

dallas voice

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PLAY BALL?

Greg Abbott's anti-trans policies endanger Dallas' position as 2022 Gay Softball World Series host city

By David Taffet, Page 9



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PUBLISHER Leo Cusimano, leo@dallasvoice.com

MANAGING EDITOR Tammye Nash, nash@dallasvoice.com
SENIOR STAFF WRITER David Taffet, taffet@dallasvoice.com
STAFF WRITER Rich Lopez, rich@dallasvoice.com
PROOF READER Philip Burton
CONTRIBUTORS Chris Azzopardi, Gary Bellomy, Jenny Block, Joey Casiano, Jesus Chairez, Lawrence Ferber, Hardy Haberman, Scott Huffman, Lisa Keen, Mark Lowry, Jonathon McCellan, Cassie Nova, Josh Robbins, Howard Lewis Russell, James Russell, Terri Schlichenmeyer, Leslie McMurray, Gregg Shapiro, Casey Williams

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR Chad Mantooth, mantooth@dallasvoice.com
MARKETPLACE MANAGER Stephen Mobley, mobley@dallasvoice.com
NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE National Advertising Representative
Todd Evans, Rivendell Media Inc. 908-232-2021

ART DIRECTOR Kevin Thomas, thomas@dallasvoice.com
MULTIMEDIA Stephen Mobley, Social Media Director
Jimmy Bartlett, Website Management
Israel Luna, DVtv Video Producer, Host
Tom Roma, DVtv Producer | Joseph Herrera, DVtv Producer
Regina Lyn, DVtv Host | Dom Pecikonis, DVtv Host

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR Linda Depriter, distribution@dallasvoice.com

FOUNDERS Robert Moore | Don Ritz

AFFILIATIONS | MEMBERSHIPS

Associated Press - Associate Member
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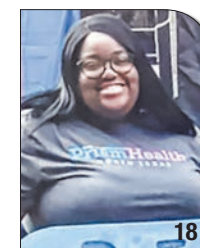
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Charlee Corra Disney

Disney heir comes out as trans, donates to HRC

A great-grandchild of Roy O. Disney — brother of Walt and cofounder of the Walt Disney Company — has come out as trans and is speaking out against Florida's right-wing leadership and the

'Don't Say Gay' bill Gov. Ron DeSantis recently signed into law, according to Los Angeles Times columnist Robin Abcarian.

Charlee Corra Disney, a 30-year-old heir to the Disney fortune and a high school biology and environmental science teacher, announced

at the Human Rights Campaign's annual gala in Los Angeles last month that they were giving a \$250,000 matching grant to HRC. Then Charlee's family — Roy and Sheri Disney — stepped up and doubled the amount.

The family's \$500,000 matching grant, Sheri said, is a "bridge" showing the family's commitment to LGBTQ rights, and a way to show the rest of the world that LGBTQ youth need and deserve love and support.

— Tammye Nash

Stand in solidarity with MacArthur H.S. GSA

Collin TFA will rally in support of the MacArthur High School Gay Straight Alliance and teachers who have been suspended, punished or about to be fired for their connection to the GSA, on Monday, April 18, at 6 p.m. at Irving ISD headquarters, 2621 W. Airport Freeway. The rally will happen during the Irving ISD school board meeting.

People who live in the Irving school district and who would like to read a prepared statement or make their own three-minute comments at the board meeting should sign up inside the building between 6-6:15 p.m. The board meeting begins at 7 p.m. and is open to the public.

— David Taffet

Advocates protesting at the Arboretum again Saturday

Activist and protest organizer Steve Atkinson announced this week that there will be another protest outside the Dallas Arboretum on Saturday, April 16, from 10 a.m.-noon. Atkinson and other organizers have pledged to continue regularly staging protests until Arboretum and/or Dallas city officials address alleged anti-LGBT and racial discrimination at the arboretum.

Atkinson said to follow the same guidelines set in the previous two protests for where to park and where to gather. 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

Brownwood set to host its first LGBTQ film festival

Brownwood, Texas, is set to host its first LGBTQ film festival for Pride. Filmmaker and actor Brock Cravy is the festival director for The Pride of Texas Film Fest, set for June 10-12.

They'll kick off the weekend by celebrating Pride Month at the 10 Mile Productions Tasting Room in the heart of downtown Brownwood.

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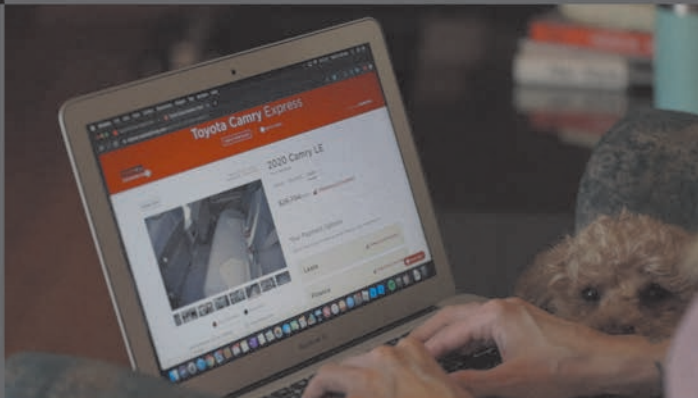
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There will be food, wine and beer, drag queens, music and LGBTQ movies.

The 10 Mile Productions Tasting Room is at 401 Center Ave, Brownwood. And Brownwood is a short 140 miles southwest of Fort Worth and 80 miles southeast of Abilene, or about 120 miles west of Waco. The most direct route is Highway 377 from Fort Worth.

— David Taffet

'X' gender marker now available on U.S. passports

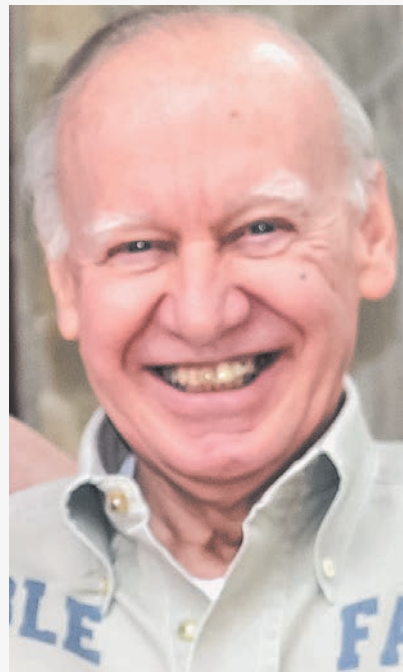


A change announced by the U.S. State Department last year adding a third gender option — “F,” “M” and “X” — to U.S. passports went into effect Monday, April 11, with passport application forms on the State Department website now offering all three gender choices.

The State Department is the first U.S. federal agency to offer the “X” gender marker on an identity document.

The change came after Dana Zzyym, an intersex and nonbinary Colorado resident, filed a lawsuit saying that with only the “F” and “M” options, it was impossible for them to get a pass-

OBITUARY



Fred Mosconi passed away March 27, 2022, at the age of 81. A celebration of life will be held at the Round-Up Saloon on Sunday, April 24, 2-4 p.m.

Fred was a staple in the LGBTQ commu-

nity in Dallas for many years. He and his husband owned An Occasional Piece on The Cedar Springs Strip until their retirement.

Fred's love for life was apparent to all those who saw him walking the Katy Trail each day or found him enjoying coffee with his friends. He loved the Round-Up Saloon — there is a photo of him and his husband next to the bar — where he went almost every Saturday night for 30 years. His ability to entertain everyone at the Eagle for disco dancing was amazing. His energy made everyone jealous.

Fred's love for his family was unmatched. He adored each and every one of them and always talked fondly of raising his kids and adoring his granddaughters. He had hundreds of friends who will miss his joy forever, not to mention his devotion to the Green Bay Packers.

Fred was preceded in death by his loving husband, George Schill, and daughter, Terry Schill, as well as his parents, Chelso and Armina Mosconi, his sister, Eileen Kitto, and brothers, Ludwig and Eugene Mosconi.

He is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, Rob and Monique Shill; his beautiful granddaughters, Kelly and Erin Schill and Ashtyn Boque, and many grand-nieces and nephews.

port accurately reflecting their gender identity, NPR notes. Zzyym received their passport with the “X” gender marker last December.

The “X” gender marker is officially defined as “unspecified or another gender identity.”

— Tammye Nash

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Ron vs. The Mouse

Florida's governor is mad because Disney opposes his efforts to force his anti-LGBTQ ideology on people

I get a lot of texts from Donald Trump these days. OK, not really from him, but from his campaign. I got one today that asked me to take a survey. A survey? Sure! I love surveys.

The first question was about Disney and whether they are too "woke" now because they aren't openly hostile toward LGBTQ people. Because being openly hostile to LGBTQ people is very much in fashion for Republicans right now.

The reason right-wingers are so mad at Disney right now is because Disney dared to challenge, however tepidly and belatedly, the "Don't Say Gay" bill Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis recently signed into law.

"Florida's HB 1557, also known as the 'Don't Say Gay' bill, should never have passed and should never have been signed into law," reads a statement Disney posted on Twitter. "Our goal as a company is for this law to be repealed by the legislature or struck down in the courts, and we remain committed to supporting the national and state organizations working to achieve that."

How brave of them.

The statement continues, "We are dedicated to standing up for the rights and safety of LGBTQ+ members of the Disney family, as well as the LGBTQ+ community in Florida and across the country."

It's good that Disney is publicly against HB 1557 now. It sucks that they didn't fight it while it made its way through the legislature and onto the governor's desk. And it really sucks that Disney had no problem giving big campaign contributions to the



D'Anne Witkowski
Creep of the Week

people and have become the home of anti-democracy white supremacist Q Anon conspiracy theorist loons. And evangelical Christians.

A lot of overlap there, though.

And now DeSantis is pissed.

"Disney has alienated a lot of people now," DeSantis said at a recent press conference. "And so the political influence they're

very Republicans who created this bill in the first place. Even as the GOP veered so far to the right they've alienated thinking

used to wielding, I think, has dissipated. And so the question is, why would you want to have special privileges in the law at all?"

Believe it or not, the "special privileges in the law" DeSantis is talking about aren't about LGBTQ people, even though that's how any laws to protect LGBTQ people anywhere have always been framed by people opposed to us. No, these special privileges are about Disney as a company and how it operates in Florida.

The state has given the company a lot of perks and freedom to, like,

practically rule itself. Which, I'll admit, seems kind of weird and maybe should be looked at? Like, the power we give to corporations and stuff in the U.S. is wild, especially when we say, "Gosh, we just don't have the money to [insert anything that could actually help people who need help and make life easier for the average American]" while we let some of the biggest companies pay no taxes at all.

But to retaliate against

the company by saying, "Nice situation you got here, Disney. Would be a shame if something happened to it," because Disney doesn't support a shameful and hateful law that the majority of the country doesn't support. That's pretty sick.

But DeSantis is a man of principle. And that principle is to be a hateful ignoramus.

"There's policy disputes, and that's fine, but when you're trying to impose a woke ideology on our state, we view that as a significant threat," DeSantis told reporters. "This wokeness will destroy this country if we let it run unabated. So in Florida we take a very big stand against that."

Oh, FFS. The man just signed a bill that attempts to erase the existence of LGBTQ people in his state, a state that only six years ago was the site of the mass shooting of 49 people in a gay night club, and yet Disney is the one imposing an ideology by daring to object?

Among the things Republicans are threatening? Not extending Disney's copyrights, meaning Mickey Mouse could become public domain. Meaning you could finally open that Mickey Mouse Etsy shop you've been dreaming of without getting a cease-and-desist letter.

Now Disney is "pausing all political donations in Florida as it reviews its approach to advocacy," according to CNBC.

All political donations — meaning they're not interested in helping Democrats assume power in Florida.

But who knows? Maybe Disney will finally see these radicalized Republicans for the villains they are. ■

D'Anne Witkowski is a writer living in Michigan with her wife and son. She has been writing about LGBTQ+ politics for nearly two decades. Follow her on Twitter @MamaDWitkowski.



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Advocating in Collin County

ADVOCACY

Equality Texas field organizer Gordy Carmona said registering voters is key

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Gordy Carmona has been named Equality Texas field organizer for Collin County. They started their position in March and have already held one meet-up with plans for additional events through the November election.

Equality Texas is targeting Collin County because it's one of the fastest-growing counties in the country. That includes Frisco, the fastest-growing city in the U.S., which doubled in size between the 2010 and 2020 census. Among those moving to Collin County are large numbers of people from the northeast and the west coast — blue states — who could change voting patterns in what was once one of the most Republican counties in the U.S.

Carmona said the plan is simple: Make sure people are registered to vote.

Their first event was successful — a meet up in a local Plano bar that's friendly to the LGBTQ community. A deputy voter registrar was on hand to help anyone not already registered to vote get registered and ready.

The median age of residents in Collin County is 37. And lots of young people means lots of people attending college, many of whom have never voted before.

So engaging with students on campus is part of Carmona's plan. And, although their target is students at Collin College and UT Dallas in or near Collin County, Carmona said they've already engaged with students from UT Arlington and UNT in neighboring counties.

"My message to young people," Carmona said, "is vote and make change for our community."

They said this election cycle there will



Gordy Carmona, Equality Texas' organizer in Collin County, says registering voters is key, above. The recent Equality Texas event in Collin County drew a crowd, right.

be a lot of attention on Texas because of Gov. Greg Abbott's recent actions, including his order to investigate the parents of trans children as child abusers.

According to the Texas Tribune, at least six investigators have resigned in response to the governor's order. One investigator who is the subject of an investigation herself was put on leave, and there is fear that a mass exodus of employees from Child Protective Services will happen.

In addition, Abbott has put immigrants on a bus to Washington, and he has ordered more extensive inspections that have slowed down the movement of trucks crossing the border to a crawl. That is likely to cause a shortage of fresh produce coming from Mexico into the state and will likely add to already high inflation.

And who knows what additional stunts Abbott will pull before the election?

Voting, Carmona insists, is the easy way to take care of the problem.

Carmona already has a number of events in the early planning stages. A picnic in Richardson is probably the next event, and block-walking is a possibility. So far, Equality Texas hasn't endorsed any candidates, so Carmona said any block-walking now being planning would be to make sure people are registered to vote.

Carmona is originally from Corpus Christi but grew up around the state. They got their polit-

there to speak. But most of those who had come to testify also opposed the bill, so they were speaking to a friendly audience.

The 2021 Legislative session, Carmona said was "a gruesome 10 months." And they were back in Austin testifying — but this time to a more hostile audience.

Carmona identifies as trans non-binary but has only come to understand that identity more recently. Before that, they identified as a gay male who was aware of the transgender community but mostly knew of it through people who had died of AIDS or people who had died from physical attacks.

Then they became involved in the trans community.

"The trans community took me in," they said. "They showed me the ropes, helped me understand who I was later in life."

Carmona said one of their greater joys has been helping Trans Kids and Families with their holiday party, saying the trans kids they've met are "a ray of sunshine."

Carmona's position with Equality Texas is funded through the election. The organization has also placed a field organizer in Harris County and is looking for someone to work in The Valley. To get involved, Carmona said the easiest way to get in touch is by email: Gordy.Carmona@Equality-Texas.org.

If this past session was gruesome, as Carmona describes, that's no reason for any lack of optimism.

"The political climate is difficult," they said. "But 70 percent of Texans support LGBTQ equality."

Looking to the future, Carmona sees themselves making a career advocating for the trans community.

"They've helped me so much, it's only right I continue to advocate," they said. ■



ical start as a board member of GALA North Texas. In 2019, they traveled to Austin to participate in Advocacy Day and returned to testify against a Senate license to discriminate bill.

"It was rewarding to do," they said. "Even though at the time I was afraid of public speaking."

They remember that when they testified, the full committee was there, and the gallery was packed with others

Gay World Series is headed to Dallas

SPORTS



Ryan Holdhusen

Trans team members argue the games should be moved out of Texas as a response to Abbott's bigotry

DAVID TAFFET | Senior Staff Writer
taffet@dallasvoice.com

Brittney Miller manages the Puget Sound Pronouns softball team in Seattle's Emerald City Softball Association, and Miller wants the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance to move this summer's Gay Softball World Series out of Dallas because of Gov. Greg Abbott's treatment of trans kids.

Two Seattle teams have said they won't travel to Dallas should they qualify for the World Series, and one Portland team is calling on its league to boy-

cott the games, according to Outsports.

Two months ago, Miller posted a Change.org petition called "NAGAAA: You must move the gay World Series out of Dallas if you support trans rights." That petition has gotten 651 signatures so far.

NAGAAA is the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance that oversees softball competition with more than 17,000 players in 46 cities.

Dallas was supposed to host the Gay Softball World Series last year, but because COVID-19 canceled the games in Columbus in 2020, Columbus hosted in 2021. Dallas' hosting gig was postponed to this year, and Minneapolis, originally awarded the 2022 games, will host next year. And 2023 host Las Vegas will now be home to the GSWS in 2024.

"The Gay Softball World Series should be moved because politicians like Greg Abbott only respond to the bottom line," Miller said. "The GSWS is worth roughly \$5-7 million to the host city,

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IMMERSED IN ART

'Love' is shiny and new at Rainbow Vomit

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
rich@dallasvoice.com

At first mention, the name Rainbow Vomit can stir up mixed emotions: Rainbows — yay! Vomit — eh, no thanks. The two together though are something altogether different — with a lot more yay to it.

For three years, this immersive art exhibit/experience has called Exposition Park its home. For the uninitiated, it's basically like walking into a colorful, comic book-like experience ripe for selfie-taking.

Throughout its tenure, the space has offered a variety of themes or experiences, and for springtime this year, Rainbow Vomit is all about the love.

"Right now our theme is A Love Story," Rainbow Rob said during a tour of RV's latest exhibition. "We're just leaning into those stories of love and acceptance that Rainbow Vomit has long circled around."

It was launched around Valentine's Day, but experience director Rainbow Rob (nee Robert Andrews) and lead designer and curator Deanna Theis are holding over the exhibition, since love is in the air during this time of year.

The two founders are also partners in real life.

"For Deanna and me, this has been special personally and, in a way, a manifestation of our own love," Rob said. "We want to share that with a wider audience, because the world just needs more love."

Rainbows, love, acceptance are all keywords that resonate with the LGBTQ community for sure.

"The theme fit us and opened up creative possibilities for us," Rob said. "We talk about accepting all the colors of the rainbow here, and you have to do that to find happiness."



Rainbow Vomit is certainly about an upbeat vibe, and the team invites everyone to come out and feel the love — whether it's a date night, a family outing or a group of single friends.

For those familiar with RV, the experience opens with the black and white room. Then crossover through the ribbon curtains into an explosion of color, art and balloons to first see Cupid's Armory, followed by the Kissing Booth and an actual phone booth.

The RV team "and other vomiteers" usually work on any redesigns within the space, but some works are commissioned — like the Kissing Booth by graffiti artist Jose "Sparks" Rami.

Usually held as a surprise feature in Rainbow Vomit, a large unicorn named Gerard greets visitors in the colorful, quirky kitchen area.

The space celebrated its third anniversary in January. As Rob, Deanna and co-owner Jason Mendez and the rest of the team now have that time under their belts, new conversations have come up regarding the future of Rainbow Vomit.

"We really use this art form as a way to raise people's spirits with impact," Rob said. "This is a very positive experience, and it fills people with joy and happiness. But there are deeper levels we want to go through

"We're determining — at this point —

what is our grander vision?"

The magic of the space is that it appeals to the vanity in all of us. Who wouldn't like a fabulous selfie with all these colors and shapes and props? But then visitors might find something special within its psychedelic walls.

"You may get a vibe that's a bit deeper here. We allow people to create their own story here in this kind of big comic book," he said.

In fact, people may even put down their phone to just take in this dreams-



cape of a place that sits across Fair Park.

After more flamboyant backdrops upstairs, Rob reveals A Love Story's final fantasy back on the first floor:

The cloud room is a mainstay of RV, and it's like walking into a dream. Visitors are surrounded by "clouds" with lightning and comforting sounds. The vomiteers added a joyful feature into the room ready for that up, up and away selfie.

"It's been such a positive experience. We have this mix of love songs playing, and we want people to just turn off the world and find our message of 'exude love,'" Rainbow Rob said. ■

A Love Story is currently on display. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit RainbowVomit.com.

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Getting 'Bent'

STAGE



Mitchell Horn, left, is Max and Curtis Gestner is Horst in UTD's production of *Bent*.

UTD students dig deep to bring story of gays in the Holocaust to the stage

RICH LOPEZ | Staff writer
rich@dallasvoice.com

As newer legislation across the country displays glaring homophobia and transphobia, UT Dallas students remind us that history can repeat itself — it just looks different. On Thursday, April 21,

The UTD School of Arts and Humanities, with the Ackerman Center for Holocaust Studies, will open *Bent*, a story about persecution of gays in Nazi Germany.

And in the middle of all that, it is a story of love and pride.

Playwright Martin Sherman premiered *Bent* in 1979 in London. The cast included Ian McKellen as the main character, Max.

The story begins with the story of Max and Rudy who try to flee to France but are ultimately arrested. After they are separated, Max meets Horst, who teaches him about being true to yourself even in terrible, oppressive times.

Talk back

In addition to the production, UT Dallas will host three post-show talkback events throughout the production. Each will have a different focus of conversation and are open to all audience members.

April 22: LGBTQ+/Pride Night talkback will feature a discussion with the cast, production team and members of the Galerstein Gender Center

April 28: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the Arts talkback with panelists Matt Winsler-Johns, Colby Calhoun, Janelle Gray

and director Christopher Trevino with local activists, the cast and production team. The talkback will also stream on YouTube.

April 29: Holocaust and Beyond Bent: LGBTQ+ Activism in Texas, noon. Director Christopher Trevino will moderate this discussion on the histories of LGBTQ+ life, law, and resistance in Texas. Join historians who will discuss the transgender history of Indigenous people, resistance to sodomy laws, and activists that have marched-been arrested-and advocated for LGBTQ+ rights. Panelists include Gregory Smithers, Wes Phelps, Gene Alviar and Kris Klein.

Director Christopher Trevino this week talked about working on the show with students who didn't know the history and the discussions that the cast and crew had to have to bring the show to life. Trevino serves as the assistant technical director for the department but will serve as a first time director for this show.



Christopher Trevino

Dallas Voice: *Bent* is certainly a classic in queer theater with some heavy messages. How has it been directing this as your first show? Christopher Trevino: I think I picked a doozy for my first show. It's challenging, but it's going well. The process has been enjoyable, and I just really find myself having to stay on top of everything in every department for the show.

How has your cast taken to this story? People didn't know this story — at least about homosexuals being persecuted during the Holocaust. This was their first time hearing that story, which I think sometimes gets left behind. There have been a lot of thought processes and a lot of decisions that I — and we — had to make.

I imagine there had to be quite a bit of research or dramaturgy or even just conversation about this before getting started — especially with some not knowing the history. I have a student who is serving as our dramaturg, and we're both researching key things such as Dachau [concentration camp] and how mostly men were persecuted since they weren't continuing the bloodline.

We all watched *Paragraph 175*, a documentary about the law that criminalized sexual relations between men when the Nazis rolled in. We learned that some men would hide their identity while some stuck to their guns. The play explores both sides of that with the characters: Max has to figure out whether to be true to himself and speak his truth or is he going to live a life that is basically a lie.

How long was the preparation? We had

about two weeks of tablework. Each night we'd talk about the characters.

Haydn Lopez did a compendium, this 18-page doc of different tidbits of the show that were mentioned. We'd write down words or names that some of the younger cast didn't know. We'd talk about the playwright and scenes and the history. All these names would come up, like Marlene Dietrich or the Nazi leaders. I think the cast needed to know about the backgrounds of these people that they are saying lines about.

For those who may not know, could you explain the title? That came up in our tablework as well. "Bent" was this offensive word that described homosexuals. So basically it was this slur.

What is your hope for this play? We're excited. I hope people will come with an open mind and begin a conversation. We're also going to have UTD's first Pride night on April 22, and we'll have three talkbacks (see sidebar), and, on April 28, we'll have a moment of silence to recognize Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Bent opens Thursday and runs through April 30 at University Theatre at UTD. \$15. Calendar.UTDallas.edu.



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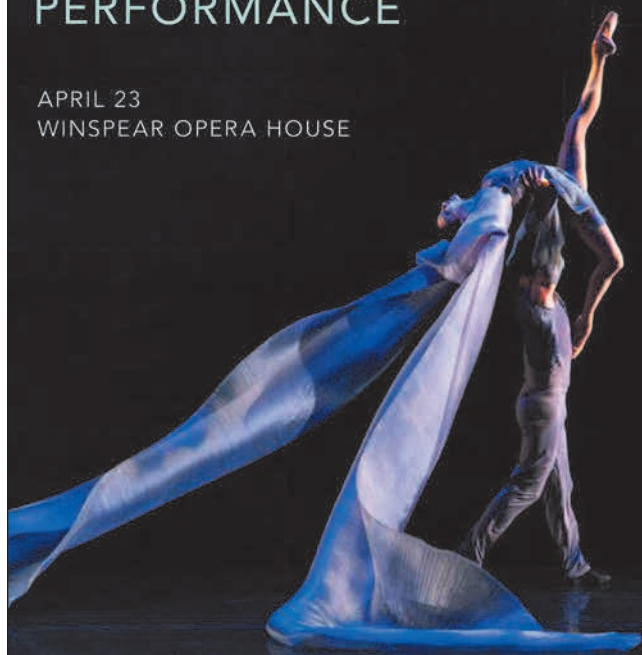
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SERIES, From Page 9



Members of a Las Vegas softball team enjoy the 2014 GSWS opening ceremonies in Dallas. Las Vegas will host the tournament in 2024. (David Taffet/Dallas Voice)

and while a lot of that would be spent at queer-owned businesses, that will trickle into the Texas economy and will be taxed like any other straight dollar.”

Actually, Visit Dallas estimates the economic impact of the Series will be \$16 million.

But Abbott hasn't been responding to the economic argument recently. His blockade at the border with Mexico — initiated to play to his base voters who want the border “secured” — is wreaking havoc with food supply chains and a variety of other industries, especially the auto industry.

“Conservative voters often focus on how the economy is doing, and if Abbott's hateful agenda weakens the Texas economy, he'll lose support,” Miller argues.

And she may be right. Democratic gubernatorial candidate Beto O'Rourke's poll numbers are up this week.

Miller argues that coming to Dallas, being loud and proud, puts money into the pockets of Abbott's supporters: “United Airlines donated to Abbott's campaign,” Miller said. “Some of our members are veterans and will be using their USAA cards to spend money down there — and USAA donated \$50,000 to Abbott's campaign. Does everyone know that if they rent a car for the week from Enterprise, they're supporting a company that donated to Abbott?”

Ryan Holdhusen is executive director of Dallas Gay Softball World Series. He agrees with Miller on each of her points about Abbott but said he and his team

have been working on hosting the World Series since 2019 — and it's too late to move the games elsewhere.

Last year, 235 teams attended the Columbus games. This year, Holdhusen said he's expecting 250 teams to attend bringing 4,000 people from 50 different North American cities. When Dallas last hosted in 2014, 162 teams competed.

Games will be played on softball fields in Kiest Park in Oak Cliff, The Parks at Texas Star in Euless, McInnish Softball Fields in Carrollton and at fields in Waxahachie. Transportation to and from host hotel the Hilton Anatole is being arranged.

Sponsors have already been secured. The Texas Rangers are sponsoring the GSWS both financially and in-kind. Holdhusen points out what a big deal that really is, considering the Rangers are the only major league baseball team that hasn't held a Pride night.

The Dallas Mavericks are also sponsoring.

“And we're reaching out to the Stars and FC Dallas,” Holdhusen said.

Moving the games to a different city means losing all that support with no time for the new city to find the patrons who can underwrite the cost of the games.

Gilley's is reserved for opening ceremonies on Aug. 29. A charity event at the Anatole will benefit Coalition for Aging LGBT. And permits have already been drawn for a street party on Cedar Springs Road.

SERIES, Page 22

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COMMUNITY EVENTS



Sattie Nyachwaya, left, and Feliz Ruiz with Prism Health North Texas

PHNTX holding clothing swap event for transgender community

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
 nash@dallasvoice.com

“Fashion,” fashion photographer Bill Cunningham once said, “is the armor to survive the reality of everyday life.” And transgender people — especially these days, when they are being targeted from every direction by the forces of hate — need some really strong armor. Unfortunately, many trans people,

especially those who have only recently transitioned, often find themselves forced to go into battle without proper the armor. But Prism Health North Texas is stepping up to help fill that need.

PHNTX is hosting a clothing swap event on Saturday, April 23, from 2-6 p.m. at the agency’s newest offices, located at 4004 Worth St., next to the Baylor Hospital campus just east of downtown Dallas. The event is being held in conjunction with National Transgender HIV Testing Day, and free HIV testing will be available, according to Policy, Advocacy, & Community Engagement Coordinator Sattie Nyachwaya, PHNTX’s policy, advocacy and community engagement coordinator.

“For individuals of trans experience, having nice, gender affirming clothing is a part of you stepping into a new sea-

son of you," Nyachwaya said. "As you are embracing who you are even more, an item of clothing can change everything, it can make you feel better and it can make your life be uplifted. As a community accomplice, PHNTX needs to always be there waiting with resources like for this community as they have been stepped on and overlooked so many times."

TRANSform Your Closet has "been



in the works for about two years now," Nyachwaya said. "Prism wanted to figure out how, as an organization, we could help the transgender community in addition to our Trans Wellness Clinic. Our clients at the clinic often told us that they needed to find certain kinds of clothes for certain kinds of events. But it can be hard to navigate through thrift shops and resale shops and other organizations.

"So we decided to find a way to help fill that need. The pandemic has delayed things a bit, but we decided to go ahead and have this event once we got into our new space where we have space for something like this."

Nyachwaya said the event set up to look similar to a thrift store, with clothing arranged based on use, with a section for clothes you would wear for a night out, casual clothes and business and business casual styles. Basically, she

said, it is designed for trans people to trade in clothes they no longer wear for clothes that better fit them now.

"If you bring one item, you take five items home. If you bring in two items, you take 10 items home," Nyachwaya explained. "But if you don't have anything to bring to swap, don't worry. We have an internal closet of donated items that case managers use to provide clothes for those clients who need something immediately. No one will leave empty-handed."

Nyachwaya said they plan to have food and beverages available for those who attend, as well as a table where visitors can find other resources available to the transgender community, including organizations like Trans Pride Initiative, House of Rebirth and DFW Trans Kids and Families.

There will also be a PHNTX nurse practitioner on hand to talk about what services the organization offers.

"We are primarily an HIV service organization, so we offer preventative care, access to testing and treatment for HIV. But we also have a Trans Wellness Clinic that offers healthcare for transgender people at little to no cost."

According to research by the Centers for Disease Control, an estimated 1.4 million adults in the United States identify as transgender. Transgender women, especially trans women of color, are at high risk of exposure to HIV, the CDC says.

Feliz Ruiz, Behavioral Intervention Services team lead for PHNTX, said, "Preventative HIV care is important for the trans community not only because trans women are at a higher risk of acquiring HIV, but because there is so much stigma around both HIV and the trans community.

"Everyone, no matter how or who they identify as, needs to have access to all forms of healthcare no matter what," Ruiz continued. "In addition to access, the healthcare setting needs to be a space where they feel comfortable, safe and confident to access the services they need, including hormone therapy, HIV/STI testing, or PrEP. I am excited for this event in hopes that it gives individuals of Trans experience a chance to see what options they have for preventative services, ask all the questions they want to ask, and connect with their community and its allies." ■

For more information, visit PHNTX.org and check the events calendar.

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PROFILE

Friends honor the late Billy Roy Smith by getting Texas Tech to dedicate planned Raider Red statue to him

TAMMYE NASH | Managing Editor
nash@dallasvoice.com

If you are from Texas, or if you are a fan of college sports, you probably know who "Raider Red" is. Well, you might not know that's his name, but you probably recognize this distinctive cartoon-like character that is the costume mascot for Texas Tech University. Soon, a statue of Raider Red will stand on the Texas Tech campus, thanks in large part to the ef-

forts of Texas Tech alumnus Billy Roy Smith, who was not only a Red Raider cheerleader back in the day but was also the man behind the Raider Red mask in 1981.

And now, thanks to the efforts of Smith's many friends and Texas Tech fans, when it is built, the Raider Red statue will be dedicated to his memory, honoring the man known as one of the biggest Texas Tech fans ever.

Smith, who lived in Dallas for many years before he and his husband, David Haass, moved to San Antonio, died April 3 in a bicycling accident. In the days after his death, Carson Roye — another former Raider Red and Tech grad — launched a Change.org petition to convince TT officials to dedicate the soon-to-be-built statue to Smith. This week, Roye said, he heard from Tech

President Lawrence Schovanec who told him that the dedication will happen.

"At first, I reached out the university to try and get something simple [in memory of Smith after his death] — something like getting the Will Rogers statue wrapped in black for a few days in his memory," Roye said. "They told me they would have to get approval for that, and it would take a while to the approval. Then I thought about it, and I wondered, why fight so hard for something small and temporary. Billy deserves something permanent."

That's when Roye launched the Change.org petition. Within 24 hours, he said, the petition had gotten more than 4,000 signatures.

So Roye emailed Schovanec to ask for his support. "He responded right away," Roye said of the university president. "It

was really cool how fast he responded and supportive he is of it. He also knew Billy personally.

"He told me he supports dedicating the statue to Billy, and he will get a plaque put in place," Roye added. "He has the people in place to get it done."

Roye explained that Smith spent the last seven years getting funding secured to pay for the statue of Raider Red, developing a 107-step sponsorship plan to raise the \$250,000 necessary. "A bank came through at the end and filled the gap between what we had and what we needed, and by the first of this year, it was fully-funded," Roye said, noting that construction of the 10-foot statue of the school's costume mascot begins in the fall.

According to a February 2020 post by Lubbock radio state KFMX 94.5, Smith



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Billy Roy Smith with Raider Red

was a Texas Tech cheerleader from 1978-80 and from 1983-84. He was Raider Red in 1981, a member of the Saddle Tramps spirit group from 1980-84 (Saddle Tramps is an all-male group, the female spirit group is the High Riders), on the National Cheerleaders Association staff from 1980-86, founder and owner of Spirit Celebration cheer event company from 1998-2018. (Spirit Celebration is now part of Varsity Spirit.) Smith was also a member of Cheer Dallas.

There is a scholarship in Smith's name for Spirit Program students at Texas Tech, and Smith appeared in the Netflix series *Cheer*, which focuses on the award-winning cheer squad at Navarro College in Corsicana.

Roye, a Tech student from 2013-16, said he first met Smith when Roye became Raider Red. The two became friends and, after Roye graduated and moved to the DFW area, they often watched Texas Tech sports together. "In 2019, we watched the first game at American Airlines Center together," he said.

Paul J. Williams, who said he met Smith through mutual friends about 2012 or 2013, said that Smith was "the most positive person I think I've ever met. I don't remember ever seeing him be angry or negative about anything.

"He worked with the Texas Tech cheerleaders every year, and he was always helping other cheerleaders or aspiring cheerleaders. He has done so much for so many people; his benevolence is amazing," Williams continued. "The statue dedication is absolutely glorious. Billy absolutely deserves it." ■

Let's Go Celebrate: A Tribute to Billy Roy Smith, will be held Saturday, May 14, from 2-3 p.m., with a reception rally from 3-4 p.m., at Marriott Dallas Allen Hotel and Convention Center, 777 Water Creek Blvd. in Allen. Those attending are encouraged to wear Texas Tech red and black.



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SERIES

From Page 14

Holdhusen expects fundraising in addition to the CFA event to top \$100,000 that will benefit Legacy Cares, Resource Center and Prism Health North Texas as

guest across the LGBTQ+ spectrum feels safe, welcome and celebrated in our city," Visit Dallas continued.

Miller said, "Moving the GSWS would



Dallas also hosted the Gay Softball World Series in 2014. (Tammye Nash/Dallas Voice)

well as Trans Kids and Families of Texas.

Pegasus Slowpitch Softball Association, the Dallas NAGAAA affiliate, established Wings Fund PSSA to help those affected by injury or illness. During the pandemic, the fund helped players, non-players, bystanders and fans with unexpected medical bills. Holdhusen said they'll be another beneficiary.

Holdhusen said he's excited Resource Center's trans advocate Leslie McMurray will use her experience as a sportscaster to announce games on the GSWS online broadcasts. He said Dallas GSWS is looking for additional ways to engage the trans community throughout the event.

VisitDallas has been working with Dallas GSWS and believes the event will have more than just an economic impact on the area.

"VisitDallas and the Dallas Sports Commission truly value our partnership with NAGAAA and are looking forward to once again proudly hosting the Gay Softball World Series in August 2022," a spokesperson told Dallas Voice in a written statement. "We completely understand the range of emotions being felt across the LGBTQ+ community in response to actions occurring at the Texas state Capitol."

Visit Dallas staff spent time at the Capitol testifying against discriminatory legislation, specifically pointing out that it would hurt the region's travel industry. "We will work collectively with community partners to ensure every

send a message loud and clear that the larger LGBTQIA truly and forcefully stands behind the trans community."

Holdhusen said he'd like to hear how to address the trans community's concerns. Miller had several ideas. She said she'd like a statement of support not just for trans players in the league, but for the trans community as a whole.

Other items include donations to trans organizations. Dallas has already added Trans Kids and Families as a beneficiary. She'd like to see promises of donations from each GSWS sponsor to a trans rights organization and, finally, a statement in the GSWS program standing behind the trans communities and in opposition to Abbott's mandate.

While firmly supporting the transgender community, VisitDallas stood firmly on the side of keeping the world series in Dallas. Travel boycotts just don't work, they said.

"The GSWS should stay in Dallas as travel boycotts can serve only to further disenfranchise those who are already getting left behind due to racism, economics or identity," VisitDallas wrote. "Dallas is a destination that promotes inclusion, regardless of the politics of our state legislature, and stands firmly against any form of discrimination and hate based on sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

"VisitDallas and the Dallas Sports Commission continue to advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion and are committed to keeping Dallas a welcoming destination for all."

GAY AGENDA

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE



This is the last weekend for two super shows onstage now in the Metroplex. The final performance of **Sister Act**, Theatre Arlington's first play in its new season and newly-renovated space at 305 W. Main St., is Friday night, April 15. You know the story, right? It's about a nun — a Carmelite nun? Check TheatreArlington.org for all the details. And Uptown Players winds up its run of Harvey Fierstein's *Torch Song* — that iconic and award-winning piece of gay theater that made Fierstein a star — on Sunday, April 17, at the Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. Find the details at UptownPlayers.org.

ALL ABOUT THE CROWNS



The Miss Gay Texas State Pageant System presents the **Miss Gay Cedar Creek State and Miss Gay Cedar Creek State At Large** pageants on Saturday, April 16, at Garlow's, 308 E. Main St. in Gun Barrel City. The event honors Miss Gay Cedar Creek State 2020-21 Marissah D'Amour Starr, Miss Gay Cedar Creek State At Large 2020-21 and Miss Gay Texas State At Large 2022 Carmella DuBuque and Miss Gay Texas State 2022 Sienna Silver. It will feature Miss Gay Texas State At Large 2020-21 Gloria Devine and Miss Gay Texas State 2020-21 Candi Carroll. There is no contestant entry fee, and anyone who wants to compete should contact Linze Serrell, Carmella DuBuque or Sienna Silver. Tickets are \$20 for those ages 18-20, and \$10 for those 21 and up. Contact Katrina to reserve your seat. The show starts at 8 p.m.

STAND UP, SPEAK OUT



It's no secret that the haters are coming for us, full force, doing everything they can to roll back our hard-won rights.

And, right now, one of the battlefields is right in the DFW area, where the Irving ISD is firing an LGBTQ teacher for speaking out against a principal's move to take away student safe spaces at MacArthur High School. If you want to be part of the resistance and fight back against the forces of hate, head over to the Irving ISD administration offices, 2621 W. Airport Freeway in Irving for a protest to stand in solidarity with the **MacArthur High Gay-Straight Alliance** and teacher Rachel Stonecipher on Monday, April 18, at 6 p.m. Bring water, bring sunscreen and bring your Pride.

Kelexis Davenport, Layla Larue and Sasha Andrews. Masks are required regardless of vaccination status. Tickets start at \$30, available at ATPAC.org.

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

The queens of The Rose Room are once again taking their show on tour, all the way downtown to the Winspear Opera House. Back in October 2020, when COVID was keeping everything shut down, Charles Santos, executive director for TITAS/Dance Unbound, came up with an idea that would help his organization that had been forced to cancel shows, help the Rose Room performers who'd seen their income take a big hit and help the audiences who were desperate for entertainment: **The Rose Room on Tour**. The first show featured the drag entertainers performing on the outdoor stage at Annette Strauss Square. It was such a huge hit that Santos invited the queens back for another show — this time in the Winspear — that December. Now the Rose Room performers are headed back to the Winspear again, at 8 p.m. on April 19. Don't miss your chance to see what promises to be an exciting, irreverent and, yes, hilarious show. Tickets start at \$39 and are available at ATPAC.org.



PLAN YOUR WEEK

- Red for community events
- Blue for arts and entertainment
- Purple for sports
- Green for nightlife
- 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@hopecottages.org.

APRIL

■ Through April 15: **Sister Act**

Theatre Arlington opens its new season and newly renovated space with this musical that centers on disco diva Deloris Van Cartier who witnesses a murder and is put in protective custody in a place where no one will think to look — a convent. Theatre Arlington, 305 W. Main St. TheatreArlington.org.

■ Through April 17: **Harvey Fierstein's Torch Song**

Uptown Players opens its new season with this new two-act revival of Fierstein's original 1983 *Torch Song Trilogy*. At the Kalita Humphreys Theater, 3636 Turtle Creek Blvd. UptownPlayers.org.

■ April 16-May 30: **Scarborough Faire**

The annual Renaissance Festival opens Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. at 2511 FM 66, Waxahachie. \$28. SRFestival.com.

■ Through April 16 **NCAA National Collegiate Gymnastics Championships**

The University of Oklahoma, University of Utah, University of Alabama, University of Minnesota, University of Florida, University of Michigan, University of Missouri and Auburn University will compete in front of fans from across the country for the title of National Champion. This two-day championship will feature two semifinal sessions on Thursday, April 14, and the final competition with the top four teams from the semifinals will close the weekend on Saturday, April 16. Dickies Arena, 1911 Montgomery St., Fort Worth. NCAA.com/tickets.

■ April 15-23: **Passover**

■ April 16: **Congregation Beth El Binah seder**

Congregation Beth El Binah holds its annual congregational seder at Deli News in Frisco. Tickets at BethElBinah.org.

■ April 16: **Chimp Chats**

Chimp Haven, near Shreveport, is the world's largest chimpanzee sanctuary. The 200-acre campus that is home to 300 chimps is usually closed to the public; however visitors can tour in groups of limited size on April 16 and May 14.

For a two-hour visit, register at chimphaven.org/visit/chimp-chat. To take the digital tour, visit chimphaven.org/visit/digital-tour.

■ April 16: **Blue Moon Dances**

Women only dances the third Saturday of the month from 7 p.m.-midnight at DanceMakers of Texas, 6125 SW 820 Ste. 140, Fort Worth. BYOB. \$10.

■ April 17: **Easter**

■ April 17: **Picnic in the Park**

No concerts or pooch parades this year, but members of the LGBTQ community plan to continue the tradition of spending Easter in Turtle Creek Park with a picnic.

■ April 18: **National Transgender HIV Testing Day**

■ April 18: **Irving ISD protest**

Stand in solidarity with the Gay/Straight Alliance at MacArthur High in a rally at 6 p.m. at Irving ISD headquarters, 2621 W. Airport Freeway, Irving.

■ April 19: **TITAS/Unfiltered presents The Disco Drag Show**

TITAS/Unfiltered presents the cast of The Rose Room on Tour in the Disco Drag Show at 8 p.m. at the Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora St. Cassie Nova hosts the show which will also feature RuPaul's Drag Race alumni Ra'Jah O'Hara, Chevelle Brooks, Glam Davenport, Jenna Skyy, Josephine O'Hara Davenport,

Ask Howard

HOW TO DO THE WRONG THING RIGHT

Cruel, cruel April

Hurry up. Hurry up and wait. Is it just me, guys, or has every single day this spring felt like it's the longest Sunday ever?

Our "Boring Twenties" new decade has been stalled out now, DOA, almost from the day it first started. Was it really just two years ago this very month that, overnight, we'd suddenly self-sequestered ourselves behind bolted doors, attempting vainly to hold back the angst of where, exactly, does a universal lockdown lead to?

The air, I recall, became so suddenly clear — via no cars on the roads — that from my balcony's corner I could crisply see Fort Worth. No plane trails zigzagged the sky. Mesozoic blue, it shimmered.

At night, I could actually see twinkles up in the sky from more than just the Moon and Venus. During daylight, whenever one of my cats sauntered out on deck for a bit of sunshiny basking, I'd double-check the heavens just to make sure no pterodactyls were in range to make quick tidbits of Roo and Miss Pineapple.

Such was the prism of surrealism through which our new normalcy refracted. And it has lingered ever since. To this day everyone still, pop-eyed, holds their collective breath — waiting for what unprecedented drama we don't yet know to befall us next.

The potential for April harboring the seeds of truly being the cruelest month — thank you, Mr. Eliot — is finally at the door, with a battering ram: The two-party political system we've been flogging now in America since the days of Lincoln has, inevitably — just like wizened old Abe warned us — gone horror-house divided. In fact, it's collapsed, both chambers turning equally wasteland upon the other, all partisanship having gone the way of the dodo.

Last week, pilloried by their own craven members, a mere three Senate Republicans displayed the tribal magnanimity to vote for Biden's exemplary new Supreme Court justice nominee. The 47 others instead sneered steadfast,

in defiant unison, humility-free, stroking Ted Cruz's turd-mongering pedophilia obsession, the flagrancy of their racism denials patriotically waving at full, jizz-junkie hard-on.

And we wonder why Q-Anon just will not die?

April's firmamental star-alignment definitely feels somehow off this year, although, on the surface, it's not too particularly unusual. Just a shortlist of April's history-altering/world-changing events is staggering: 'Twas April when the American Revolution began (1775), as well as the Civil War (1861) and, equally, America's entrance into World War I (1917). April played host to the sinking of the Titanic (1912), the meltdown of Chernobyl (1986) and the assassinations of Lincoln (1865) and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (1968), and the martyrdom of Ryan White (1990).

April also witnessed the births of, arguably, the three most influential people to have ever lived: William Shakespeare (1564), Vladimir Lenin (1870) and good old Adolf (1889). Yeah, the paper hanger. April doesn't do gray.

Nor is there any spring rainbow to Putin's scorched-earth annihilation of all remaining civilians still trapped in Ukraine, either — a country only slightly smaller than the state of Texas, by the way, whose main export just happens to be wheat, the staff of life, which of course isn't being planted this year.

Africa will, literally, starve.

In America, just 2 percent of our commodities arrive from Ukraine, and, although we'll feel no hunger pangs this summer, I sure hope we're hungrily looking for new ways to mine neon here in Freedom's Land, a gas indispensable in microchip production.

Ukraine — formerly — supplied 70 percent of the world's neon. Those factories are now rubble, hitting home only too well how all nations are so completely interconnected now that only a madman would dare attempt blowing an en-



tire country off the map.

Inside Russia — largest country on planet Earth, but with an economy smaller than the state of Texas — it's no secret that Putin's personal rationalization for invading Ukraine was to show the west that his country wasn't, as the running joke went, just a gas station with nukes. How quickly, too, did Mr. Putin — all rockets blazing and his Napoleon Complex in full view — prove what a smoke-and-mirrors act it all was, Mr. Macho Moscow Man!

Such a pity party to be thrown for the armada of goon super-yachts, now nationalized to foreign nations, that your fellow klepto stooges diverted all Russia's military-upgrades' spending to. Wholeheartedly, do I agree with President Biden and, for once, with even that pearls-in-the-kitchen flamer, Lady Lindsay Graham: "For God's sake, this man cannot remain in power."

(Uh huh. Ad-libbed, my ass!)

But at the risk of getting all too Hillary Clinton with our highbrow hubris here, let's remember that human morality and children's lives come cheap on both sides of the ponds: Bois and girlz, in case Grindr/Tinder have been consuming most all your quality time, another bombshell has exploded here on home turf, this one against the LGBTQ community. Again.

Seems Alabama just became the first state to legally ban all medical care to transgender youth — even threatening 10-year prison sentences against any doctors and nurses who attempt helping them. Only God blessed Gov. Kay Ivey her walnut-sized, dinosaur brain. No doubt, too, Florida's "Don't Say Gay" measure is sheer manna from Heaven to the Ivey. Why, oh, why, Alabama, why my home state? What's with this eternal determination of the damned you have, Alabama, to always claw for rock-bottom? Always!

As Guv'nah Ivey — who, if technically not lesbian, sure missed a good opportunity — rapturously emotes: "I believe very strongly that if the Good Lord made you a boy, you are a boy, and if he made you a girl, you are a girl."

Uh oh, Socrates, you've got competition!

Ivey clearly has a direct phone line to sweet baby Jesus himself, for upon signing Alabama's bill guaranteeing all its gender-malfunction bitches will die in agony, pervy Abbess Ivey then actually stated, beatifically, "We should especially protect our children from these radical, life-altering drugs and surgeries when they are at such a vulnerable stage in life."

Oh, Kay, your canonization is imminent!

Nothing's ever as good as it appears, and anything that appears out of nothing's never good. In our new world order, of this year 2022 AD — land of TikTok, torture porn and Tesla payments — even the etiquette of debauchery has its mantra. Opening my door Sunday morning to fetch the paper — yes, I'm old-school like that — I heard wafting on the air the faint, distant strains of Blondie: "Hurry up, hurry up and wait/I stay awake all week, and still I wait/Dry your eyes, Sunday girl."

May, bring us your flowers, gurrrrrl... hurry!

— Howard Lewis Russell

Send your questions to AskHoward@dallasvoice.com and Howard may include yours in a future column.

this week's solution

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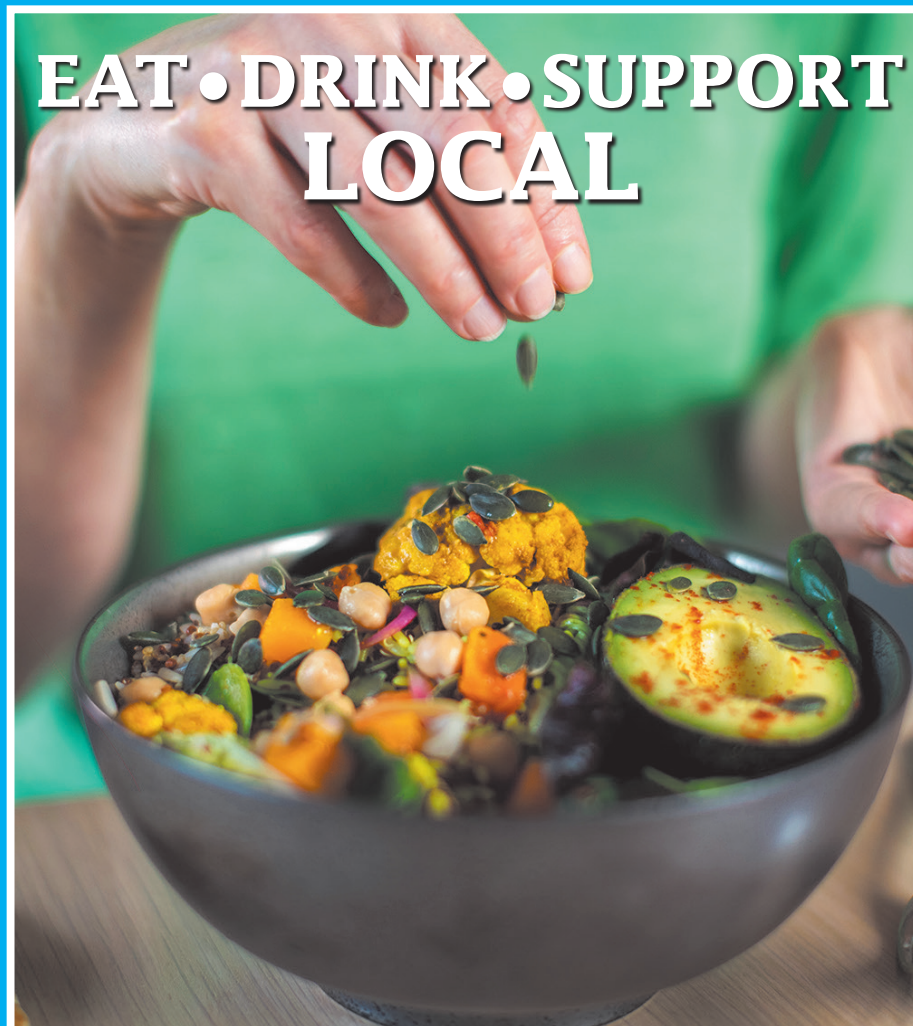


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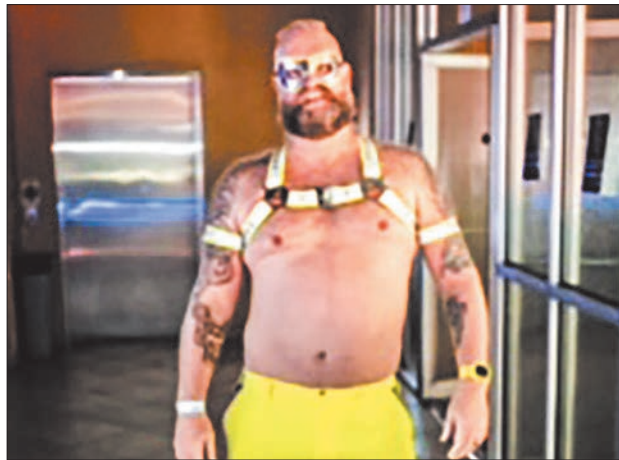
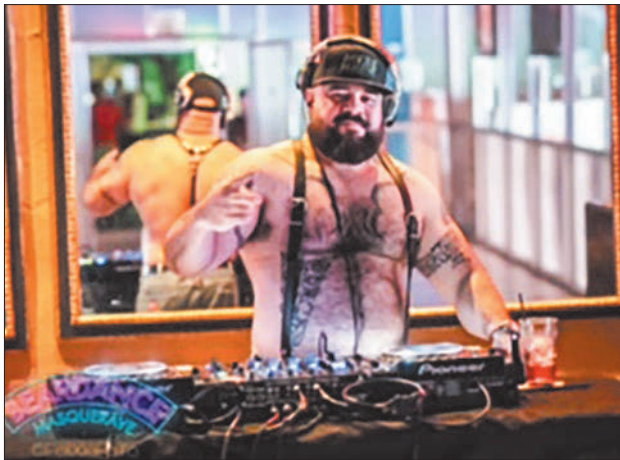
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SCENE • One more look at BearDance 2022 (Photos by Felix Moo)

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Solution on Page 24

Across

- 1 Sapphic poems
- 5 Hit with hand motions
- 9 Series with Willow Rosenberg
- 14 Oscar-night transport
- 15 Amazon competitor
- 16 Went up
- 17 Start of why Harvey says "Always admit when you're wrong"
- 19 "To ___ human..."
- 20 M*A*S*H actor Stevenson
- 21 Plays like Melissa Etheridge
- 23 *Once Upon a Mattress* legume
- 24 "___ I say ..."
- 27 Where to see chaps in chaps
- 29 You, to Frida
- 31 More of the quote
- 33 "If they could ___ now..."
- 34 Improve, in a way
- 35 It comes before Jack
- 36 Sexual desire, e.g.
- 38 Cut
- 41 Caesar's way
- 44 "I'll pay"
- 46 Thick liqueur
- 50 End of the quote
- 53 Like phone sex
- 54 ___ Records (Etheridge label)
- 55 Get wind of

Down

- 1 Home of the Greek gods
- 2 Bishopric
- 3 Use as a role model
- 4 Foot bottom
- 5 Question type for an *Advocate* poll
- 6 Degree for Andrew Tobias
- 7 Cleveland cager, for short
- 8 First mate's pair
- 9 Some Oldsmobiles
- 10 Chilean poet Pablo
- 11 Male cross-dresser's dress
- 12 *Modern Family* installment

- 13 Some O.C.S. grads
- 18 Drag queen's hose problem
- 22 Brought into alignment
- 25 Minerva, on the Acropolis
- 26 *The L Word* network
- 28 Digits for "render unto Caesar"
- 30 Meat source Down Under
- 32 Jack of hearts feature
- 37 Astronaut Cooper's nickname
- 39 Greek victim of *Wax on, wax off?*
- 40 Broadway bio
- 41 Caesar's lucky number?
- 42 Hook up
- 43 Not yet apprehended
- 45 Speed limit letters
- 47 Rubbers
- 48 Tennis great Navratilova
- 49 Lover of Franklin and Lorena
- 51 Homophobia, e.g.
- 52 Penetrates
- 56 Eva Gabor's *Green* ___
- 59 Switch positions
- 61 Vermont, to Vivien
- 62 U. degrees
- 64 Suffix with erect
- 65 The Common Mkt.

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