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Wrestlemania

By Rich Lopez, Page 8

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Dallas City Council committee votes to support trans community, condemn Legislature

The Quality of Life Committee of the Dallas City Council voted unanimously on Tuesday, March 29, to support the city's transgender community and condemn the Texas Legislature for the anti-transgender legislation passed in the last special session. The resolution now goes to the full council for a vote.

District 7 Councilman Adam Bazaldua, who chairs the committee, condemned violence targeting the trans community and noted that eight of 66 hate crimes against trans people last year took place in Texas. And while the trans community faced violence on the streets, the Texas Legislature considered 13 bills targeting the trans community for discrimination.

Deputy Mayor Chad West said about the resolution, "We took the step to tell the Legislature enough is enough."

Resource Center CEO Cece Cox thanked the

three council members for their work. Noting that she wasn't speaking for the trans community but as an ally to the trans community, Cox pointed out that "It's not safe for many of our trans allies to speak out for themselves."

— David Taffet

2nd protest set for Sunday at Dallas Arboretum

Steve Atkinson, one of the organizers of the March 19 protest outside the Dallas Arboretum, has announced there will be a second peaceful protest at the same location on Sunday, April 3, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. The protests are being held in response to allegations of the Arboretum's anti-LGBTQ employment policies and practices and alleged mistreatment of minority visitors, and organizers say the protests will continue until the discrimination has been addressed and rectified.

Participants will rally outside the main entrance gates on Garland Road, and those participating are encouraged to bring signs to be used during the protest. Participants can park in the main lot accessed by driving through the main gate, but the main lot is likely to be full by 11 a.m. Sunday. If so, participants can park in the Arboretum parking garage at 8720 Garland Road, next to Kwik Kar.

Anyone who has questions or wants more information can contact Atkinson by email at steveatk85@gmail.com or by phone call or text at 214-334-7404, or Cece Cox by email at CCox@myresourcecenter.org.

— Tammye Nash

Lincoln Properties buys former ilume properties

ilume and ilume Park on Cedar Springs Road have sold again, this time, to Lincoln Property Company, which began managing the properties March 1. Lincoln Properties took over from Venterra, the previous owners of the five-story buildings with about 550 rental units.

A current picture of the algae-covered pool residents say is typical of the service they've gotten since the new management company took over.

Park West is the current name for ilume Park. It has two dog parks and allows residents to have up to three dogs with no weight or breed restrictions. The resident said they ran out of poop bags within days at the dog parks.

Rents run as high as \$2,000 per month at the properties.

On the first day Lincoln took over management of the property, it fired all of Venterra's property management staff. Three days later, they offered staff their jobs back at less pay. After weeks of bad service, the new property managers had a resident appreciation reception serving Chick-fil-A.

"Tone deaf," is how the resident put it. "Rainbow crosswalks are right outside our door."

— David Taffet

Missing Florida trans woman found in Texas; not connected to Athens kidnapping

Julia da Silva, a transgender woman last seen March 24 leaving her home in North Bay Village,

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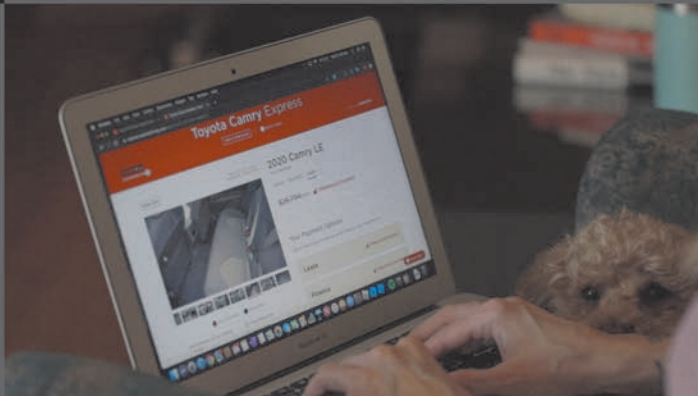


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Fla., has been located in Texas, according to a report by ABC News. But despite rumors on social media, Da Silva was not the woman rescued from kidnappers Tuesday night, March 29, in Athens, just southeast of Dallas.

Henderson County Sheriff Botie Hillhouse confirmed that the woman rescued Tuesday night by his office was not da Silva. "That's not what we are being told," he said of the rumors. Hillhouse did not identify the kidnapping victim.

A spokeswoman for the North Bay Village police confirmed Wednesday afternoon that da Silva had been found in Texas, but said she could not give any more details because the investigation into the case is ongoing.

ABC News reports today that North Bay Village police are working with local authorities in Texas and with family members to coordinate da Silva's return to Florida.

— Tammye Nash

■ Adoptable / DASHA



Meet **Dasha**, a 4-year-old shepherd mix who is active and lovable. She was discovered in the woods in the middle of nowhere and brought to the SPCA of Texas to find a great forever home. She is

super friendly and would love to be a second dog and have a playful buddy. Her quirky personality never fails to bring a smile to the face of the staff of the SPCA of Texas. She'll also offer an extra giggle or two in exchange for a treat. Being as energetic as she is, it would be best to bring her into a home with older teens and/or adults. The ideal home would have a securely fenced backyard, but a low traffic apartment with access to some exercise areas would be a good environment, too. To meet Dasha, come visit her at our Jan Rees-Jones Animal Care Center in Dallas any day between noon and 6 p.m.

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Between a rock and a trans place

Abbott, Paxton are harming our children, not protecting them

I recently received a phone call from a woman I'd never met. She was pretty upset about the "opinion" of our attorney general and our governor that affirming care for trans youth is child abuse.

Some perspective: She believes in smaller government and responsible spending. She has voted Republican for as long as she can remember. She has never really paid a lot of attention to "social issues" — until her child came out as non-binary.

She admitted to me that she had to look up that definition. That's a start.

She is a loving, caring mom, who wants the best for her child. She is certainly not the picture of an abusive parent — unless you talk to Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton or Gov. Greg Abbott.

The crocodile tears spilled by these two political opportunists under the guise of "protecting children" may fool some people, but we see through them. They have zero interest in protecting children. If they did, they would address the deplorable state of the foster care system in Texas or speak out about the children being separated from their parents at the border.

Their interest is solely in protecting their phony-baloney jobs and, maybe as a side benefit, devastating the families of people they hate along the way.

As things stand today, Lambda Legal and the ACLU have filed a lawsuit to stop CPS investigations of parents providing medically necessary care to their children. Most recently, the Texas 3rd Court of Appeals has upheld the injunction, preventing Texas from investigating these families, but Paxton has appealed to the Texas Supreme Court to have that injunction set aside and allow the DFPS investigations to continue as the lawsuit makes its way through the courts, leaving loving, supportive parents in a nightmare of limbo.



Leslie McMurray
Accidental Activist

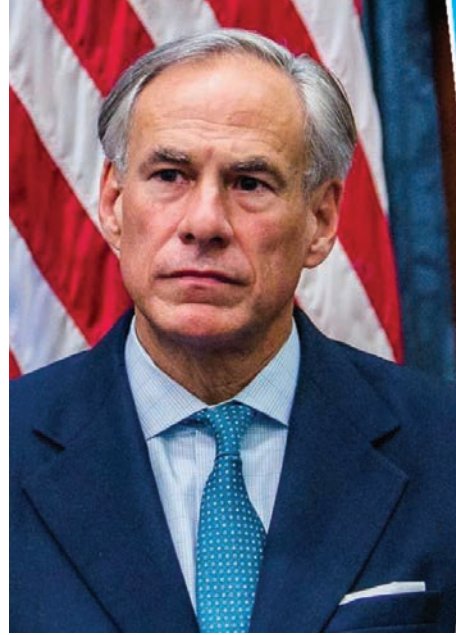
The terrifying thing that should be in the mind of every parent is that this can happen to you as well.

I also fear for our licensed professionals — therapists, lawyers and doctors and other "mandatory reporters" — communication with them is generally protected and confidential, but not when it comes to child abuse. They have a "duty to report" within 48 hours if they suspect "child abuse." So, if you are a therapist working with a child suffering with gender dysphoria and is aware that the child is receiving affirming, medically necessary care that the state deems "child abuse," do you report this to Texas DFPS and lose a client (they will never trust you again) and potentially your practice (word gets around) and also ruin a family, possibly having that child separated from their parents? Or do you keep your mouth shut and risk losing your license for failure to report?

The state of Texas is putting you in an untenable position from which no good can come.

If this "opinion" becomes law, the cost will be measured in lives. It is an undisputed fact: Access to gender affirming services cuts the odds of severe depression and even suicide among transgender youth. Providing this medically necessary care IS NOT child abuse. But denying them that care IS.

In March, Utah's republican governor, Spencer Cox, vetoed a bill that would



have prohibited transgender girls from participating in sports, citing the appalling and tragic suicide rate among transgender youth. Cox said, "I want them to live." (Sadly, the Utah legislature didn't share his concern and over-rode his veto.)

Of 75,000 kids playing sports in Utah, only four are transgender, and only ONE was involved in girls' sports.

If only our own governor had such compassion and wisdom.

Abbott isn't trying to make the lives of ordinary Texans better; he is instead working overtime to make the lives of those that he hates worse.

As of March of this year, 15 states have restricted access to gender affirming care or are currently considering laws that would do-so. Missouri and Texas are two states who are calling this medically necessary care "child abuse." The Williams Institute estimates the number of youth at risk of losing access to care in these states at 58,200.

In my mind, it's a criminal act for the state to act in a way that serves no legitimate state interest while endangering the health and very lives of some of our most vulnerable youth.

Greg Abbott, is putting every Texan in the position of having to report knowl-

edge of a child's medically necessary care, should they become aware of it, and potentially destroying a family and devastating the life of a child — all so you can pander to your base during primary season really worth it? You apparently trust parents to decide which library books should be in a school library and which school to attend, so how about you butt out of the medical decisions?

In fact, Governor, if you really want to do something about saving the lives of children, how about doing something about gun violence? In Dallas recently this past week, 10 kids age 15-21 were shot at a spring break party. So far, an 18-year-old has died. On Monday morning, March 28, a child died after being shot in a separate incident. And we haven't heard a word from you.

Maybe you hadn't heard about any of that. I mean, you and Paxton have been so busy filing appeals to interfere in the healthcare needs of people who don't need your hate-fueled brand of "help," you probably completely missed these actual atrocities harming children. ■

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



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Wrestling with Pride

IN THE RING

WrestleMania is coming to town — and so are Effy, Mike Parrow and Sonya Deville

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
rich@dallasvoice.com

WrestleMania 38, hosted by World Wrestling Entertainment, body-slams its way into North Texas this weekend for a two-day event at AT&T Stadium. The weekend will be highlighted by the Winner Takes All match for the WWE Championship and Universal Championship between Roman Reigns and Brock Lesnar, as well as Ronda Rousey vying for the SmackDown Women's Championship against Charlotte Flair.

Surrounding WrestleMania are not only its Smackdown and Raw tapings Friday and Monday, but a number of independent wrestling matches all throughout Dallas-Fort Worth — including some LGBTQ athletes who are right up in the middle of it all with a big gay wrestling event on Saturday and one WWE superstar who is taking an authority over the ring.

Learn more about WrestleMania 38 at WWE.com.

Out wrestler Effy serves up Pride and piledrivers at Big Gay Brunch

Whether it's the Bi-Curious Battle Royale, the Last Daddy Standing or the Twink Gauntlet, wrestler Effy, The Weapon of Sass Destruction, is likely behind it.

As part of the Game Changer Wrestling (GCW) collective, Effy has worked to give a voice to queer-identifying wrestlers and allies on the independent circuit. Well, if not a voice, then at least some chokeholds.

With Wrestlemania weekend upon us,

several independent wrestling events will be happening throughout DFW. And Effy's Big Gay Brunch at Fair Park should certainly be the most fabulous.

"It's a pro wrestling show at its core," Effy explained. "Surrounding that is my version of what I think LGBTQIA wrestling looks like; we take that reverent feeling of inclusion and turn it on its head."

This is the fourth Big Gay Brunch event Effy (nee Taylor Gibson) has hosted that includes a bill of primarily queer wrestlers of all genders. Previous versions have been held in Chicago, Indianapolis and Tampa, but he says this is looking to be the biggest so far.

"We wanna bring that over-the-top wrestling we have to everyone," he said.

Mimosas may not be the highlight at this gay brunch, but they will be there. Alongside food trucks for nosh. But, in short, BGB is legit wrestling — just with an even campier side.

And it all comes with backing not only from GCW but even support by a sponsor the community may not have recognized as an ally: "As fans of wrestling and wrestling culture, Pabst saw in GCW a partner rooted in a similar ethos of DIY and inclusivity

as Pabst. Supporting their diverse grassroots community and talent in authentic and meaningful ways," Seamus Gallagher, Pabst Blue Ribbon culture and partnerships senior brand manager said in an email.

Effy has long been an advocate for queer wrestlers, and he does that by fusing gay culture with pro-wrestling tropes — not that it's a far leap. He knows that wrestling is already pretty gay — oiled up, muscled bodies in tights groping each other (sounds like a night at the Tin Room).

But his mission is to bring more than just the rainbow to the ring.

"There's this community spirit that welcomes everyone. All the gays love coming to see these characters, but what we're getting are

these heteronormative people who thought they knew what gay wrestling was. Instead, this thing that connects all of us eases the tension, and maybe opens minds."

He says he has found a warm embrace by all wrestling fans, but he's also seen a safe space for queer fans too. And he sees that these events open eyes to straight folks — particularly through the gay camp.

"I like the lingo of wrestling, and I combine that with queer lingo to the point that I've become incomprehensible. But when we have teams like Team Bussy or the Bi-Curious Battle Royale event, we make straight folks confront those terms and our culture," he said. "We're starting to make a dent and push all that into a viable ok-ness."

Effy headlines the brunch card, taking on Mexican luchador Pimpinela Escarlata. Other wrestlers include Dark Sheik, Allie Katch, the nonbinary nightmare Max the Impaler, Kidd Bandit and Mike Parrow. As Big Gay Brunch and other queer-themed shows continue, Effy's finding that these wrestlers are growing in popularity.

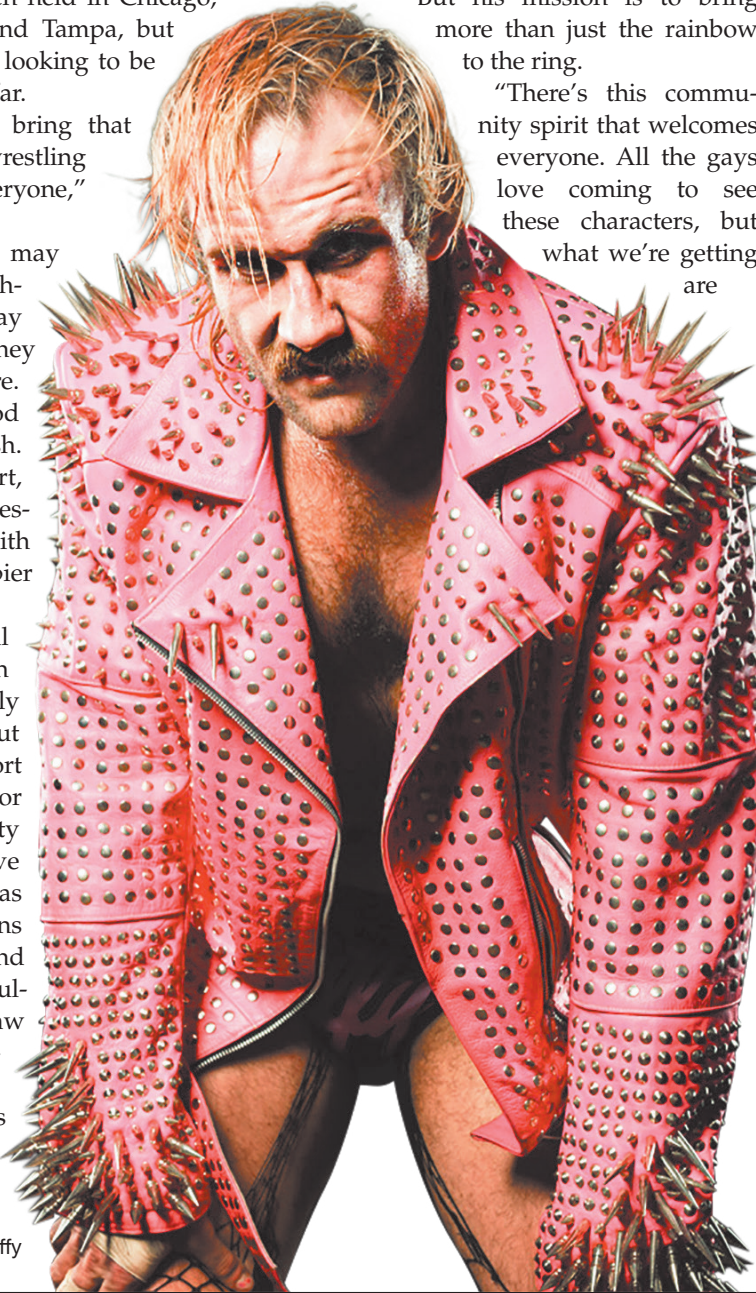
"More people are attending, and, as my reputation grows, the stars and shows have grown into household names, and they are being actively sought to wrestle," he said.

This all sounds like Effy's master plan is going as planned.

If anything, he's at least going to have a good time delivering his signature moves such as the Bitch Slap or the Fame-Asser.

Effy acknowledged that some behind-the-scenes work goes into matches, but he enjoys that wrestling is still an unpredictable art form. "I've done standup. I did some acting; I played in bands. There was always something repetitive about those that drove me away. So, I marvel to be in this situation. It's like the only art form of theater that is completely contingent on the room.

"We tell simple stories and we have to respond on our feet each time. It's a fascinating art as well as violent and showy and all that," he said.



Effy

Effy's Big Gay Brunch presented by GCW and Pabst Blue Ribbon, 11 a.m. Saturday at Fair Park, 3809 Grand Ave. Eventbrite.com.

Monster bear Mike Parrow muscles up queer culture on the mat

Towering over most everyone else at 6 feet, 4 inches and 300 pounds of beef, muscle and grimace, Mike Parrow is an intimidating figure (or a unicorn depending on your preference). He made headlines with his coming out story in 2017, but before that, he had major conflict about his identity. Still, it was love that brought him out of the closet to become a powerhouse advocate and loving husband.

Parrow is part of this year's Big Gay Brunch bill Saturday at Fair Park, and he was there at the beginning at the explosion of LGBTQ presence in independent wrestling. He takes on trans wrestler Dark Sheik this weekend.

"When I came out, there wasn't really anybody that I knew. Some had the gay gimmick. but it was on a straight character," Parrow said. "So we wanted a place where queer wrestlers could be showcased to succeed."

What he appreciates about Big Gay Brunch is how it opens up a queer safe space to everybody. This way, queer culture is on display to non-queer wrestling fans. He doesn't want safe spaces to always be bubbles that are ultimately exclusive.

"We like to bring our terminology and culture and normalize it to the straight community. Some of them just haven't been taught or don't know, so we give them a gay experience without any hetero-narrative."

For Parrow, BGB thrusts queer culture on their terms in the backdrop of wrestling — and folks have a blast with it. "Even straight people get judged, so I think they can come here, have fun, let go and not feel judged," he said.

Parrow also likes how events like this change the notion of stereotypes, something he has been doing for a while now. Gays come in all shapes and sizes, but Parrow said he has often encountered people who just can't believe he could be...you know.

"People will see 'gay' as more feminine and weak. You look at me, I'm neither. I mean I could beat you up. We

try to teach people and show how stuff like 'You don't look gay' is very disrespectful. I mean, I'm very gay; I married a man. I came out because of him," he said. "What's great now is we are being the people we need to see on television. Before, companies had these token gays, and they were always sympathetic. I'm not a sympathetic character."

On a more topical note, Parrow points out that shows like Big Gay Brunch defy any notions of "Don't say 'gay.'" The glaring notion is that you can't ignore a giant like Parrow who is gay.

"We've been pushed back so far already. Our job is to give people hope and not take it away," he said.



Boss Lady Sonya Deville,

In the ring, Effy and Parrow are adversaries. Mostly because Effy applies the term Daddy to himself, and Parrow — who says his pronouns are sir and daddy — isn't having it. So basically, two queens are arguing over their gay label.

"We're basically mean girls to each other," Parrow said. Effy mentioned that he tries to keep as far away from Parrow as he can.

That this can play out in the wrestling ring is almost genius. Parrow gives credit to Brett Lauderdale of Game Changer Wrestling.

"Without him, we wouldn't have this platform. He took the risk, and it paid off," Parrow said. "I refer to independent wrestling as purgatory, but you get to experiment. So many people tell us 'no,' but Brett gave us this opportunity as well as showcases for people of color and all-women shows, and that leads to bigger opportunities."

Big gay wrestling is on the rise, and Parrow is all about bringing that to the forefront. "Non-gay people see a lot of gay stuff as a weird fetish. I mean, we do have the pup-collar match, but we can't act like these things aren't real. I think this all normalizes that, and normalizing our culture is a big thing for me."

WWE authority figure in the organization, which puts her character center-stage with her executive decisions on matches.

She headed to Dallas the day before the chaos.

"I'm starting tomorrow and going through the whole week with *Smackdown* on Friday, then *Wrestlemania* and then *Raw* on Monday," Deville said by phone.

Her character is often in front of the audience as she sets up matches and perhaps does a little instigating as well. For *Wrestlemania*, Deville is always ready to get front and center on wrestling's biggest stage — but especially this time.

"*Wrestlemania* is our Super Bowl. Since quarantine, this has been our first full event. We have some of the best matchups, and our fans are going crazy already," she said.

She assures fans will see her around throughout each show.

Deville entered WWE as a wrestler, debuting in December 2015. She had her fair share of storylines and feuds as well as peripheral appearances on WWE reality shows *Total Divas* and initially on *Tough Enough*, WWE's wrestling competition show.

It's there that fans got to know the real Sonya Deville. When asked about her relationship status, she divulged that she had a girlfriend. And at that moment, she became the first openly gay female of WWE.

"I was being asked a question on a reality show, and I got nervous, and I just said the truth. I didn't have any clue what that meant at the time," she said.

Although not the first openly gay person in WWE, Deville's out-ness pushed her into historic — if not iconic — status. Darren Young came out in 2015 and was the first out gay wrestler in WWE. He was released from his contract in 2017 and has since moved on to other wrestling companies.

Deville said he paved the way for her. "He opened the door that I couldn't open. Without Darren doing that, who knows," she said. "And I've opened a door that he couldn't."

She said that she came out due to nerves and didn't know what, if any, repercussions she might face. Turns out that, like with Young, WWE was supportive of her. And ultimately, she was glad of her decision.

Find Mike Parrow on Instagram at @parrow.

Boss Lady Sonya Deville forges a queer path in the WWE

When WWE hits the Metroplex, Sonya Deville will be all over it. Not only will WWE host *Wrestlemania 38*, it will film its shows *Smackdown* and *Raw* here this weekend, and Deville will be instrumental in those shows. Although a wrestler herself, these days Deville serves as a

Unsafe space

IN THE SCHOOLS

Those same stickers Dallas police have been distributing are dangerous in Irving

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Placing Safe Space stickers on classroom doors creates an unsafe environment in a school, according to the Irving ISD school board. The Safe Space stickers in question are used in a school to indicate a person may enter the room and be protected from a dangerous situation and that, should police need to be called, that person may safely wait there until help arrives.

Dallas police have been distributing Safe Space stickers since last year, along with Dallas Hope Charities. Dallas Voice has one on its door.

But in Irving schools, the school board has determined, those stickers are perceived as a danger.

The controversy over the Safe Space stickers began early this school year at Irving's MacArthur High School. The high school's new principal ordered Safe Space stickers removed from classroom doors without notifying anyone that it would be happening. Three days later, one of the faculty sponsors of the Gay-Straight Alliance was removed from her classroom after questioning the action. Four days later, a second sponsor was removed from her classroom, too.

After those two teachers were removed from the school, students walked out in protest.

Rachel Stonecipher was the first GSA sponsor removed from the school. She said she heard that one teacher complained that if he didn't have a sticker on his door, his class wouldn't be perceived as a safe space for students.

Stonecipher said he was welcome to participate in the program, but could the problem be that the logo on the sticker includes a Pride flag? If so, she suggested, maybe his class wouldn't be the best



Rachel Stonecipher

place for an LGBTQ student to find the open arms they needed when looking for a safe space.

MacArthur Principal Natasha Stewart responded to the protests and the walkout by insisting all spaces in Irving schools are safe spaces. And while that is certainly the goal, Stonecipher said she wondered why, if the whole school were a safe place, so many students came to her classroom to talk about bullying.

At the recent third group grievance hearing for GSA sponsors, the argument flipped.

According to a transcript of the meeting, the reason for removing stickers from doors and other items from classrooms such as Pride flags is because teachers were not reporting incidents when students came to them. Only LGBTQ-related items were removed from classrooms. Religious items remain in Irving classrooms.

The school district accused the GSA sponsors of promising students confidentiality. In doing so, they would vi-

olate the law by not reporting abuse at home and physical bullying on school property.

But Stonecipher said nothing could be further from the truth. She said she understands the law and would report suspected abuse at home. In addition, reporting bullying is exactly what the Safe Space stickers encourage. She repeated that a student could come to her room, discuss what happened, but then report it.

"If students reported bullying, we reported it," she said.

At the hearing, Stonecipher was asked, "So if the kid is in crisis, so to speak, you're in class, they're going to come to your class, whether kids were going to deal with it while their kids are in class."

"Well, I can have that conversation outside of the class," Stonecipher responded. "I can direct my kids very, very well and say, 'Look, guys, I need you to be on page five and six today. I need to handle something real quick,' and they will. They will."

She told the grievance committee that

doesn't happen in all classes because some teachers wouldn't be comfortable with that.

One person questioning her understood she's had some training and experience in that sort of multi-tasking. Another tried framing it as some teachers think they're better than others: "So that is [saying] basically all the other teachers are not a safe ..."

But Stonecipher cut her off. "Well, that is a, I think, a misperception on the part of the other teachers," she said. "The sticker does not mean you're a good or a bad person. It simply means that you feel capable of having these conversations of being there for that kid, that you're willing to do the thing where you say, 'Hey, neighbor, watch my class for a second.'"

The grievance committee was not convinced and adopted the recommendation of its attorney that Safe Space stickers make the school's other places unsafe and therefore should be banned.

Stonecipher said she expects that, at its April 18 meeting, the school board will propose to terminate her contract but pay her through the end of the school year in August. The second GSA sponsor who was removed from her classroom resigned earlier in the school year.

After being removed from MacArthur, Stonecipher was reassigned to Irving Secondary Reassignment Center. She said there are normally 120 to 150 students at the school who have been placed there for 20 to 30 days at a time.

The school has smaller classes, and she said as a teacher who's been placed there on disciplinary action, she thinks she's made an impact on some of her students.

For some of her students, she's found, "It's a big deal to have a teacher that listens to you."

Irving ISD remains one of the few school districts in Dallas County with no LGBTQ employment protections recommended by the state after the *Bostock v. Clayton County* employment nondiscrimination case. And the school district has no specific bullying policy or other nondiscrimination policies in place to protect LGBTQ students. ■

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Dallas protests trans discrimination

FIGHTING FOR TRANS RIGHTS

UT Southwestern, Children's Health say they never closed their gender clinic.

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Allegedly after being threatened by Gov. Greg Abbott, Genecis Clinic at Children's Health last November stopped taking new clients. This month the clinic's founder filed a lawsuit against Children's and UT Southwestern, which housed the clinic. But now officials with UT Southwestern and Children's are saying it's all a big misunderstanding.

On the other side of town, the Dallas

Arboretum is taking the same position when it comes to allegations of employment discrimination there. A former employee's claims they were fired for including pronouns in their email signature, while religious quotes continue to be allowed in email signatures seem to be part of a history of allegations of discrimination at the facility. That former employee has filed suit against the Arboretum.

The Quality of Life Committee of the Dallas City Council isn't buying the "It was a mistake" claims. This week, the committee passed a resolution supporting the trans community and condemning the Texas Legislature for passing laws aimed at harming the trans community. The committee voted unanimously on Tuesday, March 29, to condemn an opinion from Attorney General Ken



Around 40 people participated in a March 19 protest outside Dallas Arboretum (Dallas Taffet/Dallas Voice)

TRANS, Page 14

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TRANS, From Page 12

Paxton that calls providing gender-affirming care to trans youth child abuse. Gov. Greg Abbott then based his directive ordering the Department of Family and Protective Services to launch abuse investigations into parents providing access to such care for their trans children.

The Quality of Life Committee's resolution now goes to the full council for a vote.

District 7 Councilman Adam Bazaldua chairs that committee. At a press conference announcing the resolution, Bazaldua condemned violence targeting the trans community and noted that eight of 66 hate crimes against trans people last year took place in Texas. And while the trans community faced violence on the streets, they also faced violence coming from the dome of the Texas Capitol as the Legislature considered 13 bills targeting the trans community for discrimination.

Deputy Mayor Chad West said of the resolution, "We took the step to tell the Legislature enough is enough." And Councilman Omar Narvaez described the Dallas trans community as vibrant, adding "We have their backs here in Dallas."

Narvaez talked about children in loving homes being investigated for child abuse, pledging that loving families in Dallas will not be investigate for or charged with abuse. "Dallas is a welcoming city," he said. "We will take care of them."

As part of the resolution, city ordinances will be reviewed to make sure there's specific language including gender identity.

Resource Center CEO Cece Cox thanked the three council members for their work. Noting that she wasn't speaking for the trans community but as an ally to the trans community, Cox pointed out that "It's not safe for many of our trans allies to speak out for themselves."

Bazaldua acknowledged there was only so much support they can give on a local level, although at the county level, District Attorney John Creuzot said his office wouldn't waste its time prosecuting parents for making life-saving medical decisions with their doctors for their children.

At the press conference, Cox also expressed her concern about the Arboretum case. She said if the allegations in

the lawsuit prove to be true, the facility is violating city ordinances and the Dallas city charter.

Cox said she's learned of additional cases of discrimination at the Arboretum that have resulted in lawsuits, but that employees and former employees speak of a culture of discrimination at the gardens that operate under contract with the city and sit on city park land.

Backpedaling over Genecis

In a separate issue targeting the trans community, Genecis Clinic at Children's Health had operated for almost a decade without controversy before last fall. As the Texas Republican primary approached and Abbott was being challenged from the right, he put pressure on UT Southwestern to close the gender-affirming clinic for trans youth.

In a statement released by UT Southwestern and Children's Health, the organizations wrote, "Last November, with legal challenges to hormone therapy as a component of care for minors treated for gender dysphoria gaining momentum in Texas and elsewhere, UT Southwestern and Children's Health suspended initiating this treatment for new patients, believing that a failure to act would put the entire program in jeopardy."

Their announcement at the time said nothing about "suspending," but it was clear they were no longer taking new patients. Even existing patients worried that their treatment would suddenly end, although hospital officials' statement did promise they would continue care for existing patients.

"In taking these actions, Children's Health and UT Southwestern weighed the momentum of opposition to hormone therapy for gender dysphoria for minors — and efforts to curtail it — against the unquestioned need for our other gender-affirming care efforts and decided to focus on these important services," the statement reads.

LGBT Caucus legislative intern Chesley Hinds looked into what was going on at Genecis and confirmed that "existing patients continue to have access to blockers/hormone therapies."

"New patients," she wrote in an email to LGBTQ organizations across the state, "are referred out to gender-affirming



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NADIA WINSTON
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The language of beauty

ON DISPLAY

Exhibit is Kimbell Museum's first focused on African art in 25 years

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

The *Language of Beauty in African Art*, a new exhibit at the Kimbell Art Museum, gives "insight into African cultures and their ideas of beauty," according to the museum's director, Eric Lee.

Three murals open the display to show that much of what is shown was part of a multi-sensory performance. That includes masks, jewelry, helmets and more in this massive exhibit of more than 200 pieces of African art from West, Central and Southern Africa.

While this exhibit may not be everyone's taste, it certainly is mine. I have a collection of masks and carved statues,



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some from Africa, that I mostly picked up at street markets. They don't have the value of these museum-quality pieces, but I learned several things about them at the exhibit.

According to Constantine Petridis, the show's curator, in many African language-

es, the word beauty extends beyond visual beauty and includes goodness.

In some sets of sculptures, statues of women are the same



size as or even larger than the companion male figure. In many of the African cultures represented, women have equal status to men. Even where the public power was a man, women were equally influential in those areas as advisors.

Beauty in African art has a purpose. In some cases, it's created to attract and please deities or to protect. Ugly masks made with horns and tusks were rough and terrifying, powerful and dangerous. These war-like creations were intentionally the opposite of beauty.

Works included in a final category of works transcends ugly and beauty and are sublime, powerful figures in an aggressive posture taking a threatening stance that were created by a carver and a ritual specialist working together.

Most of the works in this vast exhibit date from the late 1800s and early 1900s. Shows like this are rare. This is the first time in 25 years the Kimbell has focused entirely on African art.

The Language of Beauty in African Art runs April 3-July 31 at the Kimbell Art Museum, 3333 Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth. \$18. See more photos from the exhibit online at DallasVoice.com.



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WRESTLING From Page 9



Mike Parrow

"It's been a journey, but I had no idea what it would mean. I was nervous for weeks after I did it, but then that turned into pride," she said. "I wasn't really living my true self or didn't fully accept myself until I came out."

Now Deville sees herself as a pathway for representation and visibility for WWE and sports in general.

She's been working with WWE and its community relations department to really have a presence within the LGBTQIA community. Deville also has a huge stage for her platform.

"I don't get too political, but I do speak on openness and equality for all. Also, don't be a jerk and don't discriminate — my message is simple," she said. "But getting that screen time and having important partnerships with GLAAD, I think we're verbalizing our message in the right ways."

According to Deville, WWE is doing more each year to participate and be a

part of the community. Folks will likely even see WWE celebrate Pride.

"We have some cool stuff planned for Pride month. I can't wait," Deville said.

She didn't always want to be a wrestler. Deville got her start in mixed martial arts (MMA), but found her sweet spot in WWE. Growing up, though, she recalls not quite having those women to look up to.

"There wasn't much for women that I saw, so it was hard for me to imagine myself being part of all this," she acknowledged. "When you see it, it helps to accept yourself."

"When you see representation, you feel a bit more OK. I have young women and parents come to me with their stories, and that makes everything I do now so cool and worthwhile. I think my younger self would be proud."

Her younger self would also be proud of her boss status — which is first and foremost this weekend. ■



Protesters rallied outside the Dallas Arboretum on Saturday, March 19. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

care providers listed in the attached doc [and] located in Houston, Austin [and] San Antonio (there are no referrals offered for providers in DFW)."

Two of the five providers UT Southwestern referred to — Texas Children's Hospital in Houston and Legacy Community Health — have stopped offering blockers and hormone therapy to trans youth.

Hinds noted that UT Southwestern cites three reasons for discontinuing puberty blockers and hormone therapies for trans youth: media attention, political controversy and scientific controversy. While agreeing there has been plenty of media attention and the issue is politically controversial, she questions the claims of scientific controversy.

"Erroneous claims that there is uncertainty in the medical community about the long-term physiological and physical effects of these treatments on trans children," she wrote, citing findings from UT Southwestern's own published studies that support using blockers and hormone therapy on trans teens.

But the statement from UT Southwestern continues with more half-truths.

"Although Genecis served as a coordinating brand for our pediatric transgender services, contrary to what has been reported, it was never a stand-alone clinic," the statement continues.

When Dallas Voice visited the clinic in its first year of operation, it was made clear that this was a stand-alone "program" and not some related handful of services presented under some catchy name. And it was presented that way to parents of trans youth, as well.

One mom said at the time she was "delighted with the Genecis program."

The director of the program described three years of "putting the Genecis program together."

Dallas Voice was not challenged by UT Southwestern on that description.

"To be clear: UT Southwestern physicians are currently providing gender-affirming care to both youths and adults," the two organizations said in their statement this week.

"Our clinics for youths experiencing or needing evaluation for gender dysphoria were never closed and have been actively accepting new patients," they also claim. "We continue to provide evaluations for gender dysphoria in youths, continue to provide psychiatric care for gender transition, and continue the coordination of these services."

But UT Southwestern and Children's Health won't be providing the medication its own studies have shown are effective and life-saving treatments while referring patients to clinics hundreds of miles away that, in some cases, don't provide the treatments either. ■

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GAY AGENDA



The 2021 Black Tie Dinner raised a record-breaking \$1.45 million, and now organizers are getting ready to launch the 2022 Black Tie experience. The 2022 Black Tie Dinner Kick-Off event happens Wednesday, April 6, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at On The Levee, 1108 Quaker St., in the Design District. Organizers will announce Black Tie's 2022 theme, beneficiaries and more, the first step in the process leading up to the 41st annual Black Tie Dinner on Sept. 24. Tickets to the kick-off are \$50, available online at [EventBrite.com](https://www.EventBrite.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
- Orange for civic events and holidays

APRIL

■ April 1: Jen Fulwiler

Stand-up comic Jen Fulwiler at Moody Performance Hall, 2529 Flora St., at 7 p.m. [ATTPAC.org](https://www.ATTPAC.org).

■ April 1-3: Deep Ellum Arts Festival

Live music, local artists and more will be featured in this three-day festival. After a 10-year hiatus, Reverend Horton Heat will headline Saturday night's festival. For more information, visit [DeepEllumArtsFestival.com](https://www.DeepEllumArtsFestival.com).

■ April 2: Toast to Life

Back in the Saddle is the theme of this year's Toast to Life, Resource Center's biggest party of the year. Live entertainment from DJ Blake Ward and the Breckenridge Band, dancing, a silent and live auction, bites from local restaurants and more from 7-11 p.m. at The Empire Room, 1225 N. Riverfront Blvd.

■ April 2: Dixie Longate

From the creator of Dixie's Tupperware Party, the world premiere of Cherry Bombs & Bottle Rockets. Bass Hall, 525 Commerce St., Fort Worth at 7:30 p.m. Tickets at [BassHall.com](https://www.BassHall.com).

■ April 2: Colour Me Queer Play Festival auditions

In-person auditions for the inaugural *Colour Me Queer Play Festival* is taking place at the Oak Lawn Branch Library, 4100 Cedar Springs Road in the auditorium from 1-3 p.m. Visit [Dropbox.com/sh/2xad44hystfwka3/AAACJrkqU0-8Okp9sULM9Ydaa?dl=0](https://www.Dropbox.com/sh/2xad44hystfwka3/AAACJrkqU0-8Okp9sULM9Ydaa?dl=0) to submit a headshot/resume/virtual audition. Call 972-913-6511 or email: blaqueac@gmail.com for more information.

■ April 2: Effy's Big Gay Brunch

Presented by Game Changer Wrestling, this installment, hosted by out wrestler Effy, is one of the events showcasing LGBTQ wrestlers and talent during *WrestleMania 2022* here in Dallas. 11 a.m. at Fair Park, 3809 Grand Ave.

• April 3: Walk Against Hate

The Anti-Defamation League invites the LGBTQ community to participate in its Walk Against Hate at 9 a.m. at American Airlines Center. Parking in arena lots is free, but the lots close at 8:45 a.m. Booths include HRC. Register at [WalkAgainstHate.org/dallas](https://www.WalkAgainstHate.org/dallas).

■ April 3-July 31: The Language of Beauty in African Art

Presenting over two hundred works of art, *The Language of Beauty in African Art* emphasizes concepts of beauty through the languages and perspectives of indigenous African communities. Kimbell Art Museum, 3333 Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth. [KimbellArt.org](https://www.KimbellArt.org).

■ April 3: Oak Cliff Earth Day

Community event celebrating the environment at Lake Cliff Park, 300 E. Colorado Blvd, from noon-5 p.m. [OakCliffEarthDay.com](https://www.OakCliffEarthDay.com).

■ Through April 3: Gary: A Sequel to Titus Andronicus

Written by Taylor Mac and presented by Kitchen Dog Theater. Trinity River Arts Center, 2600 N. Stemmons Freeway, Suite 180. [KitchenDogTheater.org](https://www.KitchenDogTheater.org).

■ April 5: Classic Chassis Car Club meeting

Enjoy the cars out in the parking lots and then enjoy the food from 6-8 p.m. at Ojeda's, 4617 Maple Ave. [ClassicChassis.com](https://www.ClassicChassis.com).

■ April 6: Black Tie Dinner Kick-Off Event

Black Tie Dinner shares news of the dinner while enjoying drinks, bites and beats. Reveal of the 2022 beneficiaries, the theme and other exciting news from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at On the Levee, 1108 Quaker St. \$50. Tickets at [Eventbrite.com/e/black-tie-dinner-kick-off-tickets-301551999147](https://www.Eventbrite.com/e/black-tie-dinner-kick-off-tickets-301551999147).

■ April 6-23: Dry Powder

Second Thought Theatre's season opener is about the price of success and the real cost of getting the deal done. Performances at Bryant Hall, 3400 Blackburn St. [SecondThoughtTheatre.com](https://www.SecondThoughtTheatre.com).



ARTRAGEOUS

Some 200 decorative and visual artists, 100 bands and singer/songwriters performing on four stages areas, food, drink and The Artists in Motion Walk are all included in the **2022 Deep Ellum Arts Festival**, open April 1-3 on Main Street in Deep Ellum. You'll have the chance to check out displays of cutting-edge decorative arts, purchase art, commission special pieces and even watch some of the artists at work, creating on the spot. And each evening will end with a performance by a national headliner, including All The Cool Kids and, on Saturday, Reverend Horton Heat. Get all the details at [DeepEllumArtsFestival.com](https://www.DeepEllumArtsFestival.com)



GIDDYUP Y'ALL

The last couple of pandemic years have put a hitch in many a get-along, especially for LGBTQ nonprofits who rely so much on money brought in by fundraising events. This weekend, though, you can get "Back in the Saddle" for the return of Resource Center's biggest party of the year, **Toast to Life**. The Western Glitz-themed event features live entertainment from DJ Blake Ward and the Breckenridge Band, dancing, silent and live auctions, bites from local restaurants and so much more. It's all happening Saturday, April 2, from 7-11 p.m. at The Empire Room, 1225 N. Riverfront Blvd. Tickets and sponsorships are available online at [OneBidpal.net/ToastToLife2022](https://www.OneBidpal.net/ToastToLife2022).



SELENA FOREVER

It's been 27 years now since Yolanda Saldívar killed singer Selena Quintanilla, who was then just 23 years old, cutting short a career that was on the verge of super stardom. But there is no doubt that Selena remains the "undisputed queen of Tejano music," and the queen of our hearts. Back by popular demand, the Round-Up Saloon and **Texas Latino Pride** present the third annual Siempre Selena Party on Sunday, April 3, from 4:30-9 p.m., at the Round-up, 3912 Cedar Springs Road, to celebrate what would have been the singer's 51st birthday on April 16. Hosted by Greg Castillo and Macarena, the party will include drink specials, a "Fiesta Market" with food by Locura Small Bites and merchandise from Que Rico Tees and other vendors, as well as a Selena look-alike contest and a show.

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](https://www.DallasVoice.com)

Jenny Block

GIRL ON GIRLS

Living ‘horn up,’ but not always

I thought I was an extrovert — until I met my wife. I enjoy people. I talk to strangers. I love speaking in front of large groups. But I also can get my energy easily zapped, and I would much prefer an amazing conversation with one person than small talk with lots of people.

I am, it turns out, an extroverted introvert.

When my wife and I first met, she loved how easily I fit into her friend group. But one night she complained that I was “holding court.” “You just stayed in one spot and waited for people to come to you,” she said.

She felt the move was snobby. I felt like I wasn’t imposing myself on people.

She lives to work a room, and I love that about her. I will happily work one when required. But I have no need to.

At her big promotion party, I went from person to person with her and made the right jokes and told charming stories. But, if I had my druthers, I would have stood in one spot and spoken to anyone who spoke to me and hoped for at least one connection deep enough to allow for conversation beyond shop talk and the weather.

The great thing about being an extrovert is that you get your energy from being around others, and so you are driven to connect with them. But when being around too many people drains you, it can be hard to muster the oomph to insert yourself into conversations and already-established groups at parties or events.

Now, anyone who knows me in real life — or even who reads my writing about all my many adventures — is likely shaking their head as they read this. “You’re not shy,” they’re saying, with a roll of their eyes.

And they’re right. I’m not shy.

It’s just that when I look at a room, I think, “Who will welcome an intrusion, and who might make for good company?” I’m looking for an energy boost rather than a zap.

And, yes, I am an overthinker:

“Are they in a private conversation?”

“Will they want to talk to me?”

“Should I just wait and see who wanders my way?”



When my wife looks at a room — well, she just talks to people. I envy that. And sometimes, I channel that. But mostly, I muster it.

If you saw me in person, you’d likely describe as an extrovert. I’m good with people. I’m easy going and friendly. I’ve never met a stranger, and I enjoy getting to know people and what they love and what makes them tick.

But here’s the thing: Just because someone is good at something, that doesn’t mean they find it easy to do. But I don’t mind a challenge.

Since I do travel and go to events alone, I have made that challenge one I have to accept, unless I want to spend all my time not speaking to a soul (which sometimes I do) or go to a party and stand in the corner alone (which I do not do).

So, I put myself out there. I just do it in my own way.

I channel what I like to call “That Unicorn.”

(Pardon what might appear as a shameless plug for my book by the same

title. But the thing is, it’s true. People I talked to about it found the idea so relatable that I wrote a book about it.)

“That Unicorn” is the person who walks into a room and everyone wants to be around. They make everyone feel good about themselves. They are confident and open and friendly, and they love getting to know people.

They live life, well, horn up.

It’s not that I’m not “That Unicorn.” It’s not that I’m faking it. It’s just that my inner introvert sometimes needs a little pep talk. Sometimes she even does need to fake it, at least to get the ball rolling. And knowing that we all have “That Unicorn” inside us helps us to do that. And having a partner who seems to always be able to do it and yet still support my not doing it doesn’t hurt either.

I recently went to the Charleston Wine and Food Festival. Although one of my besties was meeting me there in a few days, I had a few events to tackle alone. I knew I would miss out if I kept to myself, so I jumped in, and I joined conver-

sations, and, yes I admit it, I had a really good time.

One evening I met a chef who was at that night’s event on her own, and so we spent the entire evening together and had a blast. The next day, I struck up a conversation with the girl in the salon chair next to me when I was getting a haircut, and she ended up joining me for an event that evening. We had the best time. So much so that I learned to like pinot noir.

And, the next day, I walked up to two women who happened to be standing outside of my hotel and asked if they already had a Lyft ordered for the event, and if so, might I join them. We shared the ride and the day. We talked and laughed and had a great time drinking too much and not eating nearly enough.

The next day, my friend arrived, and, as always, we spent the rest of the weekend attached at the hip and continuing to meet lots of great people, all the while eating and drinking all manner of wonderful things.

And when the festival closed and we said good-bye to our new friends and one another, I felt grateful for my ability to honor who I am and still push my comfort zone so that I never miss out. I am equally grateful for a partner who respects and loves me — whether or not I’m feeling horn up that day or not.

this week’s solution

R	U	G	S		A	C	T	S		S	C	A	T	
A	S	I	A		G	L	E	E		S	A	R	A	
I	A	M	P	R	E	O	R	G	A	S	M	I	C	
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A	B	O	U	T	T	O	H	A	V	E	O	N	E	
P	O	R	N		R	E	I	N		M	O	N	A	
E	S	S	O		A	M	O	K		S	K	Y	S	

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submit

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KICK-OFF

**WEDNESDAY APRIL 6TH, 2022
6:30PM - 8:30PM**

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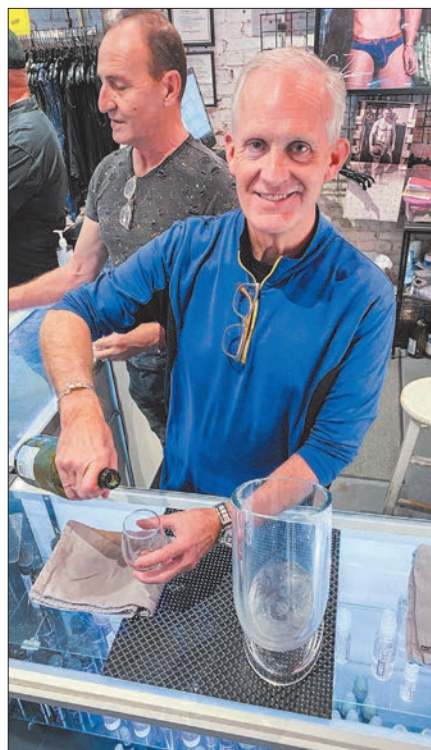
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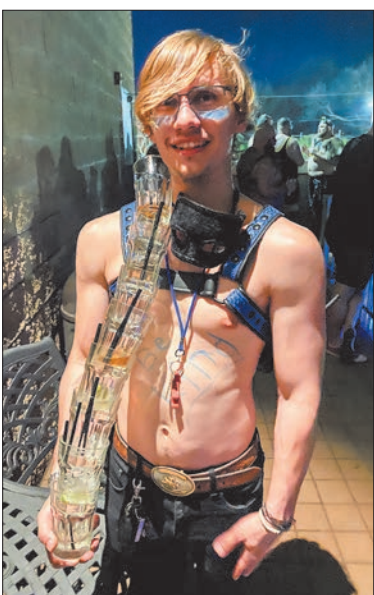
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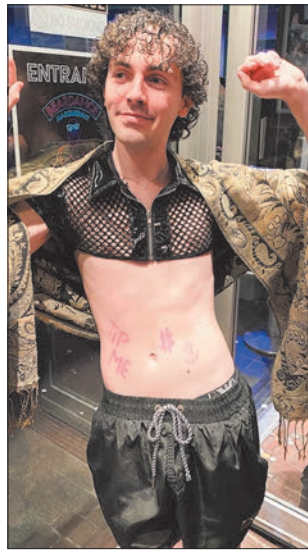
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You can learn more about Temple Emanu-El at
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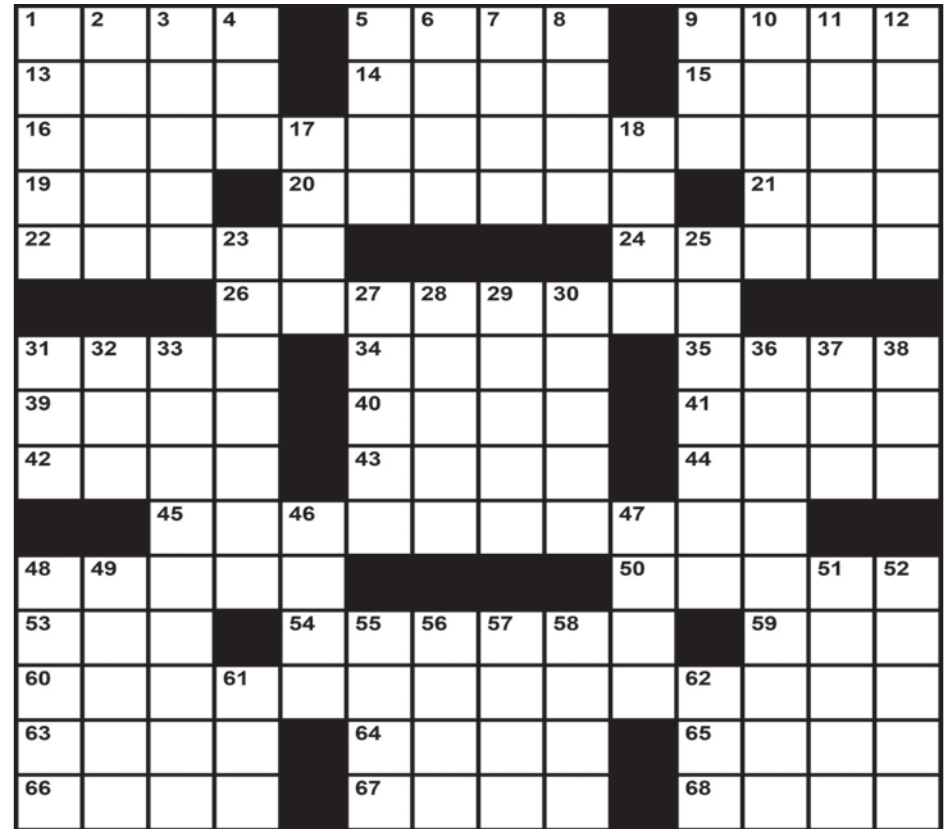
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Solution on Page 24

Across

- 1 They may burn lovers on the floor
 5 Fragments of *The Glass Menagerie*
 9 "Beat it!"
 13 Tibet setting
 14 Fox comedy with Jane Lynch
 15 Poet Teasdale
 16 Statement by Sofia in *Shortbus*
 19 Curry of Rocky Horror fame
 20 One who's "out"
 21 Comics cry
 22 Trick alternative
 24 Nervous sort
 26 Start of Jamie's response to Sofia
 31 Cheesy side trip from Amsterdam
 34 Mine, to Rimbaud
 35 Station wagon, e.g.
 39 Tara portrayer Collette
 40 Actor Rip
 41 Chew like a mouse
 42 Direction from Susan Feniger
 43 "___ you not"
 44 Beat, but barely
 45 More of the response
 48 She had her hand up Lamb Chop

50 Elton John's source for *Aida*

- 53 How some like it
 54 Seaport of Italia
 59 Son of Abe
 60 End of the response
 63 X-rated material
 64 Steed stopper
 65 Da Vinci's Lisa
 66 Big name in pumps
 67 Nuts
 68 "The ___ the limit!"

Down

- 1 Singer Bonnie
 2 Name on jetliners, once
 3 Easy putt for Spencer-Devlin
 4 Type of sucker
 5 Like a chickenhawk
 6 Lump of earth
 7 Six years for a senator Baldwin
 8 Video game name
 9 Sound of an inflated doll leak
 10 *Lawrence of Arabia* ride
 11 Princess with fins
 12 Tasteless
 17 Magazine section
 18 Jodie Foster's role with the King
 23 Valentine sender
 25 Place for trinkets

- 27 Try a Rick Rodgers cookbook, e.g.
 28 Like gay bars that allow cigars
 29 Hope-Crosby flick, *Road* ___
 30 Gandhi, e.g.
 31 Cause of Venus envy?
 32 Decimal point
 33 Some Disney employees
 36 Saw to
 37 Touching children's game
 38 Be in debt to
 46 "It ___ Necessarily So"
 47 Word on a map of Israel
 48 Triangle, e.g.
 49 Migratory guys
 51 Kaye of *Hans Christian Anderson*
 52 Think tank products
 55 It can give a drag queen smooth legs
 56 Hart Crane work
 57 Birth state of Langston Hughes
 58 Like young Abe Lincoln
 61 Game with "Reverse" cards
 62 Scrabble 3-pointers

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