



25 years of
LeAnn

**Singer is coming home
to DFW for a holiday concert**

By Tammye Nash, page 10

Important Facts About DOVATO

This is only a brief summary of important information about DOVATO and does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your condition and treatment.

What is the most important information I should know about DOVATO?

If you have both human immunodeficiency virus-1 (HIV-1) infection and Hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection, DOVATO can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Resistant HBV.** Your healthcare provider will test you for HBV infection before you start treatment with DOVATO. If you have HIV-1 and hepatitis B, the HBV can change (mutate) during your treatment with DOVATO and become harder to treat (resistant). It is not known if DOVATO is safe and effective in people who have HIV-1 and HBV infection.
- **Worsening of HBV infection.** If you have HBV infection and take DOVATO, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking DOVATO. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.
 - Do not run out of DOVATO. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your DOVATO is all gone.
 - **Do not stop DOVATO without first talking to your healthcare provider.**
 - If you stop taking DOVATO, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your liver function and monitor your HBV infection. It may be necessary to give you a medicine to treat hepatitis B. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking DOVATO.

For more information about side effects, see “What are possible side effects of DOVATO?”

What is DOVATO?

DOVATO is a prescription medicine that is used without other HIV-1 medicines to treat human immunodeficiency virus-1 (HIV-1) infection in adults: who have not received HIV-1 medicines in the past, or to replace their current HIV-1 medicines when their healthcare provider determines that they meet certain requirements. HIV-1 is the virus that causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). It is not known if DOVATO is safe and effective in children.

Who should not take DOVATO?

Do not take DOVATO if you:

- have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine that contains dolutegravir or lamivudine.
- take dofetilide. Taking DOVATO and dofetilide can cause side effects that may be serious or life-threatening.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using DOVATO?

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you:

- have or have had liver problems, including hepatitis B or C infection.
- have kidney problems.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. One of the medicines in DOVATO (dolutegravir) may harm your unborn baby.
 - Your healthcare provider may prescribe a different medicine than DOVATO if you are planning to become pregnant or if pregnancy is confirmed during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.
 - If you can become pregnant, your healthcare provider may perform a pregnancy test before you start treatment with DOVATO.
 - If you can become pregnant, you and your healthcare provider should talk about the use of effective birth control (contraception) during treatment with DOVATO.
 - Tell your healthcare provider right away if you are planning to become pregnant, you become pregnant, or think you may be pregnant during treatment with DOVATO.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. **Do not breastfeed if you take DOVATO.**
 - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
 - One of the medicines in DOVATO (lamivudine) passes into your breastmilk.
 - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Some medicines interact with DOVATO. Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

- You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of medicines that interact with DOVATO.
- **Do not start taking a new medicine without telling your healthcare provider.** Your healthcare provider can tell you if it is safe to take DOVATO with other medicines.

What are possible side effects of DOVATO?

DOVATO can cause serious side effects, including:

- See “What is the most important information I should know about DOVATO?”
- **Allergic reactions. Call your healthcare provider right away if you develop a rash with DOVATO. Stop taking DOVATO and get medical help right away if you develop a rash with any of the following signs or symptoms:** fever; generally ill feeling; tiredness; muscle or joint aches; blisters or sores in mouth; blisters or peeling of the skin; redness or swelling of the eyes; swelling of the mouth, face, lips, or tongue; problems breathing.
- **Liver problems. People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening changes in certain liver tests during treatment with DOVATO. Liver problems, including liver failure, have also happened in people without a history of liver disease or other risk factors. Your healthcare provider may do blood tests to check your liver. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms of liver problems:** your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice); dark or “tea-colored” urine; light-colored stools (bowel movements); nausea or vomiting; loss of appetite; and/or pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area.
- **Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis). Too much lactic acid is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms that could be signs of lactic acidosis:** feel very weak or tired; unusual (not normal) muscle pain; trouble breathing; stomach pain with nausea and vomiting; feel cold, especially in your arms and legs; feel dizzy or lightheaded; and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Lactic acidosis can also lead to severe liver problems,** which can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the signs or symptoms of liver problems which are listed above under “Liver problems.”**
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female or very overweight (obese).**
- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having new symptoms after you start taking DOVATO.
- **The most common side effects of DOVATO include:** headache; nausea; diarrhea; trouble sleeping; tiredness; and anxiety.

These are not all the possible side effects of DOVATO. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

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DOVATO is a complete prescription regimen to treat HIV-1 in adults who have not received HIV-1 medicines in the past or to replace their current HIV-1 medicines when their doctor determines they meet certain requirements.

Results may vary.

*As compared with 3- or 4-drug regimens.

Morgan

Taking DOVATO

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dolutegravir 50 mg/
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You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Where can I find more information?

- Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- Go to DOVATO.com or call 1-877-844-8872, where you can also get FDA-approved labeling.

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New to treatment? Considering a switch?
Ask your doctor about DOVATO.





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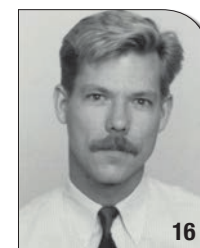
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LeAnne Rimes.
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The HELP Center for LGBT Health and Wellness founded in 1994 by Memie Hardie, Sister Mary Fulbright and Dr. Rita Cotterly, on Dec. 1 cut the ribbon on its new Arlington facility at 602 E. South Street. The new facility is dedicated to HELP's three founders, and two of them — Hardie and Cotterly — were there for the grand opening, as were Arlington Mayor Jim Ross and Councilmembers Raul Gonzalez, Ruby Faye Woolridge and Dr. Barbara Odom-Wesley.

Jessica González files for re-election



State Rep. Jessica González, D-Dallas, on Wednesday, Dec. 8, filed for re-election to the District 104 seat in the Texas House of Representatives. District 104 includes parts of Grand Prairie, Dallas and Cockrell Hill. It would be her third term in the House.

"It has been the honor of my life to serve my community in the Texas House of Representatives," González said in a written statement. "This past year has been challenging, as Republicans in Texas and throughout the United States have declared war on our civil liberties, specifically the right to vote.

"As vice chair of the Texas House Elections Committee, I fought back against Republican attempts to undermine our democracy and worked

to enact meaningful legislation for the people of Texas," she continued. "I look forward to having the opportunity to continue serving the residents of House District 104 as we fight for Texans' right to vote, women's reproductive healthcare access, nondiscrimination protections and criminal justice reform."

González is also on the House Insurance Committee. She was a vocal opponent of voter restriction measures, helping to bring national attention to the Texas voting rights battle. Her advocacy contributed to Texas House Democrats historically breaking quorum to prevent Senate Bill 7 from passing during the legislature's regular session.

González was a cofounder of the House's LGBTQ Caucus. She was named Texas Monthly's "Bull of the Brazos" in recognition of her leadership and was selected to receive the Matt Garcia Public Service Award by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

— Tammye Nash

Pastor Craig loses his position after 'We're Here' appearance

Pastor Craig Duke has lost his position as pastor of Newburgh United Methodist Church after he appeared onstage in drag, with Eureka O'Hara, in a fundraising show as part of the HBO series *We're Here*. Pastor Craig participated in the show in support of the LGBTQ community in his area and in support of his daughter, who is

pansexual.

The episode premiered in November.

In a written statement to Religion News Service, UMC's Indiana Conference said Pastor Craig had "stepped away from his duties at the church and entered a time of renewal, reflection, and recovery. The statement clarified that the pastor did not resign, nor was he fired, but that "He and the Conference felt that he was no longer able to effectively serve in parish ministry with the Newburgh congregation."

While Pastor Craig and his family were traveling over the Thanksgiving holiday, RNS reports, Mitch Gieselman, superintendent of the South and Southwest District of the Indiana Conference, told the congregation via email that Pastor Craig would be "relieved from pastoral duties" beginning Dec. 1. He will receive a "significantly reduced" salary from the church through Feb. 28, but will not perform any pastoral functions there. His wife, Linda, who was youth minister at the church and has also lost her job, will be allowed to remain in their church-owned home through Feb. 28.

Drag superstar Shangela, who stars in the show with Eureka and Bob the Drag Queen, posted a video on Instagram saying that some in Pastor Craig's church had "bullied him right on up out of his job because he is a person who believes in love and in faith and inclusion. ... Our show is about bringing people together. It's about love; it's about acceptance. ... When we [in the LGBTQ community] don't agree with somebody,

we don't go get them fired. Not primarily. But they've been doing it to us for years. And now they're doing it to our allies as well."

A GoFundMe for the pastor and his wife, Linda, who has also lost her job as the church's youth minister, has already raised more than \$58,000.

— Tammye Nash

Freakmas Show hits an all-time high for Sam Houston students



Cassie Nova and her "freaks" hit an all-time high in donations this week at the annual Cassie's Freakmas Show, held Monday night, Dec. 6, at JR.'s Bar & Grill, bringing in \$15,000 in raffle sales, auctions and cash donations — all in one night — for the Personalized Learning Preparatory program at Sam Houston Elementary School.

"It really warms my heart to see the LGBTQ community come out and support this program," Cassie (aka James Love) said. "Everyone

deserves to have a great holiday, and I love that my community can help give it to these kids.”

The Secret Santa program allows every child to receive a gift of their choosing and a goody bag filled with fresh fruit, snacks, treats and surprises each Christmas. On the last day of classes before Christmas break, Santa makes a surprise visit to the school, spending time in

each classroom.

Each year, 100 percent of the proceeds from the Freakmas show and other efforts go to help the students at Sam Houston. If there are more toys/funds than what is needed to provide for those students, extra toys are donated to Scottish Rite Children's Hospital.

— Tammye Nash

■ Adoptable / CUTIE



Meet Cutie!
This sweet, 4½-year-old pit bull terrier mix is one happy pup! She came to the SPCA of Texas, with her puppies, from a bad situation, and since then all of her babies have

current on all age-appropriate vaccinations. To meet Cutie, please submit an inquiry at www.SPCA.org/DogAdopt.

Regular adoption fees are \$150 for puppies and kittens aged 0-6 months and \$75 for adult dogs and cats aged 6 months or older. Fee includes spay/neuter surgery, age-appropriate vaccinations, a heartworm test for dogs six months and older and a FIV/FelV test for cats 4 months and older, initial flea/tick preventative and heartworm preventative, a microchip, 30 days of PetHealth Insurance provided by PetHealth, a free 14-day wellness exam with VCA Animal Hospitals, a rabies tag and a free leash.

In an effort to reduce the potential for COVID-19 to spread to more people via gatherings of people and protect the health and well-being of the animals in their care, their staff and volunteers, as well as the community, the SPCA of Texas is following all appropriate CDC guidelines. The SPCA of Texas is requiring masks to be worn at all of their facilities. The Jan-Rees Jones Animal Care Center is open for adoptions every day from noon-6 p.m. Animals are available by walk-in on a first-come, first-served basis. Appointments are also available for select animals. Please browse available animals at SPCA.org/FindAPet and visit SPCA.org/DogAdopt to inquire about a dog or SPCA.org/CatAdopt to inquire about a cat.

found homes. Now it's her turn. Cutie takes the medal when it comes to being sweet, and she lights up whenever she meets new people. She spent some time in a foster home, where her amazing personality really shined. She didn't mind being left alone, appeared to be housetrained, rode well in the car and loved snuggling up in bed with her foster parents at night. This lovable gal is the total package; all she needs is you! Cutie is a Shelter Sweetheart, meaning her adoption fee is sponsored, and she receives 6 weeks of FREE on-demand training from the GoodPup training app. Cutie has been spayed and microchipped and is

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Reclaiming the narrative, reclaiming our faith

By the time I lost count of the number of times I spent time in behavioral health hospitals, I had also lost track of their different diagnoses for me. Schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, ADD, ADHD, psychosis and clinical depression are the ones I can remember.

But sometimes I wonder if there is actually a person alive who has ever received the oh-so-coveted professional diagnosis of “normal.” And if too few people are normal, then the inherent bias informing these definitions is greatly understated.

That is not to say that mental health issues do not exist. But the degree to which we stigmatize them does not correspond to the shared experiences many of us are having.

As members of the LGBTQ community, many of us have often been — or at least, at some point will be — diagnosed by someone as being “perverse” or “abominable.”

Only in the last century did society stop viewing queerness as a mental illness. And before that, lobotomies, shock treatments and various other forms of torture were the go-to as the behavioral health industry’s “solution.”

There was a time when I bought into their narrative. If anything, I had Religious Stockholm Syndrome characterized by my fear and devotion — not of an actual person, but of one I thought existed. Because I believed that God would send me to hell for being gay, I was held hostage by this irrational fear, and I lived my life trying to gain the approval of others.

This war within me led me to many psychological breakdowns and four attempts at suicide.

It was not God, however, that was the cause. It was instead my own community of religious extremists who had been feeding me propaganda since child-



Jonathon McClellan
Contributing Columnist

hood. And as much as it was killing me — almost literally — those closest to me continued to further degrade my mental wellness.

How many of us have had the guardrails of our sanity attacked? When one’s family, community and governing entities have control over our narrative, and we suffer as a direct result — that is, plainly put, systematic oppression.

When I was young, I could not perceive that my Religious Stockholm Syndrome was generational. The same people who were trying to convince me of my sin had someone convincing them of theirs. The same parents who were trying to protect their children from things like R-rated movies were telling them that their souls would burn forever in hellfire if they were queer.

And now, the same institutions that were diagnosing us are trying to white-wash their legacy of crimes against humanity.

It is impossible for a God of love to have a human disposition of prejudice. A systemic lack of compassion demands our examination, acknowledgement and reconciliation. The practice of psychology has had many gains over the



last few decades. And as the need for quality mental health services continues to rise, we must rise to meet those needs.

We must take back our narrative, and we must take back our faith. And we must never again allow someone else to think for us. This means we have to dig deep to find the answers for ourselves, raising our standards and admitting our own mistakes.

My mistake was believing that I needed a reason to love myself. But I have realized that if you need a reason to love, then it is not love.

Love is more a verb than noun; it is action. Certainly, love is a gift. But if that gift is never given, then it never fulfills its purpose. If we never give love to ourselves by treating ourselves with dignity and respect, then it is because we failed to act. We can love ourselves because it is our choice.

Remembering that our oppressors have themselves been oppressed, we can choose to love them, too. What will it accomplish if we reclaim our sanity only to have the world around us going mad?

We cannot attain world peace if we forget about the world; it is made smaller by our connectedness, and one tree will not survive if the rest of the forest is burning. ■

Jonathon McClellan is an award-winning author who often writes devotionals for Cathedral of Hope. In March 2022 he will release Messages of Hope for adults and The Ant’s Palace for children, each book the first in its own of series focused on empowering adults to keep hoping and encouraging children to look beneath the surface to find true riches. A large part of the proceeds will be donated to Cathedral of Hope programs for the homeless. Learn more Facebook.com/NewSeedsOfHope.

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Coming home

BEYOND THE MUSIC

Country/pop star LeAnn Rimes talks about her 25 years in the music industry and using her voice to heal the world

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor

nash@dallasvoice.com

LeAnn Rimes — who was born in Mississippi but moved with her family to Garland here in North Texas at age 6 — first hit it big at age 13, in 1996, with her recording of “Blue.” The next year, her debut album of the same name hit number one on the Top Country Albums chart.

In the 25 years since, Rimes has cemented her place in the galaxy of country and pop music. She has, according to her website, sold more than 44 million units won two Grammy Awards, 12 Billboard Music Awards, two World Music Awards, three Academy of Country Music Awards, one Country Music Association Award and one Dove Award.

That list includes the Grammy for Best New Artist, which she won at age 14, making her the youngest person to ever win a Grammy.

But Rimes has made her mark as more than just a singer. She has received the Human Rights Campaign’s Ally of Equality Award in recognition of her more than 20 years of support for LGBTQ civil rights. In 2019, she received the HOPE Award for Depression Advocacy, and in 2009 she received ACM Humanitarian Award.

Her desire to use her voice to help



heal the world led to the November 2020 release of *CHANT: The Human and The Holy*, and she continues her wellness journey with her iHeartRadio podcast, *Wholly Human*, and her lifestyle blog, *Soul of EverLe*. Rimes will celebrate her

25th anniversary as a recording artist with the release next year of her newest studio album, *God’s Work*.

Rimes is coming home to North Texas for her “Home for the Holidays” concert Dec. 17 at the Winspear Opera House,

and she recently sat down to answer a few questions for Dallas Voice about that concert, her support for the LGBTQ community and her 25 years in the public eye.

AT&T Performing Arts Center presents LeAnn Rimes: Home for the Holidays

Friday, Dec. 17, 8 p.m.
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'We will not back down'

INSIDE IRVING ISD

Since administrators removed safe space stickers and teachers from MacArthur High, students say bullying is up, classes are suffering — and they want answers

After LGBTQ “safe space” stickers were scratched off teachers’ doors and windows at MacArthur High School during the weekend before school started on Monday, Aug. 30, teacher Rachel Stonecipher, who questioned the removal of the stickers, was herself removed from the school — in front of her students.

So now, students who were already upset at the removal of the stickers and possible loss of what they saw as safe spaces also have to deal with Stonecipher’s disappearance. Administrators escorted her out of her seventh period newspaper class on Sept. 16. Students still have not been told anything about her employment status.

In response to questions about which policy prompted the stickers’ removal, district officials have only provided an unsigned, untitled Irving ISD memo, dated Aug. 30 — which was after the stickers were removed over the weekend of Aug. 27-29 — which they say precipitated the action.

Stonecipher’s absence and the disappearance of the rainbow stickers are not sitting well with students at MacArthur High. Those willing to speak out say they want to know what happened, and they want back the safe place Stonecipher’s classroom represented for them.

“I want to know answers,” senior Laura Marquez said. “That is the least the school could do after getting rid of one of the best teachers MacArthur has ever had throughout the years.”

Stonecipher was one of the Gay-Straight Alliance sponsors, and, before her departure, her classroom was recognized by students as one of the few “safe havens” they could rely upon.

“I know she was a person that you



Elle LeeAnne Caldon
Special Guest Contributor

could go to if you were not feeling accepted or you needed a person to talk to through hard times,”

said senior Donald Lubbeck,

ing of why [the stickers] were removed,” he said.

Marquez agrees: “She continuously pushed my limits when it came to my creative writing and English skills. She was not ... only interested in looking the best in the administrators’ eyes. She was willing to make sacrifices and stand up for her students when they were being mistreated.”

After Stonecipher’s removal, some students found themselves facing more challenges to their mental well-being: “She was easily one of the most reliable



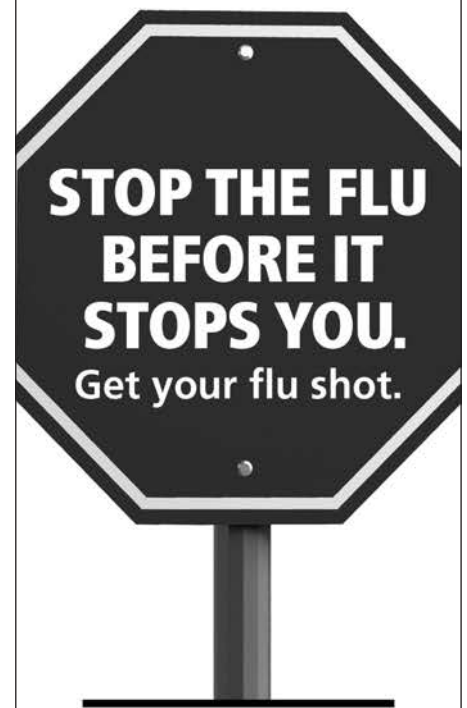
Rachel Stonecipher

one of the many students who believes Stonecipher’s removal was a targeted response to her questions about the stickers.

“I feel that she was immediately shut out and not given a proper understand-

teachers at Mac for me, and now I feel like there is just one less place where I can openly feel safe and have my voice and opinions heard,” Chloe Madho said.

BACK, Page 30



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MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY may cause serious side effects, including:

- ▶ **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** Your healthcare provider will test you for HBV. If you have both HIV-1 and HBV, your HBV may suddenly get worse if you stop taking BIKTARVY. Do not stop taking BIKTARVY without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to check your health regularly for several months, and may give you HBV medicine.

ABOUT BIKTARVY

BIKTARVY is a complete, 1-pill, once-a-day prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults and children who weigh at least 55 pounds. It can either be used in people who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before, or people who are replacing their current HIV-1 medicines and whose healthcare provider determines they meet certain requirements.

BIKTARVY does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS. HIV-1 is the virus that causes AIDS.

Do NOT take BIKTARVY if you also take a medicine that contains:

- ▶ dofetilide
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BEFORE TAKING BIKTARVY

Tell your healthcare provider if you:

- ▶ Have or have had any kidney or liver problems, including hepatitis infection.
- ▶ Have any other health problems.
- ▶ Are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if BIKTARVY can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ Are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take:

- ▶ Keep a list that includes all prescription and over-the-counter medicines, antacids, laxatives, vitamins, and herbal supplements, and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist.
- ▶ BIKTARVY and other medicines may affect each other. Ask your healthcare provider and pharmacist about medicines that interact with BIKTARVY, and ask if it is safe to take BIKTARVY with all your other medicines.

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- ▶ **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that may have been hidden in your body. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking BIKTARVY.
- ▶ **Kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys. If you develop new or worse kidney problems, they may tell you to stop taking BIKTARVY.
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- ▶ **Severe liver problems,** which in rare cases can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get these symptoms: skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow, dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored stools, loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, or stomach-area pain.
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HOLIDAY SPIRIT

The Teddy Bear Party celebrates 10 (ish) years

RICH LOPEZ | Staff Writer
rich@dallasvoice.com

The bears will be in full force this weekend — although this is a whole different kind of bear roundup from what North Texas sees each spring. This is the Teddy Bear Party, returning after its COVID-forced postponement in 2020 and benefiting both children in the hospital and LGBTQ organizations.

Plus, after missing last year, this will mark the organization's official 10th anniversary.

"It's pretty moving to have this as our 10th anniversary. This would have been our 11th but last year we didn't have the party," founder Jason Hanna said by phone.

In 2009, Hanna hosted this first event in his home for those among his social circle. That grew into the first official Teddy Bear Party in 2011, when he wanted to host the drive to support his mother who was battling cancer by donating the bears to Children's Health in her name.

"This started when my mom was diagnosed with stage four cancer, and it was something I wanted to do for her. So it's very moving to be able to continue this on an annual basis. This started because of her," he said.

Today, the philanthro-party is now a nonprofit organization and the largest queer holiday charitable event, clocking in more than 700 attendees and a slew of individual and corporate sponsors (including Dallas Voice).

For its 10th anniversary, the nonprofit will present this year's party in the new Echo Lounge and Music Hall. This year's headliners include DJ Phil Romano and DJ opener W!NTERS, and the night will be hosted by drag emcee Cassie Nova. Guests bring new teddy bears, up to 24 inches in height, to the venue as



Each year, the morning after the Teddy Bear Party, participants gather to deliver teddy bears collected the night before to Children's Health.



Cassie Nova returns this year as emcee of The Teddy Bear Party.

part of their \$100 admission to the party.

"This being the 10th anniversary, we wanted it to be a bit different," event producer Rick Gantley said. "We're in a new environment, a new venue. I think we're taking it up to the next level. After almost 22 months with this pandemic, we wanna cut loose."

Gantley does remind that they are adhering to protocols to protect guests. Those attending will

need to provide proof of vaccination and/or a negative test taken within 48 hours previous to check in.

Coming back to the party, it did have to look different no matter what. So — as many of today's events are doing — TBP figured it out.

"We want to make sure we're still on people's minds. We didn't want people to forget about the party and the cause and its beneficiaries, but we also knew we had to be careful," Gantley said. "We've done everything we should to keep our guests safe."

He did add a reminder for those coming: Teddy bears are part of the admission, and don't wait to get one.

"The first thing to do is get [the teddy bear] as early as possible, because most will be out by Friday — at least here in the area," he said. (Ed. note: Sorry for the short notice, readers) "Most people will buy a lot, or at least more than one."

He added that folks should keep within the 24-inch measurements of the

bears as well: "It's somewhat of a requirement by Children's. The consistency in size works with their sterilization process, and they are easy for children to hold during their recovery process," he noted.

On average, TBP donates about 1,500 teddy bears to Children's Health each year.

"To continue to give back with those bears and know what a significant impact it makes on the child is very meaningful," Gantley said.

The Children's Health Teddy Bear Clinic is intended to reduce anxiety in hospitalized children and give each one a new friend. The bears collected at TBP are delivered to the hospital each year on the Sunday morning after the party.

While beneficiaries include Children's Health and Children's Cancer Fund, proceeds from the night will also benefit Family Equality and Equality Texas. That's something that means a lot to Hanna.

"We're a two-dad family with seven-year-old twin boys," he said of himself and his husband, Joe Riggs. "We continue pushing forward the fight for equal-

ity on so many levels. We want to help those organizations that helped us on our family's journey and give back to those who help the LGBTQ-plus community."

What Hanna has learned over the years with TBP is the power of a community. Seeing folks gather to give back — and enjoy a fabulous party — has been a highlight for Hanna. Well, that and the post-party morning after.

"My favorite aspect is probably the following morning. That's turned into this family event," he said. "We go back to the venue with our boys, and there are a few other families as well. Those kiddos are all helping to count the bears and bag them."

Normally the volunteers would all go in to deliver the bears, but with COVID protocols, they will caravan to the hospital for delivery.

"The direct impact these bears have on these children for comfort as well as learning tools throughout their hospital journey is quite something," Hanna said.

For more information, visit TeddyBearParty.org.

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DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Saturday, December 11, 2021*	3:30 - 6:30 P.M.	City Hall - WebEx* 1500 Marilla, Dallas, TX 75201 (District 2)
Thursday, December 16, 2021	6:30 - 9:30 P.M.	Beckley Saner Recreation Center 114 Hobson, Dallas, TX 75224 (District 4)
Thursday, January 6, 2022	6:30 - 9:30 P.M.	Bachman Recreation Center 2750 Bachman Dr., Dallas, TX 75220 (District 6)
Thursday, January 13, 2022	6:30 - 9:30 P.M.	Lake Highlands North Recreation Center 9940 White Rock Trail, Dallas, TX 75238 (District 10)
Saturday, January 22, 2022	3:30 - 6:30 P.M.	Pleasant Oaks Recreation Center 8701 Greenmound, Dallas, TX 75237 (District 5)
Thursday, January 27, 2022	6:30 - 9:30 P.M.	Exline Recreation Center 2525 Pine St., Dallas, TX 75215 (District 7)
Saturday, February 5, 2022	3:30 - 6:30 P.M.	Timberglen Recreation Center 3810 Timberglen Rd., Dallas, TX 75287 (District 12)
Thursday, February 10, 2022*	6:30 - 9:30 P.M.	City Hall - WebEx* 1500 Marilla, Dallas, TX 75201 (District 2)

* Redistricting town halls at City Hall will be available for virtual and in person participation and will feature ASL interpreters, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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REMEMBERING



Bruce Monroe in his DGLA portrait

Bruce Monroe, one of Dallas' LGBTQ rights and AIDS pioneers, has died

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Bruce Monroe, one of the early HIV and LGBTQ rights champions in Dallas, has died at the age of 65. For the past seven-and-a-half years, he battled a condition known as ataxia that left him unable to walk or talk, but his mind remained clear. He communicated by typing into his phone with his thumb.

In 2020, Monroe was given the Raymond Kuchling Award by Black Tie Dinner for his years of service to the community and his activism. Friends read the acceptance speech that he had written.

In a video made for The Dallas Way history project and later transcribed, Monroe described himself as a military brat born in Roswell, N.M. He graduated from Texas A&M, then moved to Houston to build sets for the Houston Grand Opera and Houston Ballet. He came out in 1981 while working there.

His next job was with a Florida-based company installing satellite TVs around the Caribbean and South America. But when that company went bankrupt about a year later, Monroe moved to Grand Prairie, landing a job in the fund-



Bruce Monroe, left, standing in the field of crosses on the corner of Cole and Lemmon in 1988

raising department at KERA.

Monroe joined Dallas Gay Alliance, now known as Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance, when a date brought him to a meeting. He began working on the organization's publications and quickly rose to become its president.

DGA had started a new project to help a growing number of gay men living with AIDS. The organization was called the Foundation for Human Understanding and is now known as Resource Center. FHU hired John Thomas, another well-known AIDS and LGBTQ activist, as its executive director, and Monroe became its president, helping spin it off from its parent organization.

"Bruce led us: chalking 'bodies' on the street, dumping HIV mannequins off the roof at Parkland Clinic, kissing at city council meetings and literally fighting — FIGHTING — for HIV care," Jamie Schield wrote about Bruce Monroe on Facebook. Schield was one of Resource Center's first employees and later served as its executive director.

As president of FHU, Monroe dedicated himself to providing services — a food bank for people who had lost their jobs due to HIV and had no means of support, and the beginning of its clinic.

In other cities, medical facilities offered pentamidine mist to stave off pneumocystis pneumonia, the AIDS-related pneumonia that was taking so many lives at the time. No hospital or

medical facility in Dallas would offer the preventive treatment, so Resource Center — under Monroe's leadership — acquired the equipment and the medication that nurses Penny Pickle and Pam Clayton then administered. They treated about 100 people per week.

Monroe also co-founded an organization called Gay Urban Truth Squad — better known as G*U*T*S — to protest the lack of care for people living with AIDS in North Texas. Founded before ACT-UP, G*U*T*S later joined that larger, national group.

Among the protests that attracted hundreds of people was one staged when President George H.W. Bush was speaking at the Dallas Convention Center. G*U*T*S held a die-in right outside the main entrance. Half of the protestors lay down on the sidewalk that cold winter evening as the rest drew their outlines in chalk then, inside the outline, inscribed the name of someone who had died of AIDS.

Bush never acknowledged the protest.

Another AIDS memorial Monroe helped create was on a landfill on the corner of Cole and Lemmon avenues. A developer had begun a project and excavated a hole for the parking garage before going bankrupt. The city left the hole untouched for several years, but when it began to threaten property and streets around it, at a cost of half a million dollars, the city filled in the hole. G*U*T*S built 500 crosses — a number equalling the number of cases of HIV in the city at the time — and planted them across the field.

What gained the most attention in that protest was the one cross that bore the name "Terry Tebedo," a well-known activist who had recently died of AIDS.

That field of crosses brought attention to the fact that while the city of Dallas had spent half a million dollars to fill in a hole, it had spent about one-tenth that amount — only \$55,000 — on HIV that year.

After losing his position at KERA — due to what he said was homophobia at the station — Monroe was hired as associate director of membership at the newly-opened U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. About two weeks after he arrived, his immediate boss resigned, and Monroe became director of membership.

He used skills he learned as president of FHU — thank-you notes got out

FRIEND, Next Page

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Bruce Monroe speaking at Outrageous Oral at UNT in Denton in 2013. (Photo courtesy of Junebug Clark, University of North Texas)

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promptly, donors received benefits like tickets to the museum that were hard to come by in its early days — and he got involved in the local AIDS organization’s food pantry.

While in D.C., Monroe learned that he was HIV-positive. His insurance at the museum wasn’t very good for someone with a catastrophic illness, so when he was offered a position at the National Park Foundation — a job that offered excellent insurance — he took it. When he had been working there about two years, doctors diagnosed him with non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma.

Monroe went on disability, was eventually cured of his cancer and moved back to Dallas. He decided to begin a new life as an artist and began studying at Brookhaven College. He took 136 course-hours, mostly in his preferred medium of silk screening.

From there, he moved to Tampa to do graduate studies at University of South Florida and became a teaching assistant and then an instructor. During this time, he participated in a study-abroad month in Paris. While there, he got to participate in an ACT UP die-in at the Bastille.

AIDS activism drove Monroe’s art. He had a one-man show in Tampa entitled *I Thought You Were Dead*. His thesis sculpture of a body representing the immune system was displayed at the Ken-

nedy Center for the Performing Arts and is now in a private collection.

After three years in Tampa, Monroe returned to Dallas where he was a co-founder of The Dallas Way and created its oral history project, *Outrageous Oral*.

Resource Center CEO Cece Cox said her favorite memory of Monroe was when he attended the groundbreaking for the Resource Center’s new building on Cedar Springs Road. Although already stricken with the illness that eventually took his life, he was able to turn a shovel-full of dirt from his wheelchair.

Monroe was brought to the groundbreaking by three friends — Ron Allen, Mark Rogers and Deb Elder.

“I was always struck by the amount of love Ron, Mark and Don Maison and others showed to Bruce,” Cox said. “He lived so long because of their care, love and attention. They did it purely out of love and friendship, and they kept him alive.”

Allen said, “Bruce really cared for people. Whether it was marching on Parkland to demand treatment for people with AIDS or making sure the food pantry was stocked, no one will ever know how many lives he saved.”

Cox said she’ll remember that no matter what was wrong, Bruce was always in a good mood.



Bruce Monroe, left, presents an award to Dallas Police Chief Ben Click during the Festival in Lee Park following the Alan Ross Texas Freedom Parade.

Monroe told that launched *Outrageous Oral*. Over the years a number of versions of this story have been out there. Here's one:

In the early 90s, Bruce flew with a group of about 10 friends to Houston for an afternoon Halloween party. When they arrived in Houston, they had time to get into drag for the event. But that evening, back in Dallas, they were attending an HIV fundraiser, and there was no time to change back, catch their flight and get into drag again. So — long before there was a TSA checking IDs — 10 men, each named Debbie, flew home on Southwest in drag.

And if they were going to do that, they decided to have some fun. Instead of sitting together, they sat near each other, each taking the center seat between two businessmen. The businessmen tried to mind their own business, mostly burying themselves in their newspapers.

"Um, Debbie," one of them, who was pretending to do a crossword puzzle,



The Stonewall Professional Business Association board. Bruce Monroe is fourth from right.

"He always said something kind about Resource Center," she said. Even when they disagreed, "he took the time to encourage me and told me Resource Center is doing things [its founders] only dreamed about."

And while Monroe had his serious side, he wouldn't want a story about his life told without a laugh: "Bruce found joy through the struggle," Cox said.

And that reminded her of the story

said in a loud voice.

"Yes, Debbie?" Debbie answered.

"What's the capital of Wyoming?" the first Debbie asked.

"Um ... W?" said the second Debbie.

Businessmen hiding behind their newspapers were convulsing in laughter. One reached for a cigarette, but Monroe warned him lighting it might be dangerous. Pointing to the wig he was wearing, Monroe noted, "Ten cans of hairspray."

Finally, one of the men put his paper down, and said he'd have a story to tell his grandchildren. ■

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Dallas Voice: First of all LeAnn, thank you for agreeing to take the time to answer some questions for us. I know this year you are celebrating your 25th anniversary as a recording artist, how does that make you feel? And what are you most proud of accomplishing over the last 25 years? LeAnn Rimes: It's a bit unbelievable that it's been 25 years. I'm humbled and exhausted, lol — and still passionate about creating after all of these years.

Honestly, my biggest accomplishment is still being here after 25 years in this business; many aren't. And, not only having survived thus far, but having created a life where I'm thriving — mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually, creatively. I feel more whole than ever, and I am incredibly proud of the woman I am.

Being in the industry for 25 years now, what is one lesson that you have learned and hope to pass along to others who enter the industry at a young age? Trust your inner voice and always use that as your compass. There will be many outside voices and so much noise that will try to influence your journey, but you and your heart always know what's

best for you.

How has your music evolved through the years, and how do the changes in your music reflect your own personal evolution? The way I express within anything I create is straight from my heart and as authentic as possible. I want people to be emotionally impacted and inspired to be more of themselves.

Speaking of healing, last year in November, you released *Chant: The Human and the Holy*. You also launched your spiritual health and wellness podcast, *Wholly Human*, about the same time. Talk about using music for healing — not just for yourself, but for others. The last several years have been about exploring the totality of my voice and my heart. The voice is powerful and a profound tool for healing. I have been so proficient in one aspect of my voice, but there are so many other pieces of me that I have wanted to express.

Enter my *Wholly Human* podcast. I have loved being able to explore new pieces of myself through the podcast and use my speaking voice to have real conversations about the totality of this human experience with a diverse group of outliers like

myself. I learn something new and valuable with each podcast and get to connect on a deeper level than ever before.

The Chant album actually came about after a conversation with a dear friend. She asked me if I had ever used my voice for my own healing. I guess my voice had been everyone else's for so long that I forgot that it was mine. So, I started chanting as part of my meditation practice, which helped me reclaim my voice as my own.

That practice is what inspired the record. I wanted to help people create their own practice and return home to their own hearts and voices.

You have been very vocal about your support for the LGBTQ community. Some people might see that as unexpected for someone from a "small" Texas town who grew up in the country music industry. How did you come to be such a strong ally for the community? My uncle, who I loved dearly, died from complications of AIDS/HIV when I was so very young. It was during a time when no one would even talk about it. Ever since, I wanted to give him a voice he never had and to give others support that he never ever received. I love the LGBTQIA+ family.

They are my family. I will always stand up for them. They have always stood by me, and I love them for that.

There have been performers/actors/entertainers/celebrities/athletes who have seen their careers be damaged because they spoke out about controversial issues. There are folks who feel like entertainers, etc., should just "shut up and sing," or "shut up and play ball." Do you feel like you have a responsibility to speak up about things that matter to you — whether that be LGBTQ equality or some political candidate, etc. — or is it just your responsibility to entertain? There was a point in my early career where I was told to not have any opinion, as it would deter people from buying my albums. That really did fracture off pieces of me, as I thought I had to keep parts of myself hidden that were "unacceptable." However, that didn't last too long before I had to make a stand.

I used to feel like I was here to only entertain, but I truly believe that my humanity is what I'm really here to share. I'm not a show pony; I'm here to connect. If you simply want to check out with your entertainment, I'm not your artist. I'm here to

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On a lighter note, on your Twitter feed, you announced your concert here in Dallas at the Winspear, you said, "Dallas, I'm coming home for the holidays!" Do you still think of Dallas/North Texas as "home"? Do you still have family here, and how often do you come "home" to visit? Home, for me, is within — wherever I am. But, yes, I have family there. I love Texas and my Texas fam! It just felt so right to do a Christmas show there after what everyone has gone through these last couple of years. I am excited to be back.

Tell us about your upcoming album *God's Work*. What is the inspiration behind your new music? The new album is inspired by my own spiritual journey that I know I am not alone in, especially during this time when we all are awakening to a deeper truth and our intrinsic connectedness. It's music that speaks to the times we are currently experiencing.

God's Work is meant to inspire, to bring hope, to make us all think about the bigger picture at hand and what kind of future we want to create for ourselves, personally and as one collective beating heart.

It's a deep and powerful record. I'm honored to be the conduit that was given this record to create and birth out into the world.

I am sending you these questions in late September. What is happening for you between now and December when you are coming to Dallas for the holiday concert? What is coming up in 2022 that we should be watching for? And what have I not asked about that you want to mention? We've been so busy behind the scenes this year and have a few big surprises in store to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Blue. So keep a look out for that. I can tell you my new album, *God's Work*, will be released next year. I am working with the most talented souls, and I can't wait for you to hear it.

I've also been perfecting the fragrance for this year's Soul Of EverLe Holiday Candle. I make all of them myself (with a little help from Eddie); be sure to check those out. And, of course, season 3 of *Wholly Human* will be coming your way soon with some amazing new guests.

I'll also be back on your screens as a judge on a new Discovery+ show, *Meet Your Makers Showdown*. It premiere[d] on Nov. 27 with host Chrissy Metz and fellow judge Mark Montano. It's super fun!

Happy Holidays!

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DRIVE

Ford's 2022 Maverick hybrid is the pickup urban dwellers need

CASEY WILLIAMS | Auto Reviewer
AutoCasey@aol.com

I'm trying to imagine the conversation in Ford's boardroom several years ago when some enterprising executive lofted this nuggie: "Let's take our Ford Escape crossover, replace its aft half with a bed, slap on the name of a sub-par compact from the '70s and use it to replace our compact sedans. We'll make it a hybrid too."

I'm sure eyebrows slanted askew, but in fact, the 2022 Ford Maverick pickup is a pretty good idea.

It's smaller than the Ford Ranger, but

2022 Ford Maverick Lariat

5-passengers, FWD Pickup
Powertrain: 2.5-L I4, Hybrid
Output: 191 hp
Suspension f/r: Ind/Ind
Wheels f/r: 18-inch/18-inch alloy
Brakes f/r: regen disc/disc
Towing: 2,000 lbs
Must-have features: Style, MPGs
Fuel economy: 42/33-MPG city/hwy
Assembly: Hermosillo, Mexico
Base/as-tested price: \$19,995/29,340

that's not the important part. Maverick shares its unibody, car-based architecture with the Bronco Sport and Escape crossovers — more of a crossover pickup. It rides on a tight four-wheel independent suspension planted with 18-inch alloy wheels and firm steering for engaging driving — a revolution for anything with a bed.

You can almost see the Bronco Sport's



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blocky aero style in the Maverick's sheetmetal, but it rides lower to the ground and seems better integrated with its crew cab body and flush LED headlamps. The single bar grille, gray lower cladding and tall bed sides project a strong look on the road. Get it with spray-in bedliner if you expect to do real work and choose from hard or soft tonneau covers for the largest trunk this side of a '69 Cadillac.

Conjuring all of this for an affordable price, designers proved cost-effective materials can feel upscale. Sure, there's a lot of plastic inside, but the contrasting brown and blue trim enhances diamond-formed door panels. Two-tone faux leather seats, leather-wrapped steering wheel, power tilt/slide moonroof and dual-zone automatic climate control add luxuries — as do keyless starting, ambient lighting and a power sliding rear window.

Check deep door cubbies, flip-up rear seats with storage beneath and rear seat armrests with cupholders to carry all you carry.

There's a lot of standard equipment, too. An 8-inch touchscreen, Bluetooth,



Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are all standard, and 4G Wi-Fi is available through subscription. The 6-speaker audio system is surprisingly pleasing. And safety is top of class, given adaptive cruise, automatic emergency braking, lane keep assist, blind spot warning and rear cross path detection systems.

The powertrain specs read more like a Prius than pickup. The Maverick's standard hybrid system mates a 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine with a continuously variable transmission and electrical system to generate a combined 191 horsepower and deliver an astounding

42/33-MPG city/highway. All of that power goes to the front wheels to haul up to 1,500 lbs. of payload or tow 2,000 lbs. of boat or camper. Step up to the optional turbo-four to tow 4,000 lbs. and send power to all four wheels.

gate a notch as if loading in plywood, but the tree fit with the gate closed. Had we wanted to pick up a load of plants, mulch, or a snow blower, that would have been no problem either.

F-150 pickups are nice, but the Maverick is also surprisingly capable.

The Maverick is the single smartest product move Ford made since the original Explorer 30 years ago. It sounds crazy, but an affordable front-drive hybrid pickup that's appropriately sized and styled for urban living is a fantastically compelling formula.

Given a \$19,995 base price, or \$29,340 as-tested, Ford will sell heaps of these to everybody from grad students to your grandma! Competitors include the Hyundai Santa Cruz, random vintage El Caminos and used Subaru Bajas.

Storm Forward!



Last weekend, my family needed a Christmas tree, so we took the Maverick to the home store and chose a 7.5-foot tree for our mid-century house. I thought we would need to raise the tail-

Send comments to Casey at AutoCasey@aol.com; follow him on YouTube @ AutoCasey. Watch his video review online at [YouTube.com/watch?v=XBH8Qy9mn-W4&t=4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBH8Qy9mn-W4&t=4s).

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STRATEGY 4

LGBTQ+ safe school strategies: LGBTQ-Related Resources & Curricula

LGBTQ+ Resources:

- Libraries; safe zone; visible images
- When students know where to access information and support, they feel their schools are safer

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Curriculum:

- Links to school safety: Students who have learned about LGBTQ+ issues at school report less bullying and more safety
- Links to student health: Teacher sensitivity to LGB issues in HIV education was linked to lower sexual risk-taking for LGB youth

MHS students feel like what has happened since the start of school blatantly contradicts administrators' claim that "Every space in Irving ISD is a safe space."

The school's GSA usually meets bi-weekly. But on Aug. 31, GSA members invited administrators to a special meeting to hear about the club and to hear students' distress over removal of the safe space stickers. Senior Natalie Gonzales said she went to the GSA meeting for the first time that day to hear Principal Natasha Stewart's response. But the principal didn't show.

Stewart did not attend a GSA meeting until more than a month later, on Oct. 5, after hundreds of MacArthur students staged a Sept. 22 walkout over these issues that garnered international media attention, and which the principal suggested was "malicious" and ill-informed in an unannounced response the next day over the school's PA system.

At the Oct. 5 meeting, Stewart was asked to address the student body as a whole on the school's daily KMAC video announcements regarding the situation but still has not done so. And when asked at the same meeting why she had the safe space stickers removed, she said only that she would have done it differently had she known there was such a strong GSA on the campus.

GSA members say they just wanted to correct what they assumed had been a miscommunication. Now, though, they feel they are being neglected.

"If the district [had asked] us before they took action, then [GSA members] could have had adult conversations [with administrators] instead of having to fix what has already been done," said senior Victor Frausto.

Reports of anti-LGBTQ bullying have increased since the stickers were removed, and still, students say they are being kept in a haze, with no answers forthcoming.

"I put in several times of incidents that have happened to me, and the school board has done nothing to prevent it," said a student who wished to remain anonymous. "They don't care, as long as their image doesn't look bad."

Several GSA club members, other students, teachers and a MacArthur parent — nationally recognized physician and ally Dr. Theresa Patton — spoke about their worries at school board meetings on Sept. 20 and Oct. 18. Three months have since passed, and the only response? Silence.

"The school board does not care about MacArthur's students and couldn't even meet my eye during my speech," said sophomore Aly Harbin, who spoke before the board. A Change.org petition calling for the stickers to be replaced and Stonecipher and another teacher, who had also questioned the removal of the stickers, returned to their classes has almost 1,300 signatures. It's part of students' efforts to bring in outside support and keep their concerns on the school board's agenda.

"There is power in numbers," Gonzales said.

Stonecipher had taught an English 2 Honors class charged with making sure students would be ready for the EOC exam coming in April. For two weeks after her removal, her students sat in the auditorium or the spectator gym during her class periods, with no assignments and no lessons.

Stonecipher also taught the only year-book, newspaper and journalism course-

MacArthur High holds LGBTQ safety training

On Oct. 28, the administration at MacArthur High School in Irving brought in a group from Austin to do a virtual training session entitled “Promoting School Safety for LGBTQ and All Students,” created by the UT Austin Institute for Excellence in Mental Health. The full report can be found on a website called StoriesAndNumbers.org.

All MacArthur administration, faculty and staff attended.

“Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students often experience negative school climates, where they are subjected to bias-based bullying and discrimination based on sexual and gender diversity,” the report’s summary begins. That’s followed by strategies designed to keep students safe:

- Enumerated policies. (Neither Irving ISD nor MacArthur High School have these).
- Professional development on LGBTQ issues. (This presentation was an attempt to begin that).
- LGBTQ-related resources. (Teachers had been removed from classes, and Safe Space stickers and Pride flags were removed from doors and classrooms, a controversial move that prompted this program).
- Student-led clubs, which they refer to as Gender and Sexualities Alliances but are better known as Gay-Straight Alliances. (MacArthur High’s GSA is still in place although barely operating since administrators moved earlier this year to remove Safe Space stickers and removed some teachers from their classrooms, etc.).

What got the semester off on the wrong foot for MacArthur’s LGBTQ students was the removal of Safe Space stickers from the doors of a number of classrooms. That contradicts the advice of experts hired by the school. In the report upon which the presentation was based, safe spaces are specifically addressed.

“The identification of ‘safe spaces’ or ‘safe zones’ for LGBT students has emerged in several studies as another school resource associated with positive school climates,” the report states.

And one slide shown the faculty and staff specifies: “Students who have learned about LGBTQ+ issues at school report less bullying and more safety.”

Apparently, no one in the administration saw the irony in any of this, while LGBTQ students and their allies are reporting increased bullying at MacArthur High School.

— David Taffet

es at MacArthur, and she advised the UIL Journalism Team, the Philosophy Club and the GSA. Students say in her absence these classes and clubs are withering. Students sit in class each day with a substitute teacher, wondering what happened to Stonecipher.

Administrators have also stalled production of MacArthur’s first-ever physical newspaper, saying students are unprepared to produce it. Students are also required to write a “persuasive paragraph” with each of their articles, arguing why their chosen topic is “important enough” to be news.

Before Stonecipher’s disappearance, the school had a vibrant 35-person staff to write, design and edit the paper, including section and layout editors and an editor-in-chief whom Stonecipher had empowered with the skills and tools to print the paper with her supervision. Their student newspaper had a brand-new name and design concept and more than 15 articles in production — none of which have been approved for publication by any of the administrators now handling those classes, as the fall semester comes to a close.

Instead, students are getting basic as-

signments for concepts they had already learned before Stonecipher was pulled from class. Recently, they were told to find a news article from any major news outlet, then spent three days in class “annotating” it, with 10 required annotations to mark “false information or facts.”

Without research into the issues concerned, students were expected to find “fake news” in the professional journalists’ work they found online.

Before she left, Stonecipher had created and completed a DonorsChoose project to fund the newspaper’s production, receiving support from around the country that helped provide paper, booklet staplers and newsstands. These donations have remained boxed and unused. Students were told that even if they opened the boxes, they don’t know how to use the items donated.

Madho, editor-in-chief of the MHS yearbook, said the yearbook staff isn’t faring much better. Not all yearbook staff members, she said, have acknowledged that their teacher may be gone permanently.

“It does feel like a lot of the staff has lost motivation, which is completely un-

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► Severin Roesen (1816-after 1872), *Still Life of Flowers and Fruit with a River Landscape in the Distance* (detail), 1867, oil on canvas, 1987.9, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, 1987.9

▼ Morton Livingston Schamberg (1881-1918), *Figure* (detail), 1913, oil on canvas, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, 1984.16



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▲ Frederic Remington (1861-1909), *The Cowboy* (detail), 1902, oil on canvas, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, Amon G. Carter Collection, 1961.382

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LGBT IN THE MILITARY



Noah Siple

A decade after DADT, Army vet Noah Siple reflects on how social change happens in the military

ANTHONY EATON | Contributing Writer

Anthonys.Interviews@gmail.com

Since the Revolutionary War, engaging in homosexual activity has been grounds for discharge from the American military even though there may not have been specific poli-

cies. As the United States entered WWII, the military added homosexuality as a disqualifying trait to its screening induction process.

Before WWII, gay service members were dishonorably discharged, court-martialed and jailed. But due to the difficulty of convening court-martial boards during the war, blue discharges became the standard.

In 1944, Regulation 615-360, Section 8 was put in place, and gay service members were committed to military hospitals where psychiatrists examined them before being discharged. Blue discharges ended in 1947 when two new classifications were created: "general"

and “undesirable.” A military member who was found to be gay but who had not committed any sexual acts while in service would usually receive an undesirable discharge. Those found guilty of engaging in sexual conduct were usually dishonorably discharged.

Even though the 1957 U.S. Navy study known as the Crittenden Report dismissed the idea that homosexuals constitute a security risk, that did not end to anti-gay discrimination. Instead, officials declared, “The service should not move ahead of civilian society nor attempt to set substantially different standards in attitude or action with respect to homosexual offenders.”

It would be almost another decade before the situation would begin to change. As a result of the LGBTQ rights movement and greater visibility, more service members began to challenge the discriminatory policies.

Despite his campaign promises to eliminate the ban on gays serving openly in the military, President Bill Clinton agreed to the “Don’t ask, don’t tell” compromise, issued under Department of Defense Directive 1304.26 on Dec. 21, 1993. DADT, which remained in effect from Feb. 28, 1994, through Sept. 20, 2011, prohibited military personnel from discriminating against or harassing closeted homosexual or bisexual service members or applicants while barring openly gay, lesbian and bisexual persons from military service.

Still, the fight continued. On Dec. 22, 2010, President Obama signed the repeal of DADT into law, marking the first time in history that LGBTQ individuals could openly serve in the armed forces without fear of prosecution or dishonorable discharge. While President Obama supported open service by LGBTQ people, Donald Trump, during his four years in the White House, once again prohibited service by transgender men and women.

In April 2019, at the direction of Trump, the administration required the Pentagon to implement a controversial new policy that stated anyone with gender dysphoria, who was taking hormones or had already undergone a gender transition would not be allowed to enlist. The policy also said that anyone currently serving who has been diagnosed with gender dysphoria after the implementation date would have to serve in their sex as assigned at birth and would be barred from taking hormones or getting gen-

der-affirming surgery.

But since taking office last January, President Joe Biden has once again removed those barriers to service.

Noah Siple, an Iraq War veteran and full-time member of the Army National Guard, sat down to talk with Dallas Voice about his thoughts on LGBTQ people serving, DADT and how social change occurs in the military.

Dallas Voice: What are your thoughts about LGBTQ people serving?

Noah Siple: From my perspective, LGBTQ individuals want to serve as everyone else, and it is wonderful that they can openly be themselves and still satisfy their desire to serve their country. It’s been a long road. Sometimes, the military is kind of a control group; it tests social issues inside the military.

We have gone from zero tolerance of LGBTQ people in the military to Don’t ask, don’t tell, then open service. I was celebrating the repeal of Don’t Ask Don’t Tell the other day, and I wrote a little article on LinkedIn to say I remember when that happened.

I was a company commander in Iraq, and of all the things I was dealing with there, that was super important. We had to have some deliberate discussions about that. There were a lot of biases, and [we talked about] the way people’s thinking needed to shift around that. So those things were important.

That is an excellent point, that it is often kind of this control group. Do you think that the military moves slowly? From a cultural change standpoint, the [military] environment is so unique. I don’t know if it’s necessarily slow to adapt. But it’s such a big machine, so those changes have their challenges. We’re talking about social issues, whether it be LGBTQ individuals being able to serve their country or social issues, like the Black Lives Matter movement and all of that social and political unrest.

While the military is not known to be a trailblazer on the cultural change front, it certainly does and has changed as societal norms have changed. How have you seen that in the time you have spent serving? I grew up when the one theme in the military was that there’s only one color in the army, green. Well, that was really coding for white. I never heard any of my Black friends say there’s only one color in the army. That was the contrast I made for the soldiers I had who struggled to adapt 10 years ago. With racial integration, there were officers in

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the room who said, "You know, Blacks will serve in our units, and we need to make space for that." And soldiers needed to accept that that's the way the cultural norms are dictated in the military. Now they may have a problem with it. But if they want to maintain their service, then they need to adjust.

In the article you wrote for LinkedIn, "Repealing DADT in an Army at War," you draw comparisons to when the armed forces were finally integrated. Can you touch on that? The same kind of message came with the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell and LGBTQ service members serving openly. For my friends that are gay and serving in the military, this is a beautiful thing because they can be their authentic selves, and we can celebrate their service.

What about all those who were essentially kicked out of the military who lost careers or more? So many were discharged because of what was a terrible policy; something needs to be done. I

don't know that reparation is the right word to use, but I am happy to see that our politicians are looking at that and trying to repair the damage that those discharges did to those people's lives.

How does that impact servicemembers doing their job? Or, is it one of those things where it's kind of far removed in a sense? I think that servicemembers and veterans are just a cross-section of America, like we don't have a warrior caste system where we're birthing Spartans [and] they go live on an island, and then they serve in the military. We all grew up in either rural America, inner cities or suburbia, so our characteristics and ethics are all products of those situations that we grew up in.

The way we were nurtured shapes us and then we're put into this melting pot. But there are some institutionalized schools of thought that I would say in the past 10 years and then even in this past year that are breaking apart due to great disruptors, positive disruptors.



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derstandable," said Madho.

Stonecipher's Philosophy Club, formerly one of the liveliest academic clubs at MacArthur, is also dwindling. "Since Ms. Stonecipher has been gone, I have had to scramble ... trying to figure out how we are going to keep the Philosophy Club running smoothly," said Marquez, the club's president.

Students want more than an apology for all that has happened. Harbin said administrators should do more than release statements seemingly aimed only at pacifying the students and parents who have spoken out.

"Irving ISD can implement ways for their students to feel more comfortable and make it blatantly [clear] through actions, and not just empty words," she said. "Just because it's a hard topic does not mean they get to ignore it because it will not go away, and we will not back down."

Elle LeeAnne Caldon is a junior at MacArthur High School

Jaston Williams, known as co-creator and co-star of the legendary Greater Tuna shows, brings his new one-man holiday show, *Blood and Holly*, to the Isis Theatre, 2401 N. Main St. in Fort Worth, for a limited engagement Dec. 10-11. In the show, Williams recalls his childhood Christmases as a warped hybrid of Toyland and Spain under the rule of Generalissimo Francisco Franco. You'll get to meet the elderly sisters without any eyebrows, the house cat driven crazy by Christmas decorations and a gift list that includes rubber knives, moist towelettes and teeth. Make sure your insurance is paid up, 'cause Williams will leave you in stitches! Isis Theatre hosts two performances, at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Dec. 10-11. General admission tickets are \$35, available online at DowntownCowtown.com.



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 holidays.

• Biweekly: Hope Cottage Foster Parent Information Meeting

Hope Cottage holds information meetings for those interested in becoming foster parents. The meetings are held alternately on Saturdays at 10 a.m. and Thursdays at 6 p.m. For information email Clyde Hemminger at chemminger@hopecottage.org.

DECEMBER

• Dec. 10: Release

Blake Baker and Bodhi Calagna invite you to RELEASE with a brand new mind-blowing audio-visual experience at Station 4 ... and we're turning it up a notch with more production, more visuals, and even bigger sound. Get ready for the biggest RELEASE ever from 9 p.m.-4 a.m. at S4, 3911 Cedar Springs Road. Tickets at Eventbrite.com.

• Dec. 10-11: Jaston Williams' Blood and Holly

Greater Tuna creator performs his one-man holiday show for a limited engagement. Williams recalls his childhood Christmases including that one time he spent Christmas Eve in a bar. 7:30 p.m. at the Isis Theatre, 2401 N. Main St., Fort Worth. DowntownCowtown.com.

• Dec. 10, 12: Kinsey Sicks at Uptown Players

Uptown Players presents *Oy Vey in a Manger* with the Kinsey Sicks. Angel, Winnie, Trixie, and Trampolina trying to sell off their manger — yes, that manger — before it's foreclosed upon. Crises arise, secrets are revealed, Jewish-Gentile tensions surface, and mayhem ensues — all in glorious four-part harmony. Includes the holiday classics "God Bless Ye Femmy Lesbians" and "Don't Be Happy, Worry." Kalita Humphries Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Tickets at UptownPlayers.org.

• Dec. 11: The Teddy Bear Party

A new 24-inch teddy bear that will go to Children's Health is part of the admission at The Echo Lounge and Music Hall, 1323 N. Stemmons Freeway. \$100. TeddyBearParty.org.

• Dec. 11: 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.

• Dec. 11: DSO Family Christmas Pops

A special one-hour long family-friendly performance of the DSO's popular Christmas Pops concert. Go early for pre-concert activities for children. 11 a.m. at the Meyerson Symphony Center, 2301 Flora St. DallasSymphony.org.

• Dec. 12: 22nd annual Christmas Stocking Auction

The annual Christmas Stocking Auction, hosted by the hottest cowboys anywhere, benefits Legacy Cares at 6 p.m. at the Round-Up Saloon, 3912 Cedar Springs Road. Want to donate an item or items for a one-of-a-kind holiday basket? Email chris.lynych@legacycounseling.org or events@roundupsaloon.com.

• Dec. 14: Big Brassy Christmas and Organ Extravaganza

Deck the halls with the DSO brass and percussion sections and the Lay Family Concert Organ. 7:30 p.m. at the Meyerson Symphony Center, 2301 Flora St. DallasSymphony.org.

• Dec. 15: Empower Dallas

A virtual career fair for trans and nonbinary job seekers presented by Human Rights Campaign and TransCanWork. From 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Register at app.brazenconnect.com/events/

• Dec. 17: Pride Night at Allen Americans

The Allen American Professional Hockey Club holds Pride Night at Credit Union of Texas Event Center, 200 E. Stacy Road, Building 1350, Allen. AllenAmericans.com

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



MAKE THE HOLIDAYS SICKENING

Looking for a way to brighten up your holidays? Then don't miss **Uptown Players'** presentation of

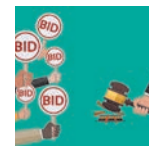
legendary LGBTQ comedy troupe *The Kinsey Sicks* and their holiday show, *Oy Vey in a Manger*, onstage Dec. 10 and 12 at the Kalita Humphries Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Tickets start at \$25; for information and tickets visit UptownPlayers.org. To read an interview with the Kinsey Sicks by Dallas Voice reporter Rich Lopez, check out our Nov. 26 issue, available online at DallasVoice.com.



TEDDY BEARISH ON THE HOLIDAYS

Don your gayest apparel and get ready to dance the night away to tunes by international DJ Winters this coming

Saturday night, Dec. 11, at the **10th annual Teddy Bear Party**. This annual fundraiser was created in 2009 when Jason Hanna was looking for a way to change lives for the better while at the same time having fun with his friends. He chose Children's Health hospital to be the beneficiary, because he wanted to someday have children and be as great a parent to them as his parents had been for him. Two years later, his mother, Kaye Hanna, was diagnosed with cancer, and Hanna's friends — and his husband Joe Riggs — rallied round to create the first official Teddy Bear Party as a way to cheer his mom on in her fight for her health. Unfortunately, Kaye Hanna lost her battle to cancer in 2012, but the Teddy Bear Party forged ahead, becoming one of the most anticipated fundraising parties in the Metroplex each year. This year's event is hosted by Dallas drag legend Cassie Nova and takes place at Echo Lounge and Music Hall, 1323 N. Stemmons Freeway. The party starts at 8 p.m., and admission is \$100 plus a 24-inch teddy bear. Beneficiaries are Equality Texas, Family Equality, Children's Health and Children's Cancer Fund. Teddy bears are donated to Children's Health, which gives each new patient a teddy bear of their own. Check out TeddyBear.org for more information.



STOCKINGS UP

Everyone needs a festive stocking to hang by the chimney with care on Christmas Eve. And you can get the most festive stockings

of all at The Round-Up Saloon and Dance Hall's 22nd annual **Christmas Stocking Auction**, which benefits Legacy Cares, this Sunday, Dec. 12, starting at 6 p.m. Hosted by the handsomest cowboys around, the event features free entry, fabulous drink specials, outstanding entertainment and more. For more information, check out the Round-Up's Facebook page.

Cassie Nova

ASK A DRAG QUEEN

Fast-food-to-bridal-party bitch fest

Hey y'all. I have a confession to make: I am a complainer and a hypocrite. Every week I say to love more, bitch less and be fabulous. Well, I got the love in abundance, and I am fabulous for days. But I don't practice what I preach: I bitch more than anyone I know. My poor husband and best friends have to listen to me bitch and complain almost constantly.

I swear, I don't know how I ever have anyone around me without them rolling their eyes constantly. Hell, maybe they do, but I am so self-absorbed and running my mouth so much, I don't even notice it.

I also say "I hate ..." so much. "Hate" is such a strong word, and I use it too freely. I need to reserve the word "hate" for when I actually hate something and am not just slightly annoyed by something.

Since I am going down that bitchy rabbit hole, I might as well jump in with both feet.

Taco Bell, I fucking hate you so much sometimes. Taco Bell has items that I really like: the Quesarito, in this case, that you can only get if you order through the app or online, yet you have to go to the store or drive-thru to pick up your order. But you can't order it in the store or drive-thru.

My blood pressure is going up just thinking about it. My blood pressure is probably up because I eat at Taco Bell in the first place. The food isn't even that good. You never finish eating Taco Bell and think, "Oh my Gaaa! That was amazing."

I remember in the early '90s, Taco Bell was so good. The quality of the food was on point. The meat tasted like meat; the cheese actually tasted like cheese. The sour cream was actual sour cream. Now it is some nearly translucent, milky looking, oil-based abomination.

Back in the day, for 59 cents, you got a scrumptious bean burrito. Taco Bell and Blockbuster made for the perfect evening.

Woe is me; take me back to the good ol' days!

Oh yeah: Taco Bell, why did you get rid of the Mexican Pizza? Dick move,



Taco Bell; dick move.

Since I am on a fast-food rant: Dairy Queen, I am coming for you next.

Their vanilla ice cream used to be amazing; now it tastes fake and has a weird aftertaste. Their buns now have some funky, powdery consistency. The steak fingers are so processed that it feels like you are eating powdered meat.

I miss quality in my "fast food."

I blame companies cutting corners to make their costs go down, but, in the process, it affects the quality of the product. I also blame over-population. There are too many fucking people buying stuff that I like. I have basically turned into the drag queen equivalent of an old man yelling for those darn kids to stay off his lawn.

Another thing I fucking hate is how many previews and commercials they show before they actually get to your movie. I'm talking to you Cinemark.

Damn y'all! They literally show 25 to 30 minutes of bullshit before every movie. Now, I love a good movie trailer before a movie, and, like, two or three are plenty. But these motherfuckers make you watch at least six, plus a commercial for XD/Imax featuring one of the previews you just watched.

It is maddening.

Plus, movie trailers give away too much. I feel like I have watched the entire movie by the time the preview ends.

On a side bitch, the Cinemark commercial for Cinemark that they show before every movie has two hot, bearded

daddies, and I love that. But one of them has a pepperoni pizza in his hand. and the other guy says, "Yeah, get me one." So, he is expecting his date to get back in line to get him a pizza.

Bitch, whatever! Don't you see his hands are full?! Take your fine, plaid-wearing ass over there and get your own damn shitty pizza! Makes me want to slap — then kiss — his pretty face every time I see that commercial.

My final rant for this bitchfest has to do with people who come to the shows with no fucking manners. One of my biggest pet peeves is when I am in the middle of a joke, bit or monologue and some bitch yells out "IT'S HER BERFDAY!" or "SHE'S GETTING MARRIED!"

I usually get around to birthdays and bridal parties — but in my time. Some nights, I haven't even finished saying "Welcome to the Rose Room!" before I hear the shriek of some banshee making sure that the one and only time these girls have ever been to a gay bar in their lives they get their shout out. It always seems to be the drunkest most ridiculous girl in the group who yells and interrupts me, then by the end she hates me because I go in, hard, on her.

To be honest, I love that we get a lot of bridal parties. We put on a great show and usually make fans for life. I've seen brides eventually bring their husbands, and, on a few occasions, have even seen them bring their kids. ... I've been there a long time.

But the ones who don't have a great

time are usually because they have a loud, rude "best friend" who just won't shut up. If they would just respect the show, respect the entertainers and maybe not get so shitfaced, they'd have a great time.

Okay, okay — I will stop bitching now. For the record, I could literally go on for five more pages, but I will spare you any more of the drama that is me. I actually feel a little better, a little lighter. Maybe I won't complain so much today. I'm sure my husband would appreciate that.

Remember to always...Blah! Blah! Blah! You know the rest. XOXO, Cassie Nova

word search solution

Diversions Word Search - The Santaland Diaries by David Sedaris



"Sister is comic actress Amy Sedaris from Strangers With Candy"

this week's solution

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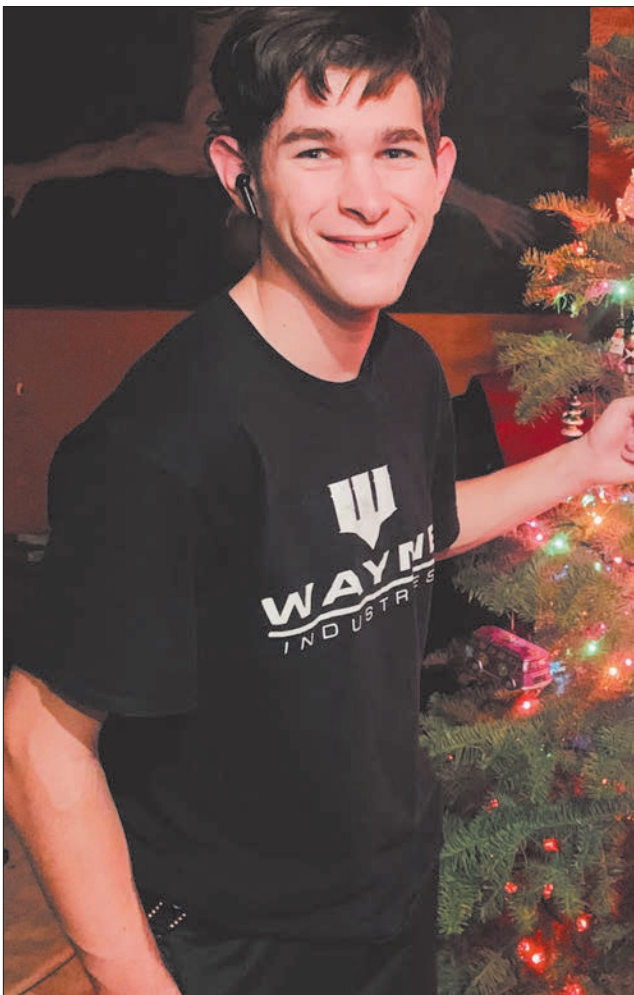
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