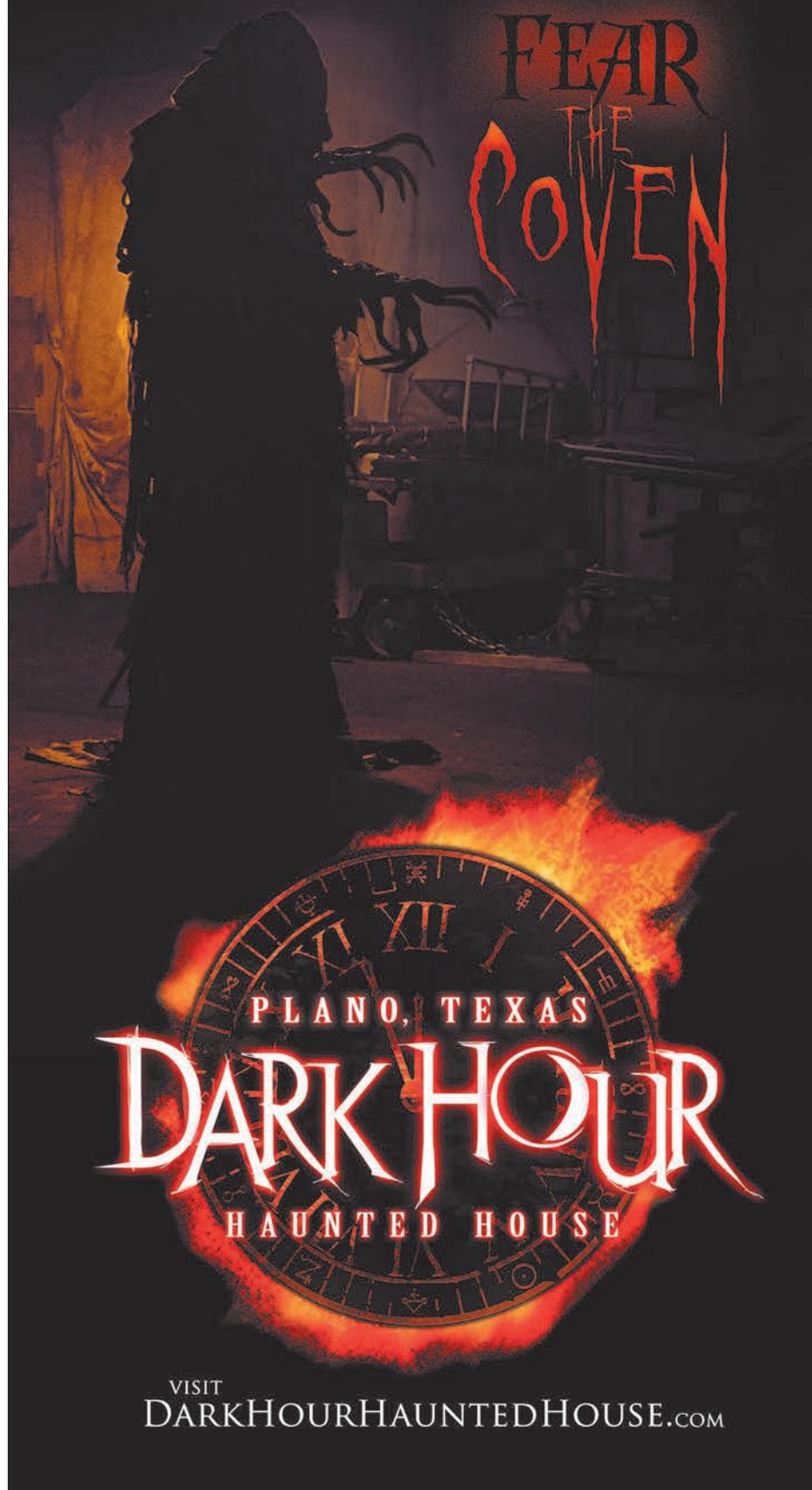
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Putting the 'gay' in gala

MAKING MUSIC HAPPEN

Dallas couple Smith, Von Wupperfeld serving as chairs for 2021 DSO event

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
rich@dallasvoice.com

On Saturday, Sept. 26, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra will present its 2021 Gala concert at the Meyerson Symphony Center. The event returns with two big debuts, including that of music director Fabio Luisi and of violinist Ann-Sophie Mutter.

The gala will also mark another first this year: Andy Smith and his husband Paul Von Wupperfeld are serving as this year's DSO Gala chairs and are the first same-sex couple to do so.

"It's so exciting, and it's been a long time coming since we were asked back in the fall of 2019," Smith said.

Von Wupperfeld added, "Of course, we were delighted to say 'Yes' to this."

They will serve alongside Gala Honorary Chairs Rich and Mary Templeton.

This year's event will be a celebration of more than 60 years of support from Texas Instruments and the TI Founda-

DSO Highlights

Highlights from the upcoming Texas Instruments Classical Series 2021-22 season at the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. All concerts held at the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center. dallasymphony.org.

- Oct. 14-17: Beethoven's "Emperor"
- Oct. 28-30: Elgar "Symphony No. 1"
- Nov. 4 and 6: Mozart's "Requiem"
- Nov. 5 and 7: Luisi and Fleming
- Nov. 18-21: Bartok and Beethoven
- Jan. 7-9: Ravel + Urioste
- Jan. 13 and 14: Ehnes plays Elgar
- Jan. 20-23: Trifonov plays Brahms
- Feb. 3-5: Welcome Back Maestro Litton
- Feb. 17-19: Tchaikovsky "Pathetique"
- March 17-20: Shostakovich and R. Strauss
- March 24-26: All-Mozart Concert
- April 1-5: Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin"
- April 8-10: Berlioz "Symphonie Fantastique"
- April 14-16: Dvorak's "New World Symphony"
- April 28-May 1: Kavakos, Kerr and Kufchak
- May 12-15: Fabio Luisi Conducts Beethoven 9
- May 19-22: Rachmaninoff "Piano Concerto No. 2"



Paul Von Wupperfeld, left, and Andy Smith

tion. That is particularly meaningful to Von Wupperfeld and Smith. Von Wupperfeld is a global manager at TI, and Smith is the executive director of the foundation.

"It's amazing to think that relationship has been around so long, and it's so strong," Smith said. "For 22 years, we've had the Texas Instruments Classical Series. At TI, we believe the arts are the building blocks of a strong and vibrant community."

As chairs, the two have led the planning and fundraising for the event. Proceeds raised from the gala directly benefit the DSO's education and community programs.

"Other than being the faces of the event, we take care of the technical aspects. We help with the letters and arrangements to make the ask of various people," von Wupperfeld said. "When it's someone you know that is asking for a donation, that can be much more powerful and effective and really make a difference."

And while he and husband may be the faces of the gala, Smith reminds that this is all about the DSO. "Certainly we get to do some fun things like the tastings, but this isn't about us. We're serving as ambassadors and, first and foremost, helping to lead those fundraising efforts.

We wanted to do this in order to help raise the money they need."

The announcement was an interesting one. It was both exciting but at the same time nonchalant in the best way. Announcing Smith and von Wupperfeld as the chairs almost felt like any previous chair announcement the DSO has made for its galas.

"I think, number one, it's just an indication that the DSO is mindful of being inclusive and thoughtful to the fact that we are part of the community," Von Wupperfeld said. "However, it also shouldn't be remarkable to have a same-sex couple as the chair."

Smith added "We're judged on the work we do and not any other characteristic. One of the things I talked with Kim [Noltemy, DSO president] about was diversity, equity and inclusion and that she wanted to bring that to the DSO. Participating as co-chair reaffirmed to me their commitment to that."

Von Wupperfeld noted that DSO continued to perform during the pandemic and took part in the June 2020 Pride concert in Turtle Creek Park with a quartet of LGBTQ musicians. "They have been out there and part of this community all along," he said.

While this year's gala will be a swanky kickoff to the season, there will be some changes for obvious reasons. "The symphony has been great about wanting this

to be a safe space for guests," Smith said.

The full gala experience includes a seated dinner prior to the concert in the Meyerson. In consideration of providing a healthy and comfortable atmosphere, the DSO has made changes this year to provide a safer environment. Guests will be seated at tables of four or six guests each, and the tables will be spaced to allow for social distancing. The Gala Concert will have assigned seating to provide space between guests. When not actively eating or drinking, attendees are required to wear masks while inside the building.

"Given the fact we are still going through the pandemic, the gala will be very dignified but fun. We're going to have a great time and raise some money," von Wupperfeld said. "Plus, they have an incredible season this year. The DSO is the crown jewel here, and it's important their education and outreach programs stay strong to keep them out into the community."

And of course, there's always the music.

"Having that music bring us together as a community is healing; it gives us hope," Smith said.

"But just know, we'll be putting the 'gay' in gala this year," Von Wupperfeld mentioned.

For more about the gala and the DSO, visit dallasymphony.org.

'Surge' protector

THE SILVER SCREEN

Ben Whishaw brings shocking authenticity to a movie that may be too much for some

GREGG SHAPIRO | Screen Savor
GreggShapiro@aol.com

Out actor Ben Whishaw is nothing if not versatile. From his performances as Sebastian in the 2008 movie version of *Bridesead Revisited* and a grieving gay man in 2014's *Lilting*, to his recurring roles as James Bond's gadget guru Q and the voice of the titular character in the Paddington Bear movies, there doesn't appear to be much Whishaw can't do.

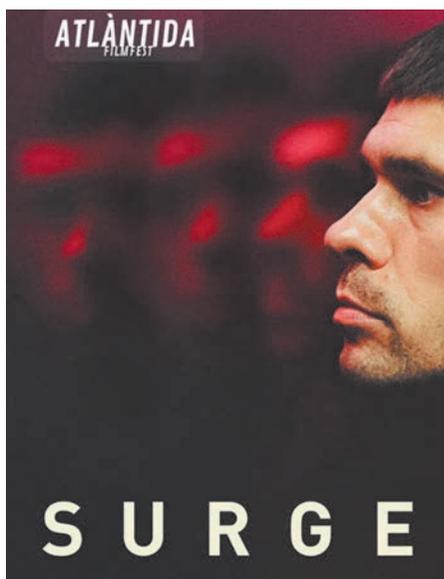
In Aneil Karia's deeply disturbing *Surge*, released today by Filmrise/BBC Films, Whishaw delivers a devastating performance as a man descending into madness. Calling it difficult to watch is an understatement. Nevertheless, it's worth watching to see Whishaw in action in this challenging film.

Socially awkward Joseph (Whishaw) works security at a London airport. The job is stressful, and you can see the degradation of the searched and the searcher. Joseph is an outsider in the employee lunchroom, on the commute home, in his apartment building. Even his interactions with his parents (played by Ellie Haddington and Ian Gelder), the kinds of unnecessarily critical and sour people who probably never should have had children, are uncomfortable, even unpleasant.

A particularly hostile visit with his folks results in him biting through a drinking glass, cutting his lower lip and gums. This sets off a series of surprising events, including a confrontation with an annoying neighbor perpetually fussing with and revving his motorbike.

Joseph's increasingly erratic behavior leads to him having a full-on breakdown on the job. Sent home, Joseph continues to act out in bizarre ways. He jumps a turnstile at a public transit station; he shows up at the flat of sick co-worker Lily (Jasmine Jobson), the only person who is kind to him at work, to help her with the problem she mentioned having with her TV.

His attempt to purchase the neces-



sary cable for Lily and the decline of his bank card causes him to become more unhinged. When an ATM eats his card, he makes his most drastic move: He holds up a teller at his bank. It's an indication of how far Joseph has slid and how close he is to the precipice.

With plenty of cash at his disposal, he returns to the store, buys the cable and, evading the police, goes back to Lily's apartment where he not only fixes her tech issue but lets off a little steam by having sex with her. Unbeknownst to her, he also hides a bag full of stolen money in her kitchen cabinet.

Emboldened by the day's activities, he holds up a second bank. While he does get away with it, his exhilaration is short-lived when the dye pack is set off a few blocks away. With nowhere to turn, he checks into a high-end hotel, where his actions, including the total trashing of the hotel room and the crashing of a wedding party, go further off the rails.

Just when you think things can't get any weirder, they do! This includes a joyride on a stolen motorbike, a car accident, a physical beating, a return to his parents' house and another brazen robbery.

Whishaw's elastic facial expressions, complete with full-body ticks, give Joseph a shocking authenticity. His breathtaking performance, as well as that of Haddington and Jobson, are truly riveting. But even at just over 90 minutes, *Surge* may be too much for some people. Forewarned is forearmed. ■

Rating: B

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ON THE PAGE

Cochrun's *Charm* runs too long; Coles' *Things* offers pleasant surprises

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER | Bookworm Sez
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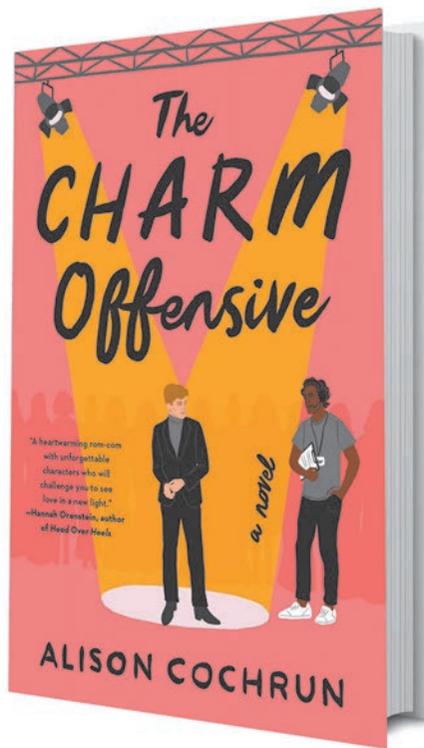
The Charm Offensive: A Novel by Alison Cochrun, c.2021, Atria; \$17; 368 pages.

The applause is all for you this time. It's deafening, really — perhaps because there's a standing ovation beneath it. All the work you did, the emoting, the emotions — you know how much your fans appreciate it.

So take a bow. Drink in the love.

As in the new novel, *The Charm Offensive* by Alison Cochrun, that's one thing that's sometimes missing in life.

Dev Deshpande was good at his job. He knew it; his colleagues knew it. It was



fact. He might personally be terrible at love — case in point: He was still smarting from a three-months-ago break-up with his boyfriend, Ryan — but Dev was a pro at his job as producer for the reality TV show, *Ever After*. In fact, he'd been in charge of making dreams happen for six years' worth of beautiful *Ever After* contestants.

It helped that he believed in fairy tales. Maybe one day, he'd find his own Prince Charming.

Just not this season.

This season, his lead director made him handle the "prince" instead of the usual "princesses," and that was a challenge.

Charles Winshaw was 28, devastatingly handsome, extremely wealthy and a nervous, introverted nerd who rarely dated. Geeky, awkward and prone to panic attacks, Charlie sincerely had no clue how to be romantic. Truth was, he was only there because his best friend and agent put him on *Ever After* to count-

er a reputation for being weird.

Still, Charlie was weird, and it was up to Dev to make him work for the show. Shoring up Charlie's confidence didn't work and neither did a pep talk. He couldn't seem to just perform a role without freaking out, and it was becoming obvious.

By the time Dev's assistant suggested having a few practice dates, Dev was willing to try anything.

He took Charlie to dinner. He spent time doing jigsaw puzzles with him, and he got Charlie to relax a little. If sparks flew, well, it was one-sided; Charlie was completely straight.

Wasn't he?

You know what's going to happen in the end, don't you? Of course, you do. You'll know it by page 30 — step-by-step, with virtually no surprises — which leaves a long way to the final sentence of *The Charm Offensive*.

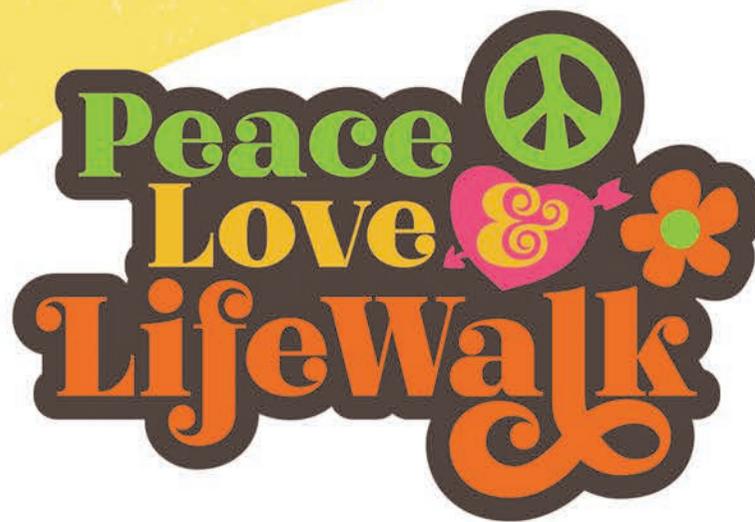
Now, it's true that this novel is cute. It

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has its lightly humorous moments, and author Alison Cochrun gives it a good cast, from contestant to show creator. It doesn't lack details; in fact, reality dating show-watchers will feel right at home here. It even has the ubiquitous panoply of exotic locales for the "challenges" that the contestants must do.

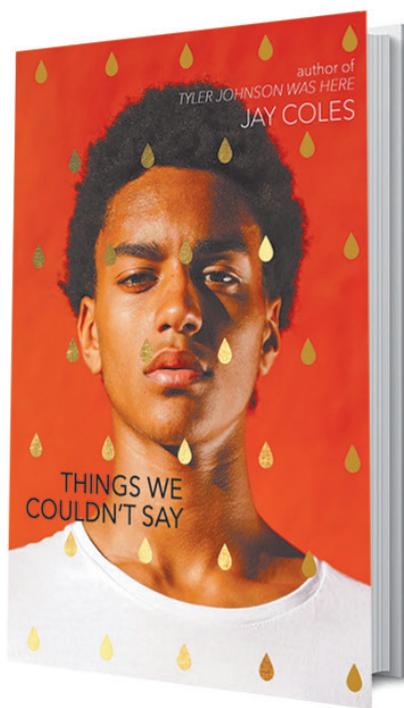
At issue is the length of this book. There's too much of it — too many shirts that creep up, too many mentions of vomit, too much needless drama, too much will-he-won't-he when we know full well he will.

This extra doesn't ratchet up the tension, it makes things slow.

And so: cute story, familiar scenes, good characters in *The Charm Offensive*. But if taut is what you want in a rom-com, leave this book and bow out.

Things We Couldn't Say by Jay Coles, c.2021, Scholastic; \$18.99; 320 pages.

You'd like an explanation, please. Why something is done or not? Why permission is denied? You'd like to hear a simple reason. You've been asking "Why?" since you were two years old, but now the older you get, the more urgent is the need to know, although, in the new book



Things We Couldn't Say by Jay Coles, there could be a dozen because.

Sometimes, mostly when he didn't need it to happen, Giovanni Zucker's birth mother took over his thoughts. It wasn't as though she was the only thing he had to think about.

Gio was an important part of the basketball team at Ben Davis High School; in

fact, when he thought about college, he hoped for a basketball scholarship. He had classes to study for, two best friends he wanted to hang out with, a little brother who was his reason to get up in the morning and a father who was always pushing for help at the church he ran.

As for his romantic life, there wasn't much to report: Gio dated girls, and he'd dated guys, and he was kinda feeling like he liked guys more.

So no, he didn't want to think about his birth mother; the woman who walked out on the family when Gio was a little kid didn't deserve his consideration at all. There was just no time for the first woman who broke his heart.

It was nice to have distractions from his thoughts. Gio's best friends had his back. He knew pretty much everybody in his Indianapolis neighborhood. And the guy who moved across the street, a fellow b-baller named David, was becoming a good friend.

A very good friend.

David was bisexual, too.

But just as their relationship was beginning, the unthinkable happened: Gio's birth mother reached out, emailed him, wanted to meet with him. And he was torn. She said she had "reasons" for

abandoning him all those years ago, and her truth was not what he'd imagined.

There are a lot of pleasant surprises inside *Things We Couldn't Say*. From the start, author Jay Coles gives his main character a great support system, and that's a uniquely good thing. Gio enjoys the company of people who want the best for him, and it's refreshing that even the ones who are villains do heroic things.

Everyone in this book, in fact, has heart, and that softens the drama that Coles adds — which leads to another nice surprise: There's no overload of screeching drama here. Overwrought teen conflict is all but absent; even potential angsts that Gio might notice in his urban neighborhood are mentioned but not belabored.

This helps keep readers focused on a fine, relatable and very realistic coming-of-age story line.

This book is aimed at readers ages 12-and-up, but beware that there are a few gently explicit, but responsibly written, pages that might not be appropriate for kids in the lower target range. For older kids and adults, though, *Things We Couldn't Say* offers plenty of reasons to love it. ■




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Seventeen years have passed in Winters, Texas, since Peggy died after falling over G.W.'s wooden leg. And the times have surely changed. It's 2015, and the U.S. Supreme Court has just issued its landmark ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges* recognizing marriage equality nationwide. So Ty and his husband Kyle — who happens to be Black, by the way — are coming back to Winters to complete their goal of being married in every state in the U.S., with Texas being state number 50. Wanna know what happens? Then you need to head over to the Kalita Humphreys Theater for Uptown Players' production of Del Shores' *A Very Sordid Wedding*, opening tonight and running through Oct. 3. The show, directed by Shores himself, stars Christopher Abraham, Brandon A. Bailey, Hunter Barnett, Bradley Campbell, Allyn Carrell, Mari Deese, Steve Golin, Kelly Groves, Isreal J. Henry, Dom G. Jones, Shannon McGrann, Bruce Melena, Kevin Moore, Cassie Nova, Ivy Opdyke, Cara Serber, Morgana Shaw, Sally Soldo and Paul J. Williams as Brother Boy, with Emerson Collins reprising his role from the *Very Sordid Wedding* movie as Billy Joe Dobson. See listings for details.

GAY AGENDA



GET YOUR PRIDE ON HERE

June may be LGBTQ Pride Month, but here in DFW, we have too much Pride to limit it to just one month, and this weekend will see Pride celebrations taking place all around the Metroplex. Dallas Southern Pride presents Black Pride Weekend, beginning tonight with a welcome reception from 7-10 p.m. at Sheraton Suites Market Center, the host hotel, and lasting through Sunday. Visit DallasSouthernPride.com for all the details. On Saturday, the North Texas Pride Foundation hosts the North Texas Pride "Come As You Are" festival from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. at Saigling House in Plano (details at [Facebook.com/NorthTexasPride](https://www.facebook.com/NorthTexasPride)), and the Texas LatinX Pride Fest is happening Saturday from 3-9 p.m. at Reverchon Park (details at [Facebook.com/events/d41d8cd9/texas-latinx-pride-fest-2021/566171514186914](https://www.facebook.com/events/d41d8cd9/texas-latinx-pride-fest-2021/566171514186914)).



GET OUTDOORS HERE

Are you looking for a place to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life and have a chance to relax in the great outdoors? Then pack up your camping gear and head about 100 miles south on I-45 and check out LGBTQ+ Outdoorfest, beginning today and lasting through Sunday, Sept. 26, at Rainbow Ranch, "Texas' favorite gay-owned campgrounds." You can join rainbow family from across the country for a weekend of camping, kayaking, hiking, workshops and more. Get more info at RainbowRanch.net.



GET YOUR COVID VACCINE HERE

Do you want the world to get back to normal? That won't happen until we can stop or at least dramatically slow the spread of COVID-19. Do your part and get vaccinated. AIN and the AIDS Healthcare Foundation Strategic Support Team will be providing free COVID vaccinations Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 29 and 30, from 8 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m. at the AHF Pharmacy inside the AIN offices, 2600 N. Stemmons, Ste. 151. There's no appointment necessary, and they can do booster shots, too.



EAT FOR A GOOD CAUSE HERE

The Greg Dollgener Memorial AIDS Fund's Team Metro will be hitting the grill at The Hidden Door, 5025 Bowser Ave., from 2:30-5:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 26, to cool burgers, brats and hot dogs with all the fixings — plus brownies for dessert — to raise money for LifeWalk. You get a great meal and help a great cause, all for just \$5. They will be selling raffle tickets for a chance to win fabulous prizes, too. What's not to love?! Visit GDMAF.org for details.

PLAN YOUR WEEK

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 holiday

SEPTEMBER

• Sept. 24: Wynonna Judd and Cactus Moser

Wynonna Judd and Cactus Moser perform live at The Kessler, 1230 W. Davis St. Tickets at Prekindle.com.

• Sept. 24-26: Dallas Southern Pride

Dallas Southern Pride presents Black Pride Weekend. Includes DSP for Her, DSP for Him and a welcome reception from 7-10 p.m. on at host hotel Sheraton Suites Market Center on Friday, the Black Pride Mega Party hosted by Papoose and featuring Remy Ma performing live Saturday, from 10 p.m.-2 a.m. at Dallas Market Hall (free general admission), and the Kirk Myers Signature Brunch from 12:30-4:30 p.m. at Gas Monkey and the Day Party hosted by Bia from 12:30-4:30 p.m., also at Gas Monkey on Sunday. Visit DallasSouthernPride.com for details.

• Sept 24-30: Rooftop Cinema

Series of outdoor films at Dallas Heritage Village, 1515 S. Harwood St., Sept. 24: *Will Smith's Birthday*, *Pineapple Express*. Sept. 25: *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World*, *Dark Knight*. Sept. 26: *The Sandlot*. Sept. 29: *Cruella*. Sept. 30: *Mamma Mia!* Tickets at RooftopCinemaClub.com/heritagevillage.

• Sept. 24-Oct. 3: A Very Sordid Wedding

It's 2015, seventeen years after Peggy tripped over G.W.'s wooden legs and died in *Sordid Lives*. Uptown Players presents the sequel that explores the questions, bigotry and the fallout of what happens when gay marriage comes to communities and families that are not quite ready to accept it. Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. 8 p.m. UptownPlayers.org.

• Sept. 24-26: LGBTQ Outdoorfest

LGBT Outdoors camping weekend will feature hands-on outdoors workshops and that magic community building that can only take place outdoors around a campfire. Rainbow Ranch in Groesbeck.

• Sept. 25: North Texas Pride

"Come As You Are" Festival North Texas Pride Foundation brings the community together to celebrate Pride in diversity. Sponsor and vendor booths, food and beverage, giveaways, adult and kid activities, bands, DJ, dancing and entertainment. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Saigling House, 902 E. 16th St., Plano. Free.

• Sept. 24-Oct. 17: The State Fair of Texas

Tickets at BigTex.com.

• Sept. 25: Texas Latinx Pride Fest 2021

Live entertainment and special guests from 3-9 p.m. in Reverchon Park, 3501 Maple Ave.

• Sept. 25: Texas Justice: Brandon Woodruff

Richard Rey, formerly of Fox 4 News, hosts a screening of Texas Justice: Brandon Woodruff about a teen convicted of killing his parents without evidence other than he is gay at 7 p.m. at the The Texan Theater, 2712 Lee St., Greenville.

• Through Sept. 25: Becoming featuring Valerie Gillespie

Becoming is an aesthetic exploration of the truth and illusion

behind the often times unfortunate actions that stem from human nature. African American Museum, Fair Park. AAMDallas.org.

• Sept. 25-Jan. 9: Anila Quayyum Agha: A Beautiful Despair

Introducing a dozen new ornate works by the multidisciplinary artist, Anila Quayyum Agha: A Beautiful Despair will open this fall at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art (the Carter). The exhibition debuts the latest evolution of Agha's luminous lantern-like sculptures—two site-specific installation pieces commissioned by the Carter—alongside a corresponding series of drawings that elevate practices traditionally assigned as female handiwork, such as embroidery. Amon Carter Museum, 3501 Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth. Free. CarterMuseum.org.

Have an event coming up? Email your information to Managing Editor Tammie 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.

Look for extended listings online at DallasVoice.com

Cassie Nova

ASK A DRAG QUEEN

Remembering trivia, forgetting things I need to know

Good day beautiful people. Y'all, the old gray mare just ain't what she used to be. I think my mind is turning to mush — probably from watching too much TV and drinkin'. My biggest problem is learning new music for the shows; it takes me forever to learn new music.

I wish I could delete certain things from my brain to make room for new things. I am never gonna need Romeo's "But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?" speech from that damned Shakespeare play. I had to learn it in 9th grade, and it still sits there in my brain taking up space. I can recite it on command as well today as I could at 14.

I know every single song and breath to *Grease 2*. I can recite every word in every scene. As a gay man and a drag queen, that actually has come in handy. But that is a large file that takes up a lot of room in my cranial laptop. I'm not sure who could possibly be impressed with that, but I did great in biology because of knowing the words to "Reproduction."

My mind is full of useless trivia and an uncanny ability to tell you about some random actor in some random series and who his sister is and how he got the part and even some fandom fact about him like he has webbed toes.

But I can't do math.

I kill at the Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon game. I remember the most useless facts about stuff that has happened to me. The first wreck I was ever in, I was wearing one of those Hypercolor shirts that change color when the temperature changes. It was pink and turned red when heated, so it always looked like my arm pits were bleeding.

I remember drag queens and what songs they were doing the very first time I ever watched them perform. The first time I ever saw Celeste Martinez in a show, she was doing "Fever" by Annabella. The first time I saw Tasha Kohl, she was doing "Why" by Annie Lennox, and she was wearing a geometric-shaped costume that only showed her face and had tassels on the end of every finger. I also remember that the combat boots I wore that night were missing the shoe-string eyelet, third down on the right of



the left foot.

Stupid, useless knowledge that I still think about for whatever reason.

I used to be able to learn a song in three listens. No joke. I heard Taylor Dayne's "Can't Get Enough of Your Love" on the radio the Tuesday morning that her single dropped. Back then, new music came out on Tuesdays, and you had to go to a music store to buy it. So, I took my little gay ass over to Sound Warehouse and bought the cassette single. I listened to it twice then went to work in the Rose Room and turned it in for the first show. I did it and knew every word and every beat.

Fast forward to January of this year: Asia O'Hara wanted me to learn the Megan Thee Stallion part of "WAP" so we could do it in the show. I still have not been able to get those words right.

There are many factors as to why: The song is a little out of my comfort zone; it has a lot of words, and I like the song, but I don't love it. I cannot commit those lyrics to memory for more than a few minutes. Oh look, something shiny! Now I have forgotten them again.

My "like" for so much of today's music is barely there. My tastes have changed so much. It is hard for me to connect with songs that will be good to do in the show — you know, upbeat and familiar. I just need to push myself more and focus. I need to get out of my comfort zone and try some new music.

I really love the song by Olivia Rodrigo called "Brutal." It's such a cute song, but she talks about being 17. I am gonna be 50 in February. It feels weird, but do people even listen to lyrics anymore?

The point I was trying to make before I went on a pity party rant about being a drag queen of a certain age is that everything is so much work now. My memory is not as quick as it used to be. I'd take ginkgo biloba if I could remember to take it.

I blame smart phones. I used to know a billion phone numbers, and now I have to really think when I give out my own number.

Everything is right at your fingertips: Who was the third president? I dunno, google it. When was the moon landing? The moon landing never happened ... the

innanets said so. Who played Darrin on *Bewitched*? I know that without googling it: First it was Dick York, then Dick Sargent.

I may be full of useless knowledge, but I am fun at parties.

Here is to me working on my memory and not getting complacent when it comes to new music. Hell, y'all have figured out by now I am not really singing in the shows. So I guess y'all will buy what I am sellin'. We will live in the fantasy together ... if I can just learn the words.

Remember to always love more, bitch less and be fabulous! XOXO, Cassie Nova

this word search solution



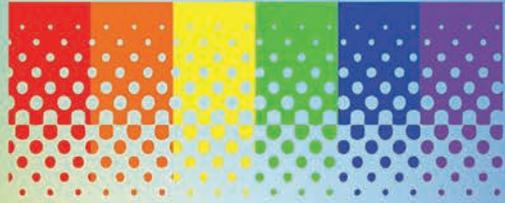
this week's solution



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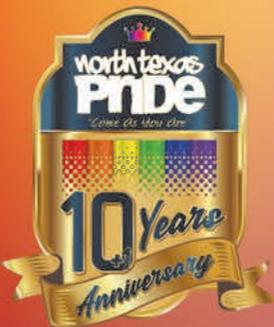
north texas
PRIDE



"Come As You Are"

Pride 2021 Festival

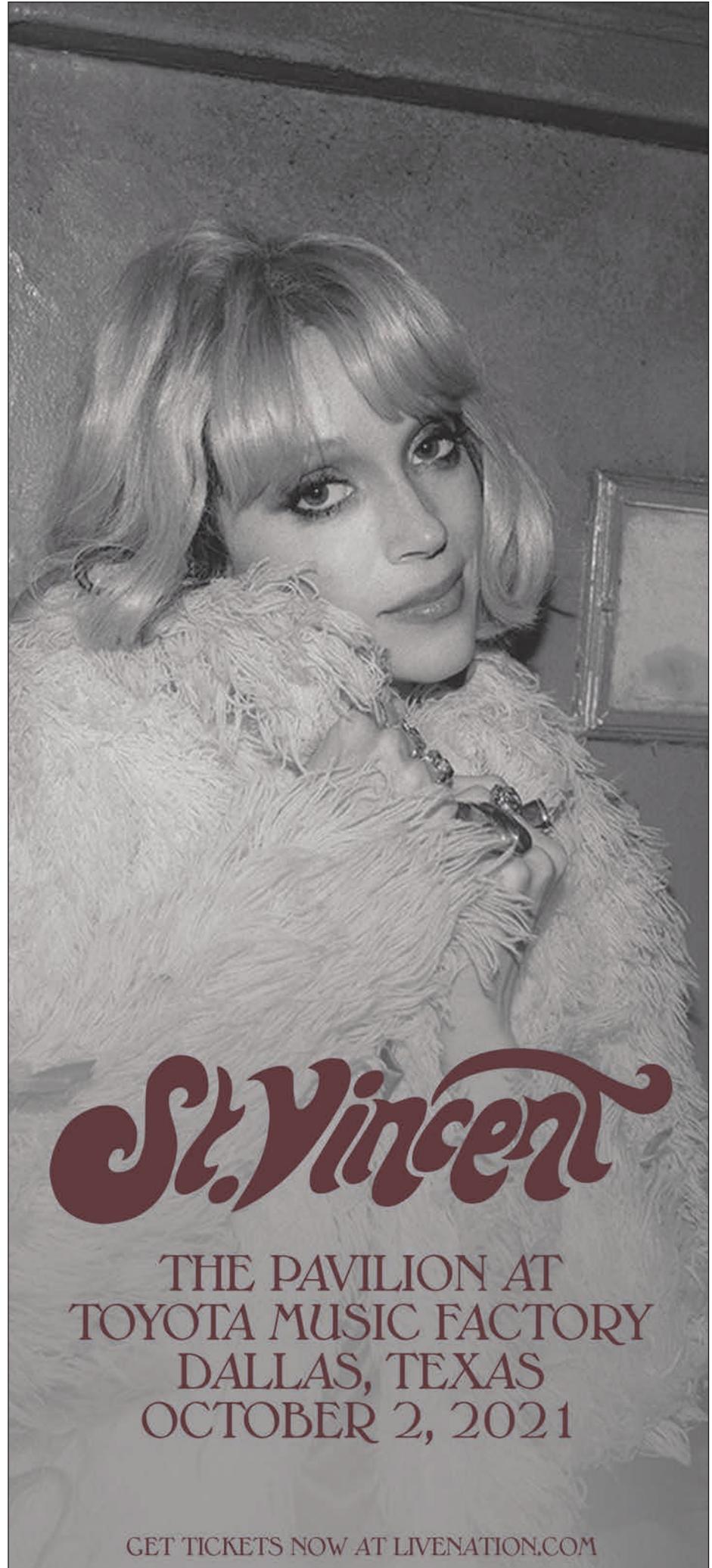
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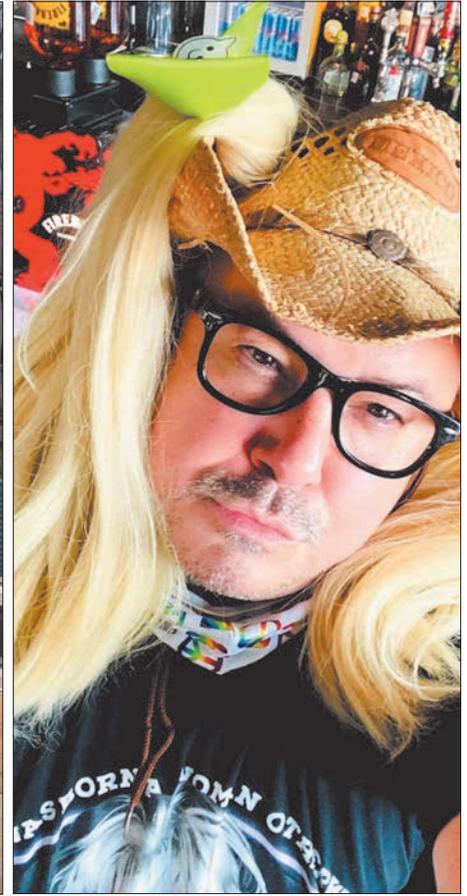
PEOPLE, PLACES AND FACES



Get your raffle tickets from Nathan and Mark at the Classic Chassis Car meeting



Brian looking pretty in pink (and silver)



Jo Bethlene at Cedar Springs Tap House



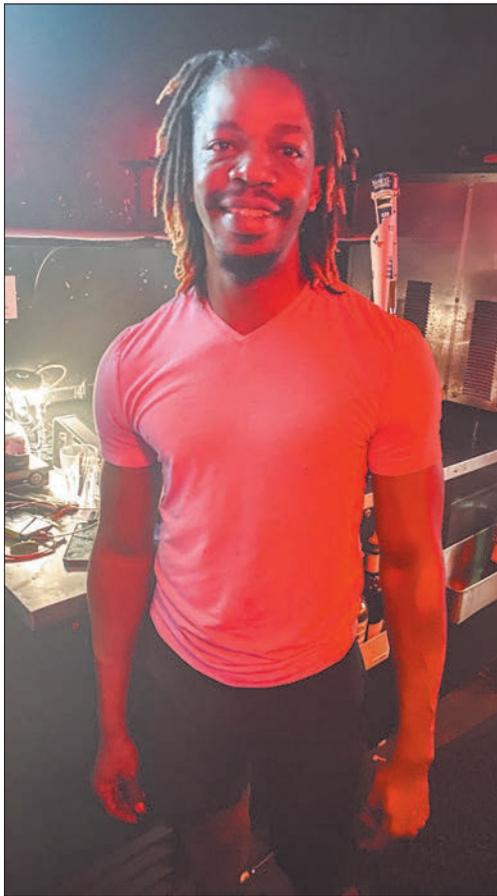
Carmella is on tap every weekend at Garlow's in Gun Barrel City



"And a-five, six seven, eight!"



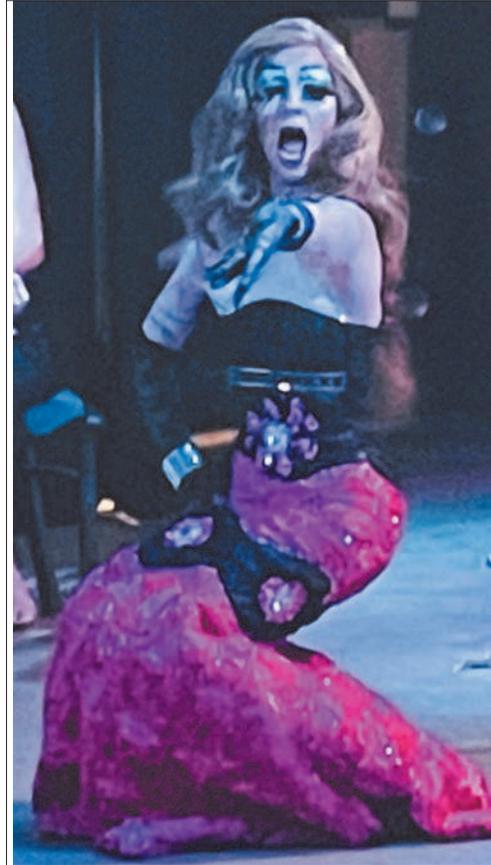
How many shots did you want?



Serving up drinks and muscle at The Tin Room



Ken is the membership mastermind for Classic Chassis Car Club



Lady Brookes works the stage at Garlows in Gun Barrel City



Steve strikes a pose at the Classic Chassis Car Club meeting



Selena Whorez and Louis Kenmar with UCLSE hosted Leather and Lace at Hidden Door to benefit GDMAF

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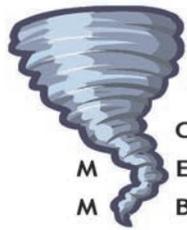
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WORD SEARCH



Diversions Word Search - The Wizard Of Oz

Find the words in the list below hiding across, backwards, up, down and diagonally in the grid. Words separated by a slash "/" are found individually in the puzzle. The unused letters starting at top left and going down by row will spell out a surprise!

C	S	T	K	C	I	T	Y	E	L	C	N	U	O		
M	E	A	R	T	C	E	W	D	R	A	Z	I	W		
M	B	N	C	O	A	L	O	H	L	U	W	H	E	R	
E	U	S	O	T	L	L	E	A	U	A	O	J	A	V	W
R	A	A	O	K	O	O	D	H	M	R	U	E	U	I	Y
S	R	T	B	W	C	N	N	U	C	E	A	N	N	H	S
F	P	W	H	K	I	I	N	E	O	M	E	G	T	R	R
I	O	B	I	L	N	C	R	D	W	E	E	O	E	E	T
E	P	R	G	T	H	A	K	B	A	D	R	P	M	I	D
L	P	A	E	K	C	A	R	E	R	O	P	I	N	N	
D	Y	I	I	S	E	H	B	F	D	I	R	M	O		
H	E	N	R	Y	T	D	N	A	L	R	A	G			
W	S	M	O	N	K	E	Y	S	Y	N	O	I	L		



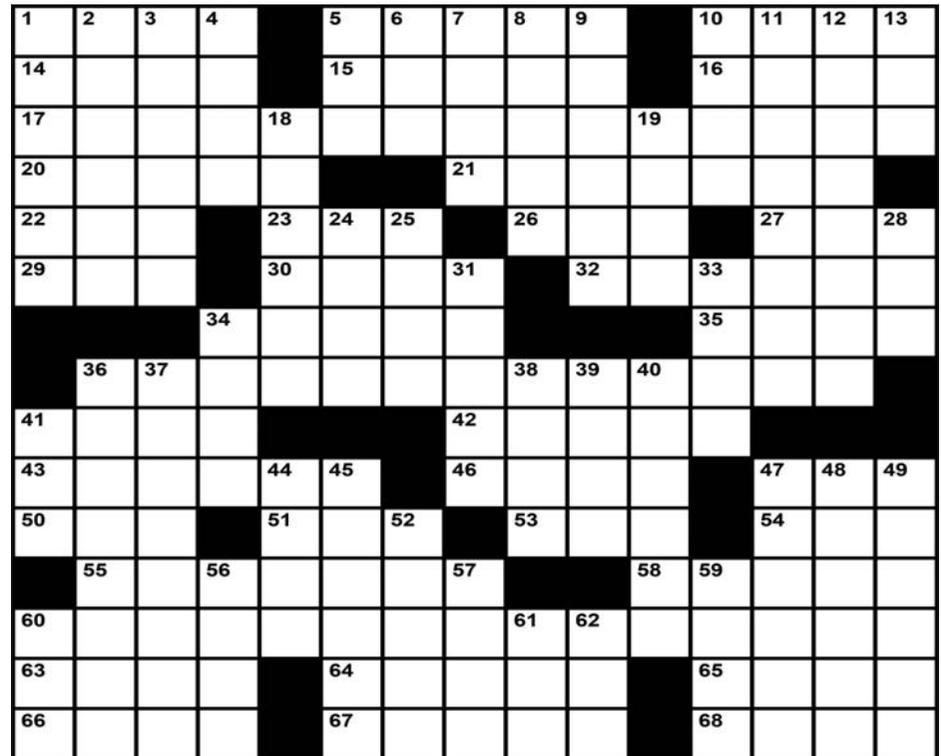
Aunt Em	Dorothy	Judy/Garland	Ruby/Slippers	Uncle/Henry
Brain	Emerald/City	Kansas	Scarecrow	Wicked/Witch
Courage	Glinda	L Frank Baum	Technicolor	Winged/Monkeys
Cowardly/Lion	Haunted/Forest	Munchkins	Tin Man	Wizard
Cyclone	Heart	Poppy/Field	Toto	Yellow/Brick/Road

Visit <https://www.facebook.com/DiversionsPuzzles> for more free puzzles and book info!

Solution on Page 24

PUZZLE

First Thing in the Morning



Solution on Page 24

Across

- 1 Shakespearean auxilliary
- 5 Mistake by Glenn Burke
- 10 Words after woe
- 14 Current currency of Sitges
- 15 Western director Sergio
- 16 Lindsay Lohan's ___ Girls
- 17 Start of what 36-Across said she would do first thing in the morning
- 20 DiCaprio title role of 1996
- 21 Bottom
- 22 Pitching stat
- 23 Pick up
- 26 ___ Cabin Federation
- 27 *Modern Family* family member
- 29 White as a ghost
- 30 Mother of Chaz
- 32 Solid gold measures
- 34 Mapplethorpe work
- 35 Hairy copiers
- 36 Writer with many friends
- 41 Guthrie with a guitar
- 42 One that ought to be paddled
- 43 It shoots off in Yellowstone
- 46 Cowboy actor Jack

Down

- 1 Language of the cut
- 2 Shirley, in *Terms of Endearment*
- 3 Will's presidential namesake
- 4 Part of a vacuum that sucks
- 5 Spreading tree
- 6 Wilder's *The Bridge of San Luis* ___
- 7 Campus mil. org.
- 8 Tatum of *The Bad News Bears*
- 9 Footwear brand
- 10 Online intro
- 11 Edward Albee play

- 12 Hall & Oates song about fellator?
- 13 It was sometimes split, for Kopay
- 18 Top banana
- 19 Frat party robe
- 24 *Cat on ___ Tin Roof*
- 25 B in Leviticus
- 28 Papers of D.H. Lawrence, e.g.
- 31 Auto pioneer Henry
- 33 Lothario
- 34 Pam Parsons and David Kopay
- 36 *The Nanny* star Fran
- 37 Timothy of *Damages*
- 38 ___ Alto, California
- 39 Like a rim job
- 40 *The Thin Man* actor Cesar
- 41 Personal-ad info
- 44 Lawman Wyatt
- 45 Peter the Great and more
- 47 ___ for *Strings* (work of 48-Down)
- 48 Composer Barber
- 49 Dildo, e.g.
- 52 Playwright Jean
- 56 Composer Thomas
- 57 Nemesis of Tinkerbell
- 59 Where to see rabbit ears?
- 60 Cruising area
- 61 Big initials in fashion
- 62 Supporter of Spencer-Devlin

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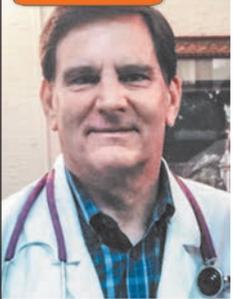


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